English 2014-2015 Guidelines and Syllabus

Mrs. Elizabeth Heck — Lakeside High School

"If you have built your castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be.
Now put the foundations under them." (Henry David Thoreau)

Welcome to English in Room 109! Now is the time for a fresh start, leaving behind any mistakes or mishaps from last semester. It is time to step up to excitement, enrichment, and the many challenges of the coming term. I am delighted to be a part of your lives this year as we work toward personal victories in and outside the classroom. If you have ANY concerns after reading the syllabus, please leave comments on the attached form.

Parental Contact I believe it is the responsibility of the student, parent, and teacher to monitor the progress of the student. Parents who know that a student's academics need monitoring or if a student needs special accommodations should notify me immediately. Parents should frequently ask the student of his or her progress, ask to see graded work, and monitor the blog (updated daily) and report cards (distributed every four weeks). You may find report card dates at the Lakeside website, www.edline.net/pages/Lakeside_HS. **Parents, please closely monitor the progress of your child so that you are not shocked at the end of the semester to learn that he or she is failing a course when it is too late to remedy.**

Blogspot I have an online blog that will maintain due dates and assignments for parents, students, and the community to access. This interface allows students and parents to see all pending assignments, make-up work, view unit calendars, access notes and review for quizzes and tests. It is ALWAYS up to date and is the BEST place to easily keep track of your student's required work for my class. The web address is http://egheck.blogspot.com

Contact Information Parents should feel free to contact me either through leaving a message with the front office, 863-0027, or via email. **The most reliable way to reach me is through email, which I check several times a day.** Through email, I can answer questions, forward progress reports, and schedule meetings. My email address is: **elizabeth.heck@ccboe.net.** Please also often check my blog, http://egheck.blogspot.com, as I will do my best to post all calendars and upcoming projects. I am never too busy to discuss your comments, concerns, and the progress of my students.

Parents should not visit the classroom without an appointment as teachers can not stop teaching a class to discuss individual matters discretely. Additionally, planning periods are often utilized for preparation, meetings, appointments, and covering for other teachers, so parents should make appointments in advance and should not simply "show up" at school without prior notification of the teacher. When arriving for scheduled conferences, please be sure to check in at the front office and receive a visitor's pass**.**

I look forward to working with each of you this semester. I hope that both students and parents feel free to express any concerns about what they have read or the class in general. After reviewing this handout and discussing it with your child, **please sign and return the attached acknowledgement form.** Please ensure that your child returns this form on the due date as **it will count as his or her first homework grade**. I share with you the goal of promoting the best possible educational experience for

each student. I know that all of this information may be overwhelming, but I assure you that with hard work and support, success is inevitable!

With high expectations for your child's success,

Elizabeth G. Heck
Secondary English Teacher

Supplies Coming to class unprepared is not an option. Students will need the following items for class:

- **A 3-ring binder with dividers:** This may be shared with another subject if you can keep an organized and clean notebook.
- **Lined paper**: college-ruled preferable
- **Pen or pencil**: blue or black ink only for formal assignments. I will not accept work written in RED ink.
- **Index cards**: for occasional research work.
- **Occasional internet access:** Students will be expected to access the internet outside the classroom for research and paper writing. Please check the Lakeside High Library and your public local library FIRST.
- **Art utensils of choice:** These can be markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc. Choose whichever you prefer. I will have bins in the classroom if you wish to donate your supplies to the class box. Otherwise, I will let you know when you need to bring your personal art supplies to class.
- **Willingness to learn and experience new ideas, cultures, and life-views beyond one's own.**

Grading Criteria While grades are important, remember that learning is more important. Nonetheless, here is the grading breakdown for my classroom:

Course Component	Percentage of Grade
Summative Assessments (Tests, Essays, Projects)	35%
Independent Reading Assignments and Vocabulary	30%
Formative Assessments (Quizzes, Class work, Literature Circles)	25%
Class Dojo Scores and Participation	10%

Parents need to keep up with student achievement EARLY in the year to ensure their student's success in this course instead of waiting until the end of the term. The end of the course affords no benefit to a failing student. Completing assignments ON TIME and correcting errors EARLY is the BEST WAY to earn a passing (and high!) grade.

In addition, English 1 (9th grade) and English 3 (11th grade) will have an End of Course Exam (EOC) as mandated by the state of Georgia. Benchmark tests will be taken three times during the year to assess growth and learning needs. These grades will be posted to Infinite Campus, where you can also access all other student grades. The EOC will count as your student's final spring exam, 20% of their spring average, and CANNOT be exempted. A midterm exam, 20% of the fall average, can be exempted and will be a teacher-generated assignment.

Throughout the term, **I rarely, if ever, give opportunities for extra credit**. Work is not extra when students have NOT completed the ORIGINAL required assignments to begin with; it is not fair to those students who worked diligently to earn a passing grade. **The BEST WAY to earn a high grade is to complete all assignments to the best of your ability when they are assigned.** Students should not compromise the integrity of the class by asking for extra credit assignments at the end of a grading period or the school year to raise failing grades.

Tutoring Students should feel free to personally see me with concerns, questions, and requests for help at any time. I am more than happy to help you outside of class or to guide you to people and or resources that can help you. I commit to stay after school each Tuesday and Thursday when students can come any time, unannounced. Wednesdays I will be available on the 100 Odd Hall in the morning from 7:15-7:30 AM. With at least a day's notice, I am available by appointment as well.

Attendance and Tardy Policy The Lakeside attendance policy states that justified and validated absences shall not penalize a student's grades as long as make-up work is completed satisfactorily and a final average of 70+ has been earned in the course. Tardiness to class will not be tolerated. For every five minutes late, tardy students will lose a point on their ClassDojo, which contributes to 10% of their final grade. I will be on time and prepared for class and expect the same of my students.

Make-up work In my classroom, **students must make up work within ONE WEEK of the student's return to school. TESTS AND QUIZZES must be made up on the TUESDAY after the student's return to school.** Upon returning to school, it is the **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY** to check for work and tests missed during his or her absence. Students can check my blog, http://egheck.blogspot.com, to see what occurred during the missing class. I have extra copies of work found in the "Extras and Makeup Work" bin in the entry of the classroom. Students may use this file to take FULL RESPONSIBILITY for their missing work. If they have questions or need help accessing this work, **students must see me BEFORE or AFTER class and NOT during regular class time.** A zero will be given for work not made up. If a student is unable to meet the above deadline, the parent should contact the teacher and/or get homework from the blog.

Make-up days for worked missed will be on **Tuesdays and Thursdays after school in room 109 after school and by appointment. It is the student's responsibility** to get any make-up work and schedule make-up tests. Students must schedule make-up assignments AT LEAST a day in advance. Although I will remind students of missed work, I will not track down students. On those days in which students need to stay after school, parents should help students with transportation needs.

Late Work "Early is on time; on time is late, late is unacceptable." Even still, **I will grade late work every other Friday** (the week of a vocabulary quiz). **You will only be able to earn 50% of the full credit on any and ALL late assignments.** Each make-up work cycle will last two weeks. For example, if you miss a due date on August 13, 2014, you have until Friday, August 22, 2014 to turn this in. If you do not turn something in on the Thursday preceding the Friday make-up day, it MUST be in the following day. Students who are absent on the day an assignment is due will be expected to turn in the assignment on the day her or she returns. Students may always email work to me if a printer stops working, for security, etc.

Conduct I will not tolerate any behavior that is disrespectful or disrupts the learning of others in the classroom. Because I only have each day for fifty minutes, we simply do not have time in class to use on discipline. I expect students to act maturely and honorably. Students will be informed of what is and is not appropriate. Students will not be allowed to sleep, write notes, or come unprepared for class – this is a waste of the class's time. I will especially not tolerate cell phones, tablets, or music players out in class for any reason not instructed. These devices will be confiscated and the parent will have to come to school to retrieve them, per Lakeside's policy. In cases of emergencies or illness, I will always allow a student to go to the office to call home.

Academic Honesty
If a student borrows someone else's words or ideas, he or she **must** give proper credit. That means online sources, television sources, radio, moms, dads, sisters, books—any ideas or words not the students' own. Presenting the words or ideas of others without proper acknowledgement is plagiarism. Copying passages verbatim, copying and changing a word here and there, and inventing sources and quotations are some of the most common forms of academic dishonesty and plagiarism. In the Internet age, plagiarism is a snap; however, so is detecting it. I am adept at using the Internet and can uncover most plagiarized essays using a simple Internet search. Any case of plagiarism or cheating (to include copying someone else's' homework, test or quiz answers, or using cliff notes) will be dealt with severity: a zero on the assignment, a reexamination of all previous work for signs of plagiarism (with grade revocation if more plagiarism is uncovered) and a phone call home. Do your best work and do your own work.

Novels, Videos, and Other Content In an effort to supplement the literature, I have planned for the viewing of several pertinent bits of film that coincide with our readings throughout the semester. As the term progresses, I will list these films with hyperlinks to more information on the blog at egheck.blogspot.com. This list may be added to as students' interests and needs arise through the year. **By signing the attached form, your child will be allowed to view these and any teacher-added films**. If at any time you do not wish your child to watch any of the videos as they appear on the blog, please email me and I will make alternate arrangements for your child on that day. I find that students enjoy these films as they make literature we have read relevant, better understood, and appreciated.

Some of the literature may contain mature themes such as sexuality, violence, religion, and objectionable language that may contradict your own values and which at times, you may find offensive. We are not condoning the actions or language found in the pages. These actions are the foundation for which you will be allowed to express your own beliefs and, most importantly, allow you to be exposed to actions and ideas that are part of wider society, one of the main objectives of education. Students will be expected to be mature in their reading, and parents and students are encouraged to become familiar with these novels early in the year so that any concerns can be addressed accordingly. The class will always discuss such topics at the onset of each piece of literature. The literature has been chosen very carefully; they have been read by various school administration, the teacher, and national curriculum instructors.

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PLEASE RETURN: FIRST HOMEWORK

Student: _____Class Period_____

I have read the attached Course Guidelines and Syllabus. I am aware of the established make-up and absence policies, class guidelines, and grading criteria. I understand that I am free to ask questions or make comments in regard to what I have read. By signing this form, I acknowledge receipt of the above mentioned items, give permission for my child to view the aforementioned films, and allow photographs/video of my child to be posted on the class blog.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parents, please fill out the following: I am a parent or guardian and can best be reached at:

Home Phone: _____

Work/Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

I prefer to be reached at or by:
Home
Work/Cell
Email

Between _____ AM/PM
And
_____ AM/PM

Please list additional information which you feel is pertinent, questions, concerns, or comments below.

Homework? Miss a day?
When is it due?
Want more resources?
Parents want to know what we are doing?
Check the blog.
http://egheck.blogspot.com