

## Syllabus

**Course:** Pre-AP Honors American Literature and Composition

**Teacher:** Philip T. Grabowskii

**Course Description:** American Literature and Composition is designed to help the student improve writing skills, critical thinking skills, vocabulary skills, and reading skills. Literary focus will be placed on short stories, nonfiction literary works, novels, plays, and poems. Emphasis will also be placed on essay writing as preparation for the Georgia End-of-Course Milestone as well as critical reading skills for the SAT. Additionally, the students at A.R. Johnson are engaging in an advanced curriculum that will prepare them for AP Language (11<sup>th</sup> Grade) and AP Literature (12<sup>th</sup>). Therefore, additional essay writing assignments will focus on preparing for these advanced courses.

### Reading List:

*Common Core Literature: The American Experience* (Primary Text)

*The Crucible*, Arthur Miller

*The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne

*Inherit the Wind*, Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee

*Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston

*A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry

*The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald

*The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck and Frank Galati

**Film List:** As a supplement to the written material to be studied, certain thematically linked Shakespearean films will be chosen. The following is a list of those films. If a student does not have signed permission to view these films, then he or she will be sent to the media center and given an alternate assignment.

- *Rocky* (1976, director John G. Avildsen, PG)
- *The Crucible* (1996, director Nicholas Hytner, PG-13)
- *Pleasantville* (1998, director Gary Ross, PG-13)
- *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005, director George Clooney, PG)
- *The Great Gatsby* (2013, director Baz Luhrmann, PG-13)

### Materials:

- College Rule Paper
- Pens (Blue-Black Ink)
- Three-Ring Binder
- Highlighters
- Post-It Notes

**Expectations:** Students are reminded that, per the contract they signed as part of the magnet school program, they are expected to maintain a C average (75+) or higher in all core classes, including English/Language Arts. Should a student be in need of extra assistance, the following resources are available:

- **Tutoring**—Tutoring is available with Mr. Grabowski on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 7:30 to 7:50. If a student cannot meet at this time, the National Honor Society sponsors peer tutoring twice a week in the afternoons. This is not a drop-off service. You must stay with me and I will sit down and go over your work with you. No such tutoring will be available on the day an assignment is due.
- **Schoolwires**—Schoolwires is provided to inform students and parents of upcoming assignments. If a student is absent, or a parent wishes to know what assignments their child should be working on, they should check on the calendar to see what has been assigned. This calendar will be updated the week prior to assignments. There is no reason not to know what you are responsible for in this class.
- **Infinite Campus**—Grades are updated at least weekly (and often more than that) on Infinite Campus. This tool is available to you to track your child's grades. Checking daily/weekly on your progress will mean that you will not be surprised when grade reports are given out.
- **TurnItIn**—TurnItIn.com is an online resource that students must use to submit papers. Peer review is also available with this resource so that students may receive comments and suggestions from other students before submitting the final paper.
- **Quizlet**—Quizlet is an app that allows students to create digital flashcards of vocabulary words for studying. It is free and students may create their own study guides from this resource.
- **Grade Recovery I**—Each nine weeks, students may complete Accelerated Reader quizzes to earn up to a bonus grade of no more than 100/100. The point value for each AR quiz passed will be used to determine the total bonus grade. Advanced Placement books (see attached list) will be worth the full point value. Any other books will be worth half of the total point value.
- **Grade Recovery II**—If a student fails for the nine weeks, he or she may contract at the end of the year to complete their comprehensive final exam. If a student shows mastery of the standards, then his or her exam score will replace the failing nine weeks grade. (NOTE: This is only available to replace the single lowest nine weeks grade. The exam will be separate from the EOCT/Milestone.)

These tools should help you to be proactive about your education as opposed to being reactive. Please also keep in mind that this syllabus is merely a guide and may be changed as necessary at the discretion of the teacher.

**Grading:** Students in this class will be graded according to a points system. Each assignment will be given a specific point value. When graded, the score will appear as the number of points earned over the number of possible points. Each grade will add on to the next for the duration of the nine weeks. You should be able to determine your current average by adding the total points earned on all assignments and dividing this number by the total possible points for these assignments.

**Grading Categories:** The following is the information for each type of assignment:

- **Tier One**—These are major summative assignments that include out of class projects and essays and in-class tests. There will be approximately three of these each nine weeks and will be worth 100 points each.
- **Tier Two**—These will be regular assessments to see that students are reviewing their literary terms and SAT vocabulary. There will be approximately six of these each nine weeks and will be worth 50 points each.
- **Tier Three**—These will include formative assignments that are meant to help guide a student towards mastery of writing skills and will include in-class practice essays, Milestone practice assessments, and reading quizzes. There will be approximately nine of these each nine weeks and will be worth 30-40 points each.
- **Tier Four**—This will be a single participation grade worth 45 points. A student will earn one point each day for actively participating in class. Students will lose points if they sleep, are inattentive, or using technology instead of taking part in class.

**\* Late Work Policy**—Late work will be accepted at the teacher’s discretion. The penalty will be 15% for the first day, 30% for the second day, and 45% for the third day.

**Absences:**

If a student is absent, any missed work goes into the grade-book as a zero until it is made up. This is done to remind students to make up the assignment. The grade becomes permanent if the student does not make up the work within 5 days. Please turn in the absence excuse to the school’s data clerk in the Guidance Department on the day you return to school.

**Passes:**

If a student needs to leave class for any reason, they should first write out a pass and then present it to me for signing. When you leave, you are expected to also turn in your cell-phone. When you return, you will turn back in your pass and get your cell-phone back. If you have to leave class to go to the restroom often, please keep in mind that you are missing valuable class time that may negatively impact your grade.

**Mr. Grabowski’s Commandments**

1. Thou shalt adhere to the A. R. Johnson Student Handbook and the Richmond County Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.
2. Thou shalt be in your desk when the bell rings and remain seated unless permitted otherwise. If you are late for my class because of another teacher, you are still late. I do not keep students after the bell and no other teacher should make you late for my class. (This includes cleaning up after labs or finishing up a test.) Yes, I do count tardies!
3. Thou shalt come to class prepared. This means bringing pen or pencil, paper, notebook and your BOOK every day. This means YOU!
4. Thou shalt be actively involved in your own education. This means taking notes, paying attention in class, ASKING QUESTIONS, and discussing the ideas being discussed. Passivity will usually lead to a lower grade.
5. Thou shalt keep all electronic devices quiet and out-of-sight unless they are specifically needed for my class. Headphones/mp3 players should not be visible unless it is an assessment day and you are finished with your test. You may NOT plug your electronic devices into the room’s outlets to charge without first asking permission. Any electronic device used while you are taking a test or quiz will automatically result in a zero for the assignment and a referral for academic dishonesty. There will be no exceptions to this.
6. Thou shalt not put your head down on your desk. If you do so, I will assume you are sleeping and write you up. This includes after tests. Bring something constructive to do!
7. Thou shalt have no other teachers before me. Do NOT work on other teacher’s assignments while you are supposed to be paying attention in here. If you do so, the work will be collected and not returned until the end of the following school day. If you finish your work for this class early, you should find something constructive to work on, which may then and only then include work for another teacher.
8. Thou shalt take care of make-up work within five days of returning to school. If, after five days, you have not made up the assignment, you will receive a zero.
9. Thou shalt eat, drink, and be merry—outside of my classroom! Don’t bring your cups, soda bottles, candy bars, and other food items into my room. (Water bottles are the only permissible alternative.)
10. Thou shalt not use my classroom as your personal locker or trashcan. If you leave your things (including notebooks and textbooks) in my room, I will send them down to lost and found where they will remain lost and most certainly never found.
11. And the most important of them all—THOU SHALT DO THY HOMEWORK!

## **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

### **Definition of Plagiarism:**

Copying or imitating the language, ideas and/or thoughts of another writer and passing them off as one's own original work. Plagiarism is cheating; if you do it, there is a price to pay.

### **Copying or Borrowing Assignments**

- Copying or rephrasing another student's work;
- Lending your assignment to another student; and
- Having someone else rephrase an assignment (not merely proofread it).

### **Use of Critical Materials**

- Direct copying of student aids (e.g. Spark Notes, Cliff Notes, student aids from the internet, etc.) or critical works in part or in whole without acknowledgement;
- Indirect reproduction of student aids, critical sources, or reference materials by rephrasing ideas borrowed from them; and
- Direct quotations from secondary sources must be properly acknowledged and identified fully on the Works Cited page.

### **Cheating on Assessments**

- Use of "cheat-sheets" or electronic devices to look up answers on assessments; and
- Giving someone a copy of the questions or answers to an assessment.

### **Penalty**

- A mark of zero will be given for the assignment;
- If collusion is found between students, all parties involved will receive a mark of zero for the assignment; and
- A discipline referral will be sent to the front office for further punishment at the discretion of administrators.

August 6, 2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the beginning of another exciting year at A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School. I hope that you and your child are looking forward to this year as much as I am.

I cannot stress enough how important grades are for this class. As such, I routinely update the school's computer software, Infinite Campus, with your child's grades. Get in the habit of checking these grades at least weekly. It is my responsibility to update these grades but it is also your responsibility to help monitor your child's progress.

To ensure that the year goes smoothly, I have reviewed a list of policies and procedures concerning classroom behavior and expectations along with this year's reading list. This syllabus is available from my Schoolwires account, which all students are expected to access for important downloads, and a calendar of assignments. I ask that you read over these statements with your child to ensure that they understand and agree to abide by the rules that will govern this class. Compliance with these rules and procedures are important to ensure that this year will be free of problems so that learning time can be maximized. Please complete the attached form with information regarding your child including contact info. Also, you and your child should both sign the form stating that you have read the policies that have been sent home, including the academic dishonesty policy. Return this form to me no later than **Friday, August 9**.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [graboph@richmond.k12.ga.us](mailto:graboph@richmond.k12.ga.us). I will get back with you as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Philip T. Grabowskii  
English Teacher

**Student Information Sheet**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pathway \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Parent /Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Parent /Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have access to Internet at home? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have an electronic device that he/she brings to school every day? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please list the type of electronic devices (i.e., laptop, cell-phone, tablet, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*I have read the attached materials concerning course requirements, classroom expectations, and grading systems. My signature indicates both understanding and a willingness to comply with the guidelines set forth in this material. In addition, I am also acknowledging that I have read the list of films for the class and give permission for my child to view these in the classroom setting.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give/do not give **[circle one]** my permission for  
(Parent/Guardian Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ to watch the movies listed on the attached syllabus.  
(Student's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)