

10th GRADE ENGLISH

COURSE SYLLABUS

Ms. Wood

WELCOME

About Ms. Wood

I'm excited to begin my first year at Timberline. I have eight years of English teaching experience, four of them overseas. I'm passionate about everything to do with language and literacy and I want my students to develop the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills necessary to succeed at whatever they choose to do in life.

Contact Info:

Ms. Connie Wood

Timberline High School, Portable Eight

I can be often be reached by phone between 7:00 am and 8:15 and from 2:30 to 4:00, although *the best way to reach me is by email.*

Email: cwood@nthurston.k12.wa.us

Phone: 412-4860 xt43808

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is devoted to helping students improve their skills as readers, writers and thinkers, as well as expose them to important literature from a variety of genre. Students will focus on 11 essential skills to reach these goals (found below). Each of these skills is grouped into the categories of writing, reading, communication, or life skills. We will also be exploring the themes of culture and world literature, so our reading will represent a wide variety of times, people and places.

Writing

1. Content, Organization, and Style,
2. Conventions
3. Writing Process

Communication

7. Communication
8. Public Speaking

Reading

4. Comprehension
5. Critical Reading
6. Reading Process

Life Skills

9. Work Completion
10. Engaged Participation
11. Goal Setting

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

READING

- Read and respond at home for **at least 30 minutes, 4 nights per week**
- **Read 2 novels independently during the year, as well as participate in class novel study and literature circles**
- Expand your understanding of the world through reading a wide variety of authors and genre.

WRITING

- Write Analytically:
 - Show your thinking in your writing
 - Support your ideas with evidence from other texts
 - Critique, explain and support the ideas of other thinkers
 - Connect to the ‘great conversation’ in the world of literature
- Write Creatively:
 - Share your personality using imagery and your own powerful voice.
- Write Collaboratively:
 - Respond to your classmates’ and teachers’ ideas, critiques and suggestions
 - Learn and practice the protocols and procedures for engaging in writing groups
- **Compose a series of peer reviewed, polished writing pieces to represent what you’ve learned.**

PARTICIPATION

- Be responsible and come into class ready to learn:
 - Meet personal needs outside of class, as much as possible.
 - Come into class on time, with the necessary materials
 - Begin the “Do Now” activity on the board when you arrive in class.
- Help create a supportive, safe learning environment by showing respect for everyone in the classroom and the learning process.
 - Be willing to work with anyone in class
 - Help minimize disruptions to learning
 - Take an academic risk and try out new skills even when you feel unsure

CONSEQUENCES

Behavior that interferes with learning or teaching will not be allowed. If a student chooses to interfere with teaching or learning in the classroom, I will redirect the student, and then give him or her a warning. After the third redirection the student will be asked to go to another classroom to refocus. If the disruptive behavior persists, the student will be escorted to the office by an administrator and will receive a call home. Egregious behavior may result in the student being sent directly to the office.

How do I find out assignments and when they are due?

Each Monday (or the first day of the week) we will review upcoming assignments for the week and their due dates. Students will write these assignments and dates in a planner or notebook and should be able to share them with you.

Since I am new to Timberline this year, it is going to take a few days to get our class website up and running, once that is online it will be a resource for checking due dates and printing assignment sheets and other information. Please check it regularly for due dates and assignments.

My email: cwood@nthurston.k12.wa.us

Our class website: <http://schools.nthurston.k12.wa.us/cwood>

Adolescent Literature Choices

It is my hope that parents speak with their children about the values that are important to them. Every effort is made at Timberline to make sure that literature chosen for our class and school libraries and curriculum has something important to offer. Part of growing up is learning to make critical choices for oneself. If your student chooses a book that makes you uncomfortable after you have taken the time to explore it, please begin by taking the opportunity to discuss the book with your student. He or she will have perspective about why the book is important to him or her. I am also available if you wish to discuss our class or individual reading choices.

GRADING SCALE

This course is designed around a standards based grading system. In short, that means that students' scores are aligned with one of the 11 essential skills developed for this course. A score of 3 is considered at standard, while a score of 4 is considered above standard. All scores below 3 have not met standard on the given skill. Standards based grading is designed to help students recognize what skills they have mastered and what skills may need improvement. To help students recognize these areas, they will be regularly graphing their progress in each area.

Grade Weighting: See Course Overview Above	
Activities (each on a 1-4 Scale)	Weight
Reading	30%
Writing	30%
Communication	20%
Life Skills	20%

Each of the four grading categories (*reading, writing, communication, life skills*) carries a separate weight in the grade book. (see chart above). I understand that this grading system may be different than what students have been exposed to in some of their other high school courses. If you would like additional clarification, please visit our classroom website for a breakdown of each of the 11 rubrics or contact me for more information.

MISSING WORK / 911 PROGRAM

The 911 program is designed to allow students the opportunity to submit missing assignments. In order to receive credit for a missing assignment, students must complete the assignment during 911 office hours. These hours will be posted in class and on the website during the first week of school.

SUPPLIES

Required Supplies

- 4 Composition Notebooks (some will be saved in class for later in the year)
- 1 one-inch 3 ring binder with pockets inside the covers.
- Page protectors (to keep resources in notebook from getting lost or falling apart—kept in class)
- Pencils and/or a black or dark blue pen (no colored pens)
- A book to read. This could be a classroom novel OR a choice book checked out from the school library, the classroom library, or brought from home. Any extra class time will be spent reading and responding to what we read.

Suggested Supplies

- A small USB storage device (flash drive)
- Sticky notes

Homework: 30 minutes of daily reading in addition to class homework.

Each Day Monday-Thursday: Read and respond at least 30 minutes daily. Often the reading will come from an assigned text, however, many times it can be almost anything else. Novels, short stories, how-to manuals, text books, graphic novels, religious texts or anything a student feels like reading counts as long as they respond in the journals.

In addition: Students will have some writing assignments that cannot be finished in class, or papers that we are working on in class that need to be finished at home. Students will be given the resources in class to complete any work that goes home. Nothing should be new. If students struggle to complete their homework, that is part of the learning process. Parents, please have your student do the best they can and turn it in, even if they feel unsure about their performance. This helps me know where the student is academically.

MOST IMPORTANT IDEAS about homework: Read daily, complete long term homework projects a little at a time, each evening. Do your own work and don't procrastinate.

THREE KEY IDEAS ABOUT THIS CLASS:

ONE: Read, Read, Read!

*The major predictor of academic success is the amount of time that a student spends reading. In fact, **the top 5 percent of U.S. students read up to 144 times more than the students in the bottom 5 percent**. Research shows that the highest achieving students are those who devote leisure time to reading. One of the few predictors of high achievement in math and science *is the amount of time students devote to pleasure reading*. **Recently, the largest ever international study of reading found that the single most important predictor of academic success is the amount of time children spend reading books, more important than economic or social status.** (Thanks to Ms. Wardell for this information)*

TWO: Intelligence increases with effort.

Students often say, “I’m just not good at reading/math/any subject.” While some activities are easier for some than for others, everyone can improve his or her ability through effort. In fact, ***the understanding that intelligence can be improved by effort is another key predictor of success at any task***. We all require different levels of effort and support to improve, but we can all reach our learning goals. Effort to improve at new skills will be treated with the utmost respect in our classroom. Please encourage your student to keep trying and practicing new skills, (including reading and writing) especially when the skill is challenging.

THREE: It takes time to learn complex skills, so we must use time wisely and efficiently.

Studies of people who reach high levels of proficiency at complex tasks (from brain surgery to high level reading and writing skills) show there is ONE THING that sets them apart from others who try but don’t do as well: HOURS OF PRACTICE. (See Key idea #1,2). All Classroom participation and behavior expectations are built upon idea three. Our classroom time is sacred, and I do all I can and expect students to do all that they can to minimize absences and disruptions.

Returning Books

Because the teachers at Timberline use our collections of literature to teach reading, we count on the books being available on a regular basis. Our love for books represents a substantial investment of school funds and teacher’s own money. Therefore, we are discouraged when books disappear for months at a time or never reappear at all. Could you please help us by checking regularly to see if your student has a book to return? Please encourage your student to scour his or her backpack, bedroom, or other personal space from time to time for titles that may belong to the school or to one of the teachers.

Final Thoughts

The ability to read and write effectively for one’s own purpose is a key life skill. I work hard to make sure that your students have the opportunity learn how to read, write and communicate to support their own success. I look forward to being your partner in this important endeavor. Please contact me if there is anything I need to know that would help me assist your student.

10th GRADE ENGLISH COURSE SYLLABUS

After you and your parent or guardian have read pages 1 – 4 of our course syllabus, please sign below acknowledging your understanding of the course and return this form to Ms. Wood. Thank you!

Please initial each circle, below.

- My student explained 11 basic skills we will be learning in 10th Grade English.
- I know what supplies my student needs.
- My student explained the homework policy and the policy for late work.
- My student explained the three key ideas about this class.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Parent / Guardian Name _____

Parent / Guardian Signature _____

The best way to contact me, the student's guardian, is: (if not listed at the school)

Email: _____ Times: _____

Phone: _____

Two things you need to know to help my student learn are:

1.)

2.)

Comments, Questions: