

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 11 COURSE OUTLINE

Mr. Chisnell, Room 105

E-Mail: steven.chisnell@royaloakschools.org

www.chisnell.com

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE: Upperclassmen of ELA 11 will test their abilities in writing formally and digitally, in reading classic and contemporary world literature and essays, and in thinking about strategies to talk back to the texts which work on us. Think of the course as part writing, part reading, part philosophy, as we prepare both for the SAT in the spring and a literacy which is cultural, political, and personal.

Students will be writing and revising papers, extending and refining their arguments, thinking, and organizational skills. They will be reading thematically, reviewing the impacts of texts across genre and time. The fall semester will pursue the question of how language works to persuade us; the spring semester will examine action, the various means we engage our culture and alter it.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Writing assignments will include: formal papers on literature and cultural issues including a research series; impromptu writing; some creative writing; peer and group writing, editing and grading; revisions of several essays.

Other assignments include: in-class and out-of-class conferences; online discussion boards; Twitter, FlipGrid, or similar micro-blogging; homework and in-class assignments; exams on literary material and SAT/MME skill sets; outside readings and research; workshops of rough drafts; and active class participation.

CHISNELL.COM: Our class website is a place to also keep track of exercises and requirements, but it also may sometimes offer more resources than the Canvas environment. Canvas and Chisnell.com will each indicate which site has the most/best materials for preparation.

GRADING POLICY: The semester and marking period grades are largely determined by a student's work to achieve outcomes for learning in reading, writing, and speaking. A "Successful" or "Publishable" assignment is one that earns an "A" or "B" by its final draft. Incomplete or poorly done final drafts have revision dates established so that they may reach the publishable level. This assures that all students receive opportunities to succeed, but only those who make a consistent and responsible effort will do well. How well you do for a semester grade depends on how much work reaches the "Publishable" level of quality. In other words, all students are expected to meet all the skill requirements for the course, not just 60% of them!

WHAT IS "PUBLISHABLE"? A Publishable or Successful paper is one that has been through significant revision and thought during the marking period. Rough or first drafts, drafts with several proofreading errors, drafts that fail to support their points completely, or drafts that are not organized well, are never Publishable. The word "publish" suggests that the paper has reached a level of authority. It convinces. It interests. It is effective not only in its organization, in its presentation, but also in its provocative nature; it must cause the reader to think. It must cause the reader to take an interest in its subject, never distracted by anything but the ideas themselves. For this reason, Publishable papers may go through several drafts before they reach this level of sophistication.

WHAT IS THE STANDARD FOR "ATTEMPTED" PAPERS? A student may not simply write a name and a scrap of paragraph on a page to say she has attempted the paper. An "attempt" must be sincere, marked by a complete draft that addresses the assignment. It will also have been workshoped and likely revised at least once. Students will decide which of their attempted papers they wish to improve to Publishable level.

REVISIONS: A student may rewrite a submitted essay until it reaches the "Publishable" "B" level. However, most revision should occur before the paper is submitted to me. Otherwise, students may find they have many papers to rewrite at the end of a semester--too much pressure for too little planning.

DOES IT WORK THE SAME WAY FOR EXAMS? Yes. All quizzes, exams, and other assignments have a rubric attached to them which indicates which skill/knowledge is measured. Students may retake exams, etc. until that skill is demonstrated. However, be aware that doing this often may require time spent outside of regular class periods.

LATE PAPERS: A student may request to extend the deadline of an essay/assignment. However, the students must arrange the new deadline in advance of the regular deadline. I may not accept a late paper without prior permission.

CONFERENCES: You should always schedule a time outside of class to meet with me about your revisions and other questions. I may ask for a conference to talk about your writing or work in general. If you ever have questions about the class, the work, or anything which might affect it, please come to me! I am impressed by your honest concern.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: I very much encourage family involvement in this course at every level possible. Parents should check my web site and Canvas often to keep up to date on student assignments, progress, and grades. This is the most effective way for continual communication of work. Parents are encouraged to schedule after school conferences about writing with the students so that we can discuss improvement and skills together. Also, I encourage as much parent or sibling review of works in progress as possible. A writer can never have too many readers! Finally, please email/message me to discuss progress or if there are questions about assignments and expectations.

BEHAVIOR: Very simple:

- 1) Always be prepared for class
- 2) Take notes and ask questions
- 3) Respect others
- 4) Work on classwork only; stay focused on the class!
- 5) Act with maturity

We have much to accomplish in the classroom; expect me to insist that we stay on task.

I have read and understand the structure of the ELA11 course and understand that I can find more details about it on Mr. Chisnell's website, www.chisnell.com.

(Student Signature)

(Parent Signature)