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DUBUQUE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH COURSE SYLLABUS CREATIVE WRITING



"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." –Aristotle

We are committed to providing your student with a well-rounded/diverse educational experience, involving a wide variety of topics and relevant social issues encountered in our pluralistic society. In our classrooms, all opinions are valued and critical thinking is expected. The focus of instruction is centered on both the Dubuque Community School District and Iowa State Standards.

Parents and/or guardians are welcome/encouraged to read, view, and discuss material with their student.

Course Description

This course is for students who have mastered basic composition skills and wish to continue to stretch and challenge themselves as writers. Writing forms that may be explored include memoir, literary nonfiction, essay, poetry, and drama. All students will create a multi-genre research project.

Iowa CORE Standards

Instruction, learning, and assessment are built primarily on the 11-12th grade-band expectations of the Iowa Core Writing and Language Strands:

- **Writing:** Students will routinely write to learn and to communicate for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **Language:** Students will apply knowledge of the English language and its conventions when reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Assessments

In this class, a variety of assessments will be used to measure student learning. These assessments include the following:

- Writers Workshop
- Narrative writing assignments
- Analysis writing assignments
- Self-reflection writing assignments
- Final writing pieces – fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children's literature
- Genre exams
- Workshop participation
- Final portfolio
- Semester exam
- Journal writing

Instructional Strategies

- Peer workshops via individual, small group, and large group will be utilized.
- Students will write in their journals on a daily basis. These entries may be used as a springboard for daily assignments.
- Students are required to keep **all** drafts writings in a digital portfolio.
- All drafts and final writings should be saved electronically in **Office 365** and be accessible between school and home.
- Students are expected to participate in class discussions as well as in writing conferences.
- Classroom discussion/Socratic Circles
- Using mentor texts for research and application to our own writing.

Resources

Provided by the Student

- Pen/Pencil
- Folder/1" Three-Ring Binder
- Notebook
- Student Planner
- Flash Storage (optional)

Academic/Behavioral Expectations

Assignments

Any work that is turned in late will miss important review that will contribute to the development of your understanding. Keep this in mind when observing deadlines.

Furthermore, **any work turned in late is still expected to be high quality and will be returned for revision if it does not meet the standard.** Consult the class calendar, another student, or ask me if you are unsure of assignment details.

Generally, I will not accept late work from a unit once the unit has been completed.

Attendance, Tardies, & Dismissal

In regards to daily attendance and tardies, this class observes the same school policy outlined in the Student Handbook portion of the Student Agenda (pp. 33-40). These policies will be strictly enforced.

After my closing comments and the bell has rung, you will be dismissed to your next class. For safety reasons, please refrain from lining up at the door.

Class Conduct

I firmly believe in the notion of treating people the way they want to be treated. This idea is conveyed many different ways, but especially in a person's actions. Therefore, I expect respectful, cooperative, and appropriate classroom behavior at all times.

Furthermore, **you are to be punctual, prepared, and productive in class. No food or drink is allowed in the classroom other than water. Cell phones and iPods in class are inappropriate unless I ask for their usage.**

Grading

A grade is not a result but rather the means for improving your level of mastery and understanding of the material. Percentages on assignments translate into the grades listed below.

ADVANCED	PROFICIENT	BASIC	NOT YET	
93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	0-59 F
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	64-66 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

Communication

Communication is the key to any success; therefore, please feel free to contact me using the information provided at the top of this document. In addition to the above, more traditional methods, I also use other services which may be more convenient.

Remind

This is a web-based texting service that allows me to send reminders via text message out to students and/or parents while maintaining your privacy and mine. Text @skilgore to 81010 and follow the prompts to utilize this service.

Power School

At registration you should have received a username and password for accessing Power School. I regularly update scores in the gradebook every 2 weeks. Check your progress here.

Canvas

Canvas is a tool available to all Dubuque Senior High School students. This platform allows me to distribute and collect assignments and make quizzes available online, so that I can provide direct feedback to class participants.

Content

The primary emphasis of Creative Writing is to connect thinking creatively with writing. This course offers an assortment of stimuli for students whose abilities vary. Class activities include the study of literary selections by recognized artists, the writing and revision of student papers, and constructive evaluation by the teacher and the classmates. Through the workshop process, emphasis is placed on individualizing instruction and providing opportunities for in-class writing.

Units of Exploration

Short Story

- Believable dialogue
- Developing voice
- Establishing point of view
- Scene versus summary
- Developing a conflict; telling a story

Creative Nonfiction

- How is nonfiction creative?
- Personal essay
- Memoir

Poetry

- Sensory language
- Poetic theme
- Found and parallel poetry
- Ballad
- Free verse
- Creating in other poetic forms

Children's Literature

- Storyboarding and outlining
- Stories with a lesson
- Writing for a specific audience