

Language & Literature: Honors English 9 Class Syllabus

Teacher: Ms. Baylee French (Room D206)

E-mail: bfrench@mail.dps.k12.va.us

Course Description

Honors Nine English is a language arts course with a focus on **communication** (including speaking, listening, and media literacy), **reading** (poetry, short stories, plays, and novels), **writing**, and **research**.

Instructional Philosophy:

As a teacher, I aspire to create a learning environment where every student can feel comfortable and welcome. The most significant learning occurs in situations that are both meaningful and realistic. To create this environment, I take time to learn about all my students to suit their specific needs and interests. We will discuss and decide together what rules and procedures accurately apply to our classroom in order for the students to feel as if they are taking control of their education.

We will take part in many group discussions that allow the students to share their own opinions and ideas. This will encourage and support the students to become comfortable and thrive in their love of English. Additionally, we will read poetry, short stories, plays, and novels, along with the completion of projects that will strengthen the knowledge of the material. The students will have many opportunities to be creative with their assignments while also learning many important life skills such as note-taking, essay writing, and reflection of their work.

Major Course Goals:

The skills that you will master throughout this course include the following standards prescribed by the Virginia Department of Education:

9.DSR The student will build knowledge and comprehension skills from reading a range of challenging, content-rich texts. This includes fluently reading and gathering evidence from grade-level complex texts, reading widely on topics to gain purposeful knowledge and vocabulary, and using reading strategies when comprehension breaks down.

9.RV The student will systematically build vocabulary and word knowledge based on grade nine content and texts.

9.RL The student will use textual evidence to demonstrate comprehension and build knowledge from a variety of grade-level complex literary texts read to include narratives, literary nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

9.RI The student will use textual evidence to demonstrate comprehension and build knowledge from grade-level complex informational texts read.

9.W The student will write in various forms for diverse audiences and purposes linked to grade nine content and texts with an emphasis on expository and persuasive writing.

9.LU The student will use the conventions of Standard English when speaking and writing, differentiating between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is more appropriate.

9.C The student will develop effective oral communication and collaboration skills to build a community of learners that process, understand, and interpret content together.

9.R The student will conduct research and read a series of conceptually related texts on selected topics to build knowledge on grade-nine content, texts and areas prompted by student interest.

Major Course Projects, Topics, and Activities:

Though we will study a wide variety of texts, some of the major works we will read include

- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- *Night* by Elie Wiesel
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Other areas of study include creative writing opportunities and analytical/ persuasive writing.

Course Assessment Plan:

You should expect to have a test at the end of each unit. Units are about two to three weeks apart, so you can expect about 3 unit tests per grading period. It is important to keep all notes and class assignments organized in your binder so that you can easily prepare for tests.

There are no state exams for this course, so your final exam will be teacher-made. However, you may be exempt from your final exam if you have earned an A in the class. Additionally, this class will prepare you for the Writing/Reading SOL that has to be taken in your 10th-grade year.

Grading Scale:

Your grades in this course fall into the following categories:

- **Gold Category = 40%**
 - Tests, research project, final essays
- **Silver Category = 35%**
 - Quizzes, middle-level projects, or essays
- **Bronze Category = 25%**
 - Smaller daily assignments

Grade Scale: We use a ten-point scale, which is as follows:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 59 and below

Supplies Needed:

- A 2-inch binder
- Pens
- Pencils
- Highlighters
- Colored pencils
- 6 dividers for units
- Loose-leaf paper
- Tissues/hand sanitizers/printer paper are always appreciated, but not required!

Homework Policy:

When you have homework, it will likely be in the form of studying, independent reading, or brainstorming/researching for essays or projects. Any other homework will be what you didn't finish in class earlier that day. When you have reading homework, you should **ALWAYS** expect to have a reading quiz (silver level) the next day in class. If you are absent, you must check with me to find out what your homework is. Other missed homework assignments may be made up with a 10-point per day penalty up to three days late.

Make-up Work Policy:

It is my goal for each of my students to grow and learn, so of course, missed work may be made up. However, make-up assignments must be completed and turned in within three days. Late work will not be accepted after the three-day mark. If you are absent, you should schedule a time to meet with me. It is usually not possible to make up missed lectures, notes, or guided work during a regular class period, so you should expect to spend time with me before or after school if you have been absent.

Extra Help:

I am the assistant swim coach during the months of November-February, so I have very limited availability due to having practice 4 days out of the week. Please schedule times to meet with me in advance so that I can be available for you. I can always work around my schedule if needed.

Contact Information:

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns outside of class. My email address is bfrench@mail.dps.k12.va.us. Parents may reach out through email or by calling the school during my planning period (2:00- 3:25 pm).

Class Rules and Expectations

1. **Bring your materials to class with you every day.** You will need pencils, paper, and your binder every single day.
2. **Be courteous and respectful of the other people in this room.** This means I expect you to be kind to all of the people in this room and to use good manners. Be respectful of other students' opinions and ideas during class discussions. Do not create disruptions that will keep other students from learning. Additionally, this includes the use of language. You should never use any negative language, such as curse words and slurs. We want this to be a welcoming and comfortable environment for everyone. The first offense will be a private discussion, the second offense will be a call home, and the third offense will be a write-up.
3. **Be respectful of school property.** Do not damage school property! Do not write on desks, cabinets, walls, books, or any other surface that does not belong to you. **Keep your desk area clean, and do not leave anything behind on the desk!**
4. **Place pocketbooks and book bags on the floor under your desk and out of the way of others.** This is important, especially when taking any kind of assessments.
5. **No eating MEALS in the classroom.** Snacks and drinks are acceptable, but we can't have huge bags of chips and meals. Those are only allowed in the cafeteria during breakfast and lunch. Please clean up after yourself. We are in a new building, and we don't want to risk bringing friends such as ants, mice, etc. Also, our custodial staff is awesome, and we don't want to make their job harder than it already is.

6. ***Try your best at all times!*** I do not expect you to know everything or to be able to “get it” on the first try. I do expect you to stay focused and try your best. Work hard when you are in class.
 7. **Adhere to the district policy regarding cell phones and any other personal electronic devices, such as headphones, AirPods, iPads, gaming devices, etc.** These WILL be taken, and you will receive a write-up. It is no longer a district policy but a state law that we have to abide by that requests for personal devices to be left out of the classroom.
 8. **Ask questions** when you do not understand something, and let me know if we are moving too fast.
 9. Each student is expected to come to class **ON TIME**, quietly, with all necessary materials, and be seated and working on the bell work when the bell rings. If you are not seated when the bell rings, you will be counted tardy. You can only receive 5 tardies before you are sent to administration to discuss the issue. Once you are tardy 7 times, you will be written up.
 10. Assignments are to be turned in on time.
 1. 1 day late: Score minus 10 pts
 2. 2 days late: Score minus 20 pts
 3. 3 days late: Score minus 30 pts
 4. Anything more than 3 days late: Score minus 30 pts.
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Please have the student and parent/guardian sign to confirm that they have read and understand the syllabus. Cut out this part below the dotted line and return it to me no later than Friday, January 9, 2026, to receive credit in PowerSchool. It will be our first Bronze grade!

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____