

English I

Mrs. Kirk and Mr. McLead

Room 127

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Course Overview:

Welcome to English I! This course is required for all 9th grade students. We will explore a variety of literary genres from both classical and modern works, including fiction and non-fiction. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, visual, and technological skills are all emphasized.

Our goal in this class is to prepare you for your future classes at North, and ultimately, life after high school. Along the way we hope to, if not pass along the love of literature, culture, writing, etc., generate an appreciation on your part for the events that shape our lives. This class is designed with a variety of different activities to appeal to many different learning styles, interests and intellectual abilities. Our hope is that by the end of this year, you will have significantly improved your critical thinking and oral and written communication skills, as well as have a heightened sense of cultural literacy and sensitivity ... oh yeah, and of course ... learn a little about yourself and your world.

Major Readings for English I will include:

The Odyssey

Please Stop Laughing at Me

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet

To Kill a Mockingbird

Possibly some novels of your choice

Texts:

- Elements of Literature, Holt

To keep costs down and prolong the useful lives of the books, we will make a complete online version of this text available to you. Not only can this version be accessed from any internet connection, but there are also learning activities specific to this e-version that are not found in the hard copy version.

- Various primary and secondary source readings will also be provided for you where applicable

Materials:

In order to optimize your success in this class, we are going to insist that every student come prepared, every day, with the following items:

- Some kind of three-ring binder with tabs - We will spend a great deal of time this year working on organizational skills. We don't care how big the binder, or what brand, but it is crucial you have some method for managing your paperwork. You could also use folders for each class that you have - just make sure one is designated for English class!
- Notebook paper - There will be some writing in this class nearly every day. It is imperative that you have something to write on. You could also use a spiral-bound notebook. Just make sure you have something to write on!
- Writing utensils - Either pencil or pen, with blue or black ink, are permissible. Any assignment submitted in any other color, or by any other medium (marker, crayon, blood, etc.) will not be accepted.
- Planner - In order to be as organized as you can be, we feel it is important that you have some method to track your assignments and other school and daily obligations. The school store will be selling low-cost planning books, but by no means are we requiring you to purchase something, as long as you have *something*. This could also be an app on your phone or a spiral notebook that you write down a to-do list in. We know you *THINK* you are able to remember everything, but please trust us, life is much easier if you have some way to keep track of your responsibilities. 😊
- Three-hole punch – while we will try to punch holes in your papers for you, we may not always get to it...

Please have available at home (or to bring to class as needed):

- Markers
- Colored Pencils
- Crayons
- Tape/glue
- Construction paper
- Poster board

Grading:

Each semester will be weighted in the following manner:

- 1st Quarter: 40%
- 2nd Quarter: 40%
- Final Exam/Project: 20%

The categories in which each student will be evaluated are:

- Exams (Tests & Quizzes)
- Assignments
- Projects
- Presentations
- In-class writing
- Journals
- Formal papers

Homework

No "D" Policy - In high school, there should be very few excuses for receiving D's as grades. In most cases, it is not because it is the best a student can do, but rather it is because the student is putting forth "D" effort. Keep the PowerPoint presentation in your mind – do YOU want to have the surgeon who got poor grades in medical school to be the one cutting you open some day???

Here is how our class is different from other typical high school classes. If you turn in your assignment on time, you have the opportunity to rewrite that assignment if you receive a grade lower than what you want. You may rewrite assignments until the end of each unit (longer extensions for end-of-unit projects and papers, which will probably be extended until the end of the quarter, as that's when your grades are "locked" and go on your grade card). You may continue to rewrite assignments as many times as you (or we) want during each unit. This allows you to learn from your mistakes and become a stronger writer. It also allows you to take some risks with your writing without your grade suffering. That being said, your grade is in your hands!

Assignments - There will be times when we will assign work for students to turn in to us for assessment purposes. Please turn in your work on time. Feel free to talk to us if you have questions or concerns.

Absences - If you have an absence that is excused by the attendance office, you will have as many days as you missed to complete all missed work without penalty. You may not make-up assignments missed due to an unexcused absence. MAKE-UP WORK IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. To facilitate this, all assignments are clearly posted in the classroom and on the class website. You can find a calendar with due dates for assignments, information about what we did each day in class, as well as links to download assignments in case you lose them or are absent on my teacher website <http://www.wcsoh.org/olc/teacher.aspx?s=4649>. We will also post handouts on the same website (you will need to choose the correct classroom on the left side of the screen). Or, you can always email Mrs. Kirk at kirkj@wcsoh.org or contact me via Facebook (Jen Kirk) or Twitter (@kirk1109) and/or Mr. McLead at mcleadj@wcsoh.org or @MrMclead. We may also be using Google Classroom this year, in which case, we will provide you with more information when/if that occurs.

We will not chase after you, nor worry if you choose not to get it from us. As high-schoolers, we do not feel that it is unreasonable to expect that students take ownership in and responsibility for their education. We have provided you with multiple means of contacting us, so please use them!

Extra Credit - In our experience, students usually do not receive the kind of grade they hope for because they fail to either turn in required work or put forth the requisite time studying the material. It is our strong belief that it is unfair to those students who have been diligent about their responsibilities to offer extra-credit to those students who have not. Therefore, we do NOT offer any extra-credit on an individual basis. However, because we understand that sometimes students legitimately struggle with certain material, we do permit students to rewrite assignments to improve their writing and their grade.

PowerSchool, PowerTeacher, PowerParent - Students and their parents have the opportunity to track their grades and check on missed assignments from any internet capable computer. Please see us if you have any questions...

Class Policies:

Unlike the rest of this syllabus, we would like to keep this short and sweet. Students are expected to follow the school's Code of Student Conduct. You are expected to reflect the maturity and responsibility that will be demanded of you now and in the future. No inappropriate actions will be tolerated. Other than that, we have four standing rules:

1. Time is short and we have a lot to cover so we will always strive to start on-time. It is our belief that by accommodating late-comers, we would be, in essence, rewarding them for being late. To that end, you must be in the classroom before the tardy bell rings. At that time, we will close the door and you will be marked as absent and/or tardy to class. If you are late to class without an excuse from us or another staff member, you will receive a warning. The third unexcused tardy will result in a detention to be served during your lunch period. Each additional tardy after that will warrant another

detention. Excessive tardies will result in parent communication and/or referral to the front office.

2. Falsely claiming another's work as your own is called plagiarism. We consider it to be the ***gravest*** educational offense, and will deal with it harshly. At the least, you will receive zero credit for that particular assignment. Seriously, don't do it.
3. We expect you to come to class prepared - every day. This means you have your notebook, relevant texts, paper, a writing utensil, etc. Once again, we do not believe it is too much to ask from you as high-schoolers to start to take responsibility for your learning. Repeated violations may result in detentions. While this may seem harsh, trust us. You will thank us as you move on in your academic career.
4. The foundation of the Warrior Way is built on the idea that RESPECT IS A TWO-WAY PROPOSITION. Please show all of your colleagues and us the same consideration that you would wish to receive and we will reciprocate. We do NOT tolerate disrespect towards our students or us.

Conferences:

This course should be somewhat challenging, but not overwhelming, tedious, boring, or anxiety-producing. If you have a problem, it's best to talk it over with us. Don't let our (especially Mrs. Kirk's) forthrightness frighten you. Most of the time we can find a solution and the problem will pass. Don't put it off. Talk with us. We think you'll find that we are very laid back and will help you the best we can. Mrs. Kirk is available in her classroom for help before school, during 5th and 7th periods and after school. Mr. McLead is available before school, during 5th and 8th period, and after school. PLEASE do not hesitate to come to us if you need help!

Communication:

It is vital that the student, parent and teacher all work together towards the goal of a student's education. We passionately believe that communication plays a vital role in reaching that goal. To that end, students and parents can please feel free to contact us at their leisure.

The very best way to get in touch with us is through e-mail. We have voice mail at school, but because we don't have a flashing beacon alerting us to a voice-mail entry, we cannot promise that we will hear your message the same day. We are, however, constantly in touch with our e-mail accounts and will always try to respond the same day. Our email addresses are listed at the top of this syllabus.

If you do not have reliable internet access, you may still leave a voice mail and we will get back to you as soon as we get your message.

Final Thoughts:

We are really excited to start this school year and share some great experiences with you. Please know that we are here to help you, so don't be afraid to talk to us! ☺



Sign up for important updates from Ms. Kirk.

Get information for 4th Period English I right on your phone—not on handouts.

Pick a way to receive messages for 4th Period English I:

- A** If you have a smartphone, get push notifications.

On your iPhone or Android phone, open your web browser and go to the following link:

rmd.at/4kirk

Follow the instructions to sign up for Remind. You'll be prompted to download the mobile app.

A graphic of a smartphone screen displaying the Remind sign-up page. At the top, the URL "rmd.at/4kirk" is shown. Below it, the heading "Join 4th Period English I" is centered. There are two input fields: "Full Name" with the placeholder text "First and Last Name", and "Phone Number or Email Address" with the placeholder text "(555) 555-5555".

rmd.at/4kirk

Join 4th Period English I

Full Name

First and Last Name

Phone Number or Email Address

(555) 555-5555

- B** If you don't have a smartphone, get text notifications.

Text the message @4kirk to the number 81010.

If you're having trouble with 81010, try texting @4kirk to (704) 209-9973.

A graphic of a smartphone screen showing a text message interface. The "To" field contains the number "81010". The "Message" field contains the text "@4kirk".

To

81010

Message

@4kirk

Don't have a mobile phone? Go to rmd.at/4kirk on a desktop computer to sign up for email notifications.

Parents,

This syllabus is a little longer than most you may see in high school. We've found that by making our expectations explicit at the beginning of the class, fewer confusions and problems arise over the course of the year.

To that end, to ensure that all students and their parents have read and understand this syllabus, we are asking your help in filling out the portion below and returning the whole page to us.

Student's name:

Parent or guardian:

Daytime phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Parent e-mail:

Please sign below to indicate that you and your child have both read and understand the syllabus and return this page to Mrs. Kirk by Monday, August 22, 2016.

Student signature

Parent signature

