

English 11

Spring 2020

Mr. Purcell

Course Description

Welcome to English 11! In this course we will

- Closely analyze fiction and nonfiction texts, with an emphasis on how writers use language strategically
- Develop skills in evidence-based reasoning and analytical writing
- Become more adept at on-demand writing through timed in-class assignments
- Improve oral communication and visual presentation skills
- Learn how to write clearly, concisely, and maturely

Eleventh grade English is partly designed to complement what you learn in Western Civilization or AP European History. For example, when we read *Frankenstein*, we will discuss the differences between the Enlightenment and Romantic periods and how the novel explores the ideas of each. During our unit on *1984*, we will discuss what the book has to say about power and the relationship between the individual and the state, a major theme in Social Studies.

This course is also partly designed to help you prepare for the SAT (Reading, Writing and Language, and Essay sections only). Our rhetorical analysis unit will feature actual SAT Essay tests, which you will practice writing both in class and at home. Also, the majority of our grammar & writing lessons are aligned with the skills you will be asked to demonstrate on the SAT.

Texts & Reading

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
- George Orwell, *1984*
- Several shorter works including essays, short stories, and poems (distributed in class)

Novels are paid for by course fees, so students will keep them and write in them during the course. If a student loses a book, it is his or her responsibility to replace it.

Materials

REQUIRED

- a laptop or Chromebook (iPads are not recommended)
- a notebook or loose leaf paper
- pens or pencils

- at least one folder (for readings, assignments, etc.)

RECOMMENDED

- 3 × 5 notecards
- highlighter

Google Sites & Classroom

This class uses a blend of Google Sites and Google Classroom. The schedule of assignments and daily agendas will be on Google Sites, while most writing assignments will be announced and submitted through Google Classroom. Links to class notes, online readings, and other course materials will be on Sites, while assignment instructions will be available on both Sites and Classroom.

****It is your responsibility to check Classroom and the class website regularly and to be aware of deadlines.**

Late Work

If you think you will not be able to complete an assignment by the deadline, you may request an extension no later than the day before the assignment is due. I usually grant such requests, unless other students are dependent on your work (group projects, peer review workshops, etc.) or you have requested too many extensions. I will not grant an extension if you ask me the day the assignment is due.

Without an approved extension, late work will be penalized as follows:

- Homework and daily assignments: -50% if completed within 24 hours
- Long term assignments (assessments, etc.): -20% per day

Grading

Your course grade will be distributed as follows:

70% Assessments (tests & quizzes, essays & other writing, projects)
20% Practice (homework, vocab mastery, some in-class activities)
10% Final exam

What grades mean

Specific grading criteria will vary from one assignment to the next (argument essays have different conventions than narrative essays, for example, so they can't be measured the same way). There are, however, some general definitions of grades in this class.

- A grade of A means that the assignment or assessment exceeds ALL of the standards being measured. For an essay, that means it is practically flawless in all categories (ideas, organization, use of evidence, mechanics, and so on).
- A grade of B means that it exceeds some of the standards and meets the rest.
- A grade of C means that it meets all or most of the standards.
- A grade of D means that it is struggling to meet the standards.
- A grade of F means that the work is incomplete, missing, or falsified.

Phones & Devices

Phones must be put away and silenced during class. That means that it must remain in your pocket, your backpack, or in one of the phone sleeves on the wall for the entire class period. If you wish to listen to music during designated work time, you may use your laptop or chromebook with headphones.

Using phones in class is prohibited. If you are caught using your phone, here's what will happen:

1st time:	verbal warning
2nd time:	phone confiscation until the end of the day
3rd time:	lunch detention
4th time & beyond:	Friday school

JA students are expected to bring either a laptop or Chromebook to class daily. If a student is unable to bring one, he or she may check out a Chromebook from the classroom for the period (first come, first served). I may request that students put away or close their laptops depending on the lesson or activity.

Email Etiquette

Students are expected to follow some basic guidelines when emailing me:

- Open with a complete greeting (e.g., "Dear Mr. Purcell," or "Hi Mr. Purcell," or even just "Mr. Purcell,")
- Use complete sentences and proper capitalization and end punctuation in the body of the message
- End with a closing (e.g., "Thanks," or "Sincerely,") & a signature
- Ask, don't demand

If a student sends an email that does not follow one or more of these guidelines, I will not respond to it.

Homework Expectations

I will frequently set aside a portion of class time to work on reading or writing assignments, practice vocabulary online, and so forth. However, if students do not complete the work in class (and they rarely do), they are expected to continue working on it at home. Most nights and weekends, there is something (usually several things) that students can be working on.

Reading Assignments: On average it should take **approximately 30-40 minutes** to read twenty pages carefully and critically. The books are challenging, but certainly not beyond the abilities of eleventh-graders.

Participation

Though I do not formally grade participation, you are expected to be an active participant every day (to the best of your ability). This doesn't mean that you need to speak every day, though. Active participation includes being on time--having your phone put away and being in your seat ready to do the warm up when class begins--as well as paying attention, taking notes, and participating in group activities. Learning is not *passive*, meaning that it cannot happen unless you are actively involved.

Google Classroom and Calendar

Students should check the daily agenda on Google Classroom before coming to class and before returning to class after an absence. In-class activities, assignments, and links will be posted there. Also, parents and students are encouraged to use the English 11 Calendar on Google to see upcoming due dates.

Academic Integrity

If you are not doing the work, you are not learning. As you ought to know by now, plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's words or ideas as your own. Beyond the ethical and legal considerations, the worst problem with plagiarism (I think) is that the writer deliberately passes on an opportunity to learn and grow by letting someone else think for her. If plagiarism is detected, you will receive a zero for the assignment initially and I will notify your parents, but you will be required to revise the assignment for a reduced score (-20%).

We will review the proper use and attribution of sources, but if you are ever in doubt, please just ask. This policy applies to all assignments, both major and minor.

Restroom Breaks & Working in the Hall

If you need to use the restroom or get a drink of water during class, just let me know. If I am lecturing or we're in the middle of a discussion, please do not raise your hand to ask to leave; just quietly leave, do your business, and return promptly. **One student at a time, please!**

If you feel you must leave class for another reason, you must discuss the matter with me first. If students are caught wandering the halls, talking with friends, disrupting other classes or distracting other students, or doing anything other than what they were given permission to do, they will be warned the first time and receive Friday school for each subsequent offense.

If you want to read or work in the hall, just grab a Hall Pass. If you misuse this pass, though, you'll no longer be allowed to work in the hall.

The Learning Environment

To help make this space as conducive to everyone's learning as possible, we need to abide by a few simple principles:¹

- **Respect each other.** Nobody learns in a vacuum; whether we are practicing grammar, workshopping an essay, or analyzing a text, we all benefit from listening carefully and open-mindedly to the ideas of others--your classmates as well as your teacher. This classroom must be a place where each student feels safe making mistakes and growing. Here are some ways we can help make this happen:
 - ***Show gratitude for someone else's participation.*** Speaking in class is hard for a lot of people. It takes courage.
 - ***Respect yourself enough to speak up.*** Your thinking and writing improve when you share it with others.
 - ***Accept feedback gratefully.*** When someone disagrees with you, it doesn't necessarily mean you're wrong, but real learners are willing to entertain that possibility for a moment to stretch their own thinking. Also, when we are workshopping essays or other projects, listen to your audience. You don't have to do everything they suggest, but you should consider it carefully.
 - ***Understand that noise can make it hard to learn.*** For many people (myself included), it can be difficult to learn and focus when there is a lot of noise in the room (talking, music, etc.). When I ask the class to keep the volume down, it is to make sure that the acoustic environment is conducive to everyone's learning.
- **Respect the work we do.** For your own part, you should be able to take pride in every effort you make in the class (and any class, for that matter). Again, your work may not be perfect, but it should represent your greatest effort and ability at the time. When responding

¹ Unless the majority of students are struggling to follow these guidelines, I will deal with disrespect on a case-by-case basis, starting with an office-hours conversation with individual students. If problems persist I may ask parents and/or administration as needed to support the student.

to the work of others, follow the previous principle and treat their work as an extension of the person.

- **Respect the space we work in.** The way we treat the classroom reflects what we think of the work, each other, and ourselves. As a group we must strive to keep the classroom neat, clean, and organized. To that end, please
 - Avoid eating *meals* in the room during class. Snacks are fine, but when you're here, we need you mentally engaged in the task at hand, which eating tends to prevent.
 - Clean up after yourself and help clean up after others.
 - Don't abuse the furniture or walls. Only one person per chair/stool. Avoid sitting on tables.
 - Return Chromebooks and other classroom resources to their proper location when finished.

Tardy Policy

Arriving to class on time is one way to show respect for the work we do here. Chronic tardiness sends the message that you don't really care enough to make the class a priority. Whether or not that is true, it is what I tend to assume, and that impacts my respect for you and--perhaps more importantly--my willingness to grant you the benefit of the doubt in other areas such as granting extensions and eating in the classroom.

The following policy applies to consecutive or chronic tardies:

- 1st Tardy: teacher-student conference
- 2nd Tardy: conference with student and phone call to parent
- 3rd Tardy: parent & student notified, followed by Friday school
- 4th Tardy: referral to office
- 5th Tardy: parent, student and admin meeting at school

Departmental Mission Statement

The mission of the Jefferson Academy English Department is to help students reason and communicate clearly, logically, and powerfully.