

9th Grade Honors English at STEM
Course Syllabus
Mr. Bresnahan
ibresnahan@lwsd.org

Course Description

This class will explore literature and the real world. Expect to engage with STEM-centric content. Expect to analyze classic and contemporary texts with seemingly no STEM connection. Expect to observe the written word and the world around you.

This class is discussion-based. You will play an important role in its success: each of you is expected to offer ideas, ask questions, listen to others' ideas, give useful feedback, do your own share of work and be prepared for class every day.

Writing, reading, speaking, and listening will be intensive in preparing you for the rigor of the upper grades. The content and skills in our units of study are:

Reading

- *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

I want everyone in this class to succeed; therefore, I will be grading you based on how well you achieve the objectives of the class. Students will...

- Read a variety of genres analytically
- Write a logically coherent thesis supported by thoughtful evidence and explanation in an essay format while following steps in the writing process
- 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

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 required)

Absences

You are responsible for making up assignments 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 their due date. Students will be supported in meeting deadlines in the following ways:

- Due dates are negotiated for major assignments (essays, projects, tests) with the whole class.
- **Student-initiated** conversations during office hours to explain extenuating circumstances are encouraged. Hint: it is far more effective to negotiate a due date extension **before** it is due than after.
- Students who miss a due date will be given the opportunity to complete the work during supervised office hours.
- Assignments will be accepted until the end of each unit. "Missing" work will convert to a "0" grade after that.

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.
- Contact home is made.
- 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, Skyward may indicate "incomplete" to reflect insufficient assessment evidence exists to make a fair evaluation of student performance. Students may receive an "NC" 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

Take advantage of office hours! Appointments will be given priority over drop-ins.

This is your opportunity to get individual help, ask questions, and stretch your

intellectual muscles. **Monday-Friday: 6:50-7:30 AM; Monday-Thursday 2:20-2:50**

PM