



# Honors English I Course Syllabus

## Ms. Bass, Room A-24

### 2021 - 2022

Welcome to English I! In this class we will embark on multiple journeys as we learn about the various genres in literature. We will stand on Juliet's balcony and explore the meaning of love in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. We will encounter Cyclopes, Sirens, and Lotus Eaters with Odysseus as he travels thousands of miles to make his way home. We will learn from others' experiences while we read non-fiction pieces by everyone from presidents to teenagers like yourself. Expect to read a great deal, write a great deal, and learn a great deal! **HONORS:** We will focus on the pre-AP/AP Literature "Big 6" of character, setting, narration, figurative language, structure, and literary argumentation in preparation for the AP track and college beyond.

#### **RCSS Course Description:** 10215X0 HONORS ENGLISH

Students in the honors course will explore literature more widely and deeply, including more challenging and/or complete print and non-print texts. This course provides a foundational study of literary genres (novels, short stories, poetry, drama, literary nonfiction). It also includes the study of influential U.S. documents and 1 Shakespearean play. The honors English course fosters intellectual curiosity by encouraging students to generate thought-provoking questions and topics and to research diverse sources. Honors courses will require students to work as self-directed and reflective learners, both independently and in groups as leaders and collaborators. Higher level thinking skills will be emphasized through interdisciplinary and critical perspectives as reflected in the quality of student performance in oral language, written language, and other media/technology. Students enrolled should expect to encounter a rigorous academic experience with much outside reading required. This course is highly recommended for college-bound students.

**\*Notice: For health and safety, we will follow all RCSS and NCDHHS guidelines including, but not limited to, mask-wearing (covering nose and mouth), social distancing, and hand sanitizing as they may change through the year. Thank you for your cooperation and concern for others!**

**The Daily Grind (Classroom Procedures): The two major rules for my classroom are:**

#### **BE NICE:**

- Respect your classmates, your teachers, classroom guests, substitutes, and yourself.
- RCS, THS, and Ms. Bass DO NOT tolerate any form of bullying. Consequences will be severe. If you have questions about what constitutes bullying or negative treatment towards others, discuss it with me early on.
- Foul language and negative comments either toward someone or otherwise communicated are NOT acceptable.
- Be cooperative and respectful of your collaborative learning groups and other groups when you interact.

#### **WORK HARD:**

- Be in your seat when the bell rings, or you are tardy. See the school policy regarding tardies.
- Begin work promptly and independently on your global/intro assignment.
- Be prepared and alert. Participate - it's part of your grade!
- We need you in class – you will have 6 emergency/bathroom passes for the **ENTIRE SEMESTER!**
- Homework and out of class assignments are due in the first 5 minutes of your respective class period. Late assignments are only worth **up to 60%** if turned in the next day. Beyond the next day, I reserve the right to give you a grade of zero. You have one day per day out to make up work (non-excused). You will receive **1 mercy pass PER 9 weeks** for EXTREME emergencies. This will only gain you a day to work on the missing assignment. (see rules on the mercy pass sheet)
- Assignments given ahead of time will still be due through email or by sending your assignment to the school **ON THE DUE DATE**, by the time your respective class period begins. You can't plan when emergencies happen – **BE PROACTIVE!!!**
- Opportunity: You may make an appointment with me to make corrections on items in the quiz category, such as grammar and in-class reading assessments (excluding outside reading checks), that are below an 80. Through making **ALL** needed corrections, you can bring that grade up to an 80 to completely replace the prior grade. Corrections must be made by the end of each quarter to provide time for grading. End dates will be announced.
- **Any form of cheating will automatically result in a ZERO.** This includes but is not limited to copying answers, writing down answers or information when it is not permitted, plagiarizing, looking at others' work, lending your work to be copied, etc.
- Refer to the cell phone policy attached for details concerning cell phones and electronics that cause a distraction.
- Food other than candy provided by the teacher should be away during class. Only water bottles with a screw-top lid are permitted – no drive-thru cups, coffee mugs, etc. **THIS IS A PRIVILEGE THAT YOU CAN LOSE!**

#### **THE SCHOOL ZONE:**

1. Students are to follow all expectations listed in the Trinity High School Handbook.

**Ms. Bass's Classroom Goal:** Students are encouraged to let themselves have fun while learning. I promise it is possible. Remember the cliché that is so true: **YOU GET WHAT YOU GIVE.** This will require you to read all assignments, write to the best of your ability, and push yourself beyond what you think you are capable of in all aspects of class. Chances are, if you did not get the grade you wanted, I did not get the work I wanted.

**Grading (100 - 90 = A, 89 – 80 = B, 79 - 70 = C, 69 – 60 = D, Below 60 = F)**

- Quizzes - 20% (25% 2nd 9 weeks)
- Tests (also projects, notebook checks, etc.) - 40%
- Classwork/Remote Participation (any daily homework included) - 30% (35% 2nd 9 weeks)
- Summer Reading - 10% (1st 9 weeks only) (divided into Classwork/Participation and Quizzes 2nd 9 weeks)

**Materials Needed/Required:**

- Literature Book (provided and left in classroom)
- Black pen or pencil
- Blue or Red pen for editing
- Highlighter(s)
- Color pencils (for your own use)
- Scissors (for your own use)

- Composition Notebook for Major Writings/Projects – sewn edge, not spiral
- Notebook paper
- Glue Sticks (for your own use)
- 1 Three Ring 1 inch+ Binder (Highly Suggested)

**Possible Selections (May Include, But Not Limited To):**

\*Note: The teacher reserves the right to modify any and all title choices, assignments, and their due dates.

\*\*Note: Some of the content of our readings may be young-adult to adult themed in nature. Our readings are chosen, not for shock value, but for proven literary merit and future reference material. You are expected to treat the material with the maturity and respect it deserves.

*Selected Short Stories*

*Romeo and Juliet* – William Shakespeare

*Nonfiction Selections*

*The Odyssey* – Homer

*Selected Poetry*

*Possible outside readings:*

*Circe* - Madeline Miller

*The Forest of Hands and Teeth* – Carrie Ryan

*The Book Thief* – Markus Zusak

*To Kill a Mockingbird* – Harper Lee

*A Separate Peace* – John Knowles

*Fahrenheit 451* – Ray Bradbury

*Red Queen* – Victoria Aveyard

It is my desire for each of you to not only pass this course but to graduate from high school and have a successful life. I hope you grow as an individual and challenge yourself to reach new horizons. I am excited to work with you.

Sincerely,

Ms. Bass

National Board Certified English Teacher, M.A. in English

School Contact: [ebass@randolph.k12.nc.us](mailto:ebass@randolph.k12.nc.us) (preferred) / 336-861-6870 (THS) / 1st Block Planning

**\*Parents:** Please complete the Parent Form and questionnaire sent home with your student to confirm receipt and understanding of the syllabus and cell phone policy that follow.

**\*\*Students:** You will have a “syllabus quiz” this week as an assignment and contract to confirm your understanding.

**SCROLL FOR THE CELL PHONE POLICY ON THE NEXT PAGE!!!**

# Cell Phone Policy

The THS English Department is continuing our cell phone policy for **2020-2021**. Students will place the phone in a visible, secure location in the room in the first 5 minutes of class (or when directed by a teacher) and retrieve it in the last 5 minutes of class (or when directed by a teacher). Students should **ONLY TOUCH THEIR OWN PHONES!**

## FAQs

*What is the purpose of this policy?*

- Protects instructional time
- Protects students from disciplinary action
- Promotes focus & limits distractions

*Who will have access to my student's phone?*

The student will be responsible for placing the phone in an individually assigned location. Only the student will access the phone -- no other student and not the teacher.

*Will I be able to contact my student or have my student contact me in an emergency?*

Yes. Parents may call the school at 336-861-6870, and students may use the classroom phone.

*What happens if the phone is not placed in the assigned location?*

If a student does not place the phone in the designated area and then has the phone out in class, we will use the THS policy detailed in the Student Handbook:

## **Consequences** (from the THS Student Handbook)

FIRST OFFENSE: Verbal warning (your receipt confirmation of this policy counts as the warning)

SECOND OFFENSE: Phone call home by teacher

THIRD AND ALL FOLLOWING OFFENSES: Will be handled as Insubordination and/or Defiance of Authority. The teacher will make parent contact and refer the matter to an administrator.

**You, the parent/guardian, will sign your confirmation and understanding of this policy through the parent syllabus/cell policy/questionnaire form that you will receive through your student. If your child will NEVER be bringing a cell phone to school, please indicate that in an email to the teacher.**

The English Department appreciates your help implementing this policy. More on the efficacy of this policy can be found in the ABC News article included on the back of this handout.

# Cellphones in classrooms contribute to failing grades: Study

By DR. KEVIN RIUTZEL

Jul 27, 2018, 10:31 AM ET

Cellphones and laptops can be distracting for students in classrooms, and new research also shows that using electronic devices can even lower students' grades.

Scientists who studied the effects of divided attention in people know that when attention is divided between two tasks, fewer items regarding those tasks may be recalled later -- a concept called "retention" in psychology.

Additional research on electronic devices shows that smart phones can reduce the ability to think to a person's full potential, and additional research from Stanford University reveals that intense multitasking decreases the efficiency of completing a given task.

While previous studies demonstrated that divided attention may induce poor performance on exams, two researchers from Rutgers University sought to dive deeper.

Dr. Arnold Glass, the lead researcher for the study and a professor of psychology at Rutgers University, told ABC News that he's long been intrigued by the notion of technology-enhanced classrooms.

"I was always interested in using technology in the classroom before it existed, but when it became apparent that it was affecting the classroom, it raised the question [of] what effect this was having," he said.

In a study published in the journal *Educational Psychology*, the two researchers divided 118 upper-level college students into two groups -- each enrolled in the same course, taught the same material by the same instructor, in the same classroom at roughly the same time of day.

The difference? One group was allowed to have laptops and cell phones open for non-classroom purposes, and the other group wasn't.

The group using devices scored about a half a letter grade lower on exams -- the difference between passing or failing for some students. Of note, students who didn't use a device but were in the same classroom with those who did also scored lower. This was likely due to distraction from surrounding devices.

The researchers noted that this study shows the minimum reduction in exam performance, because this particular course used in-class questions to help students remember course material instead of just passive listening.

So it's possible that students could do even worse in other courses, depending on how the class is taught and whether they're using electronic devices for non-classroom purposes.

Is this research applicable to high school, middle school or even meetings?

"No doubt," Glass told ABC News. "Absolutely for sure."

"These findings," he added, "should alert the many dedicated students and instructors that dividing attention is having an insidious effect that is impairing their exam performance and final grade."

Given the effects electronics have on students who were in the classroom but not using the devices themselves, Glass said in a press release that teachers need to "... explain to students the damaging effect of distractions on retention -- not only for themselves, but for the whole class."

*Dr. Kevin Riutzel is a family medicine resident physician based out of Irvine, California and a resident in the ABC News Medical Unit.*