

9th Grade Honors English at STEM
Course Syllabus
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Course Description

This course introduces students to the genres of literature, including poetry, drama, the short story, and the novel. Critical thinking and self-expression are emphasized in study of vocabulary, grammar, usage, and the fundamental elements of expository, analytical, and persuasive writing. Literature and writing will focus on themes of **identity, innovation, culture, the individual's role in society, and connecting the humanities with STEM**. Writing, reading, speaking, and listening will be intensive in preparing students for the rigor of the upper grades. The strands of content and skills in English and our units of study are:

Reading

We will examine novels, poetry, short stories, drama, non-fiction and film.

- *The Grand Challenges for Engineering*
- William Kamkwamba's *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*
- Homer's *The Odyssey*
- Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

Writing

Writing activities will consist of expository, analysis, and narrative writing tasks.

Speaking and Listening

A combination of group work, classroom discussion, debates, class presentations, and online collaboration will collectively leverage group knowledge as we explore the course's themes. Our first semester final will be a three to five-minute speech.

Language

A common writing vocabulary will be established. Conventions and MLA formatting will also be a focal point.

Course Objectives

By the end of the year, students will have developed skills important to work in literary and STEM study. Students will be able to:

- Read a variety of genres analytically
- Write a logically coherent thesis supported by thoughtful evidence and explanation in an essay format
- Use 21st Century technology to explore, analyze, and create topics connected to the humanities
- Give a prepared speech
- Situate oneself in a critical conversation while listening to and considering different voices

Class Website

PowerSchool is accessible through the student portal on the district's homepage. Our class page is **your primary resource** for retrieving homework assignments, completing projects, and downloading notes. Checking PowerSchool needs to be a part of your **daily** routine.

Required Materials

One blank spiral notebook (100 sheets minimum, perforated pages preferred)

Absences

You are responsible for making up work you missed while absent.

Step One: check PowerSchool where daily updates are posted to see what we did in class that day and if homework was assigned

Step Two: catch up with peers about missed content

Step Three: make an office hours appointment if you need help

Due Dates

Students are expected to submit both homework and major assignments on the due date. Practices related to supporting students in meeting deadlines include:

- Due dates are negotiated for major assignments (essays, projects, tests) with the whole class.
- Firm due dates are communicated in advance. Usually, these will be homework assignments that we will be using in class the next day.
- Students who miss a due date will be given the opportunity to complete the work during supervised office hours.
- There is no “late work” penalty.

If a student fails to submit major assignments on time, there will be escalating consequences that follow the below sequence:

- The assignment will be recorded as “missing” in the gradebook. However, the student may not simply take a “0”.
- Contact home
- The student will attend office hours to finish the assignment
- The student will meet with the school counselor to determine the source of the problem and develop a plan to address the situation
- For reporting purposes, there will be firm cutoff dates to evaluate student work. **If work is not submitted by these due dates, the report card may indicate "incomplete" to reflect the fact that insufficient assessment data exist to make a fair evaluation of student performance.** Students may fail a course based on insufficient assessment evidence.

Grading

100-90 = A, 89-87 = B+, 86-84 = B, 83-80 = B-, 79-77 = C+, 76-74 = C, 73-70 = C-, 69 and below = NC (no credit)

Office Hours

Please take advantage of my office hours! Appointments will be given priority over drop-ins. This is your opportunity to get individual help, ask questions, and flex your intellectual muscles.

Monday-Friday: 7:00-7:30 AM; 2:00-2:30 PM

(Due date policy adapted from Branksome Hall, Toronto High School)