

Penn-Trafford High School
English 11 (2026-2027)
Mrs. Sekera/Room 143
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Welcome to English 11! I look forward to working with you this year! 😊 The following are guidelines and information that follow and personalize to our class all guidelines and expectations stated in the [PTHS Student Handbook](#).

Course Overview: This course focuses on the study of American literature from the beginning of our country to today. Studying American literature through a literary lens helps students better understand the story of our country—how people have struggled, changed, and shaped the United States throughout different time periods. Through novels, plays, myths, short stories, poems, speeches, and other fiction and nonfiction texts, students will explore ideas such as freedom, equality, and the American Dream and how they have been challenged and redefined over time. Students will encounter diverse voices and perspectives that encourage them to think more deeply about themselves, their world, and the world around them. These texts and related assignments will also strengthen students' skills in writing, analysis, critical thinking, and communication, preparing them for life after Penn-Trafford High School.

Materials Needed

Bring to class daily:

- Charged iPad (with charger)
- 3-ring binder (1 1/2") with pockets
- Pencil/Pen
- Current text and/or materials (if applicable)
- Earbuds or headphones that pair with your iPad (occasionally)

Major Units/Areas of Study (Specific works may change.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Plays (<i>The Crucible</i>) | - Major literary movements in American literature |
| - Novels (<i>The Great Gatsby</i> and other) | (writing styles, major themes, authors, and works) |
| - Short stories (Edgar Allan Poe and other) | - Grammar - Literary terms |
| - Poems | - Vocabulary |
| - Compare-and-contrast essay | - SAT preparation |

Learning Activities

- Individual and group activities
- Reading (novels, short stories, poems, book excerpts, articles, paired texts)
- Writing
- Informal discussion
- Projects/Presentations
- Role play/Enactment
- Large and small group instruction and discussion
- Comparison/Contrast of various formats (written text, songs, movies)

Procedures for Evaluation

- Teacher-constructed, student-constructed, and standardized tests and quizzes (summative assessment) and ongoing formative assessments
- Teacher evaluation of written and other types of assignments
- Teacher observation and questioning
- Individual and group projects and presentations
- Homework
- Participation

Determination of Grade

Cumulative points convert to a percent, then the Penn-Trafford School District grading scale is followed to determine a grade: 90-100% = A/80-90% = B/70-80% = C/60-70% = D/59% and lower = F.

Classroom Expectations:

Please be:

- **prompt.** Three tardies will result in a teacher detention.
- **prepared.** Complete your assignments on time and well. The assignment is late if it is not complete when I am ready to collect, view, or discuss it. **I will accept most assignments by the next class period for half credit, but will not accept them for credit after that time.** You will submit your assignments via both Google Classroom and in writing.
- **involved.** You are required to fully participate in class, including speaking in front of the class, working with a partner or in cooperative groups, answering and asking questions, and participating in discussions, to name a few activities. **Cell phones (including earbuds, unless you are using them with permission for an iPad activity) are not to be used during class; you will deposit them in the cell phone caddy prior to the beginning of class and will not retrieve them until the end of class.** See page 28 of the [PTHS Student Handbook](#) for this information.
- **positive.** Work your hardest and your best. Please see me for any assistance you need. I am here to help you and work with you to enable you to succeed.
- **respectful.** Please show respect for yourself, your peers, teachers and staff, and school property with your words and actions.
- **responsible.** How well you perform in our class is completely up to you. Follow directions, listen well, and work hard to the best of your ability. If you need my assistance outside of class time, please e-mail me.
- **honest.** Please complete all work honestly with academic integrity. If you don't create it, it is not yours to claim as your own. Another person's ideas in your writing must be cited; if you don't cite them, you are stealing another person's intellectual property. **All plagiarized work results in a zero for that assignment per page 33 of the [PTHS Student Handbook](#).**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) use: I may sometimes permit you to use some version of AI on our assignments. When this is the case, you must indicate that you have, in fact, used AI in your work. However, when I forbid its use, you **MUST** adhere to those guidelines. If I discover or highly suspect that you used unauthorized AI on an assignment, it will be considered cheating/plagiarism, and the same consequences listed above will be implemented. **If you utilize artificial intelligence (AI) in a dishonest manner (meaning, one in which I do not allow and/or one that is simply dishonest) that is classified as cheating and will also be handled as pages 28 and 30-33 of the [PTHS Student Handbook](#) dictate: You will receive a zero on the assignment with NO chance to make up the assignment. I WILL NOT engage in a debate with you to "prove" to you why my experienced professional judgment and research indicate that you dishonestly used AI; the burden of proof that you have NOT used unauthorized AI is on YOU.**

Absences/Make-up Work

You are responsible for any work you miss when you are absent. It is **your** responsibility to make up missed work; any work not completed will be entered as a "0" in PowerSchool until it is completed within the allotted time (usually one day for each excused absence day). Check Google Classroom for current assignments. When you return, check our class folder in the hanging file box, then see me with any questions. Review my lesson plans, accessible under my name on the Penn-Trafford High School website and on our Google Classroom page, to see what you missed, and access any content available on our Google Classroom page. **Please note that ALL coursework completed during an unexcused absence cannot be made up.** Use [this form](#) for longer absence requests and follow school attendance guidelines ([PTHS Student Handbook](#) pages 41-47).

The guidelines and procedures outlined above may change as circumstances necessitate. I will inform you of any changes. I look forward to having a great year with you! 😊

“He smiled understandingly—much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced—or seemed to face—the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. It understood you just as far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey.”
— F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

English 11 Course Syllabus

Mrs. Sekera

Neatly unstaple and submit this completed signature page to me by Tuesday, September 1. Keep the previously stated guidelines in your binder for the rest of the school year.

I have reviewed and understand the rules, procedures, and consequences listed above and know that I am responsible in English 11 class for following these rules and procedures as well as all information outlined in the [PTHS Student Handbook](#).

Student name (printed): _____

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

I have reviewed and understand the rules, procedures, and consequences listed above and know that my child is responsible in English 11 class for following these rules and procedures as well as all information outlined in the [PTHS Student Handbook](#).

Parent/Guardian name (printed): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____