

# CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE SYLLABUS

## PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

### **Course Description:**

This course is the study of contemporary literature and how literature has developed over the years, as well as its role in society and vice versa. We will read and analyze contemporary novels, short stories, and more to better understand the role society and the world has played on literature and the arts. Many different stories and pieces of literature will be examined, including those of possibly sensitive material as we discuss the implications of society. The course will also feature heavy writing assignments as students dissect and analyze the stories they read and utilize previously crafted research skills to draw theories and conclusions about the world. This is a reading-heavy course.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

### **Books:**

Textbooks and novels will be provided to students when they are needed.

### **Supplies:**

- Notebook or paper
- Writing utensils (pencils, pens, etc.)
- School-issued Chromebook
- A folder or binder
- (recommended) Sticky notes or page tabs

## COMMUNICATION

### **Contacting Mrs. Steele**

[steelet@meridianhawks.net](mailto:steelet@meridianhawks.net)

- Communication is very important to me. My preferred method of communication is via email.
- If preferred, phone calls can be scheduled after school from 2:35 pm - 3:30 pm. Other times can be discussed, if necessary.
- Please allow two business days (Monday-Friday, 7am-3pm) for a reply. I will usually get back to you sooner than that. Replies cannot be guaranteed after 3:00 pm on weekdays or at any time on weekends. Thank you for understanding.

### **Google Classroom**

- All students are **required** to be added to the Google Classroom page for their course. Students are expected to check Google Classroom regularly, have notifications set to **on**, and to not remove themselves from the class.
- Google Classroom will be used to distribute assignments, announcements, etc.
- Parents are encouraged to join to receive updates. Please contact Mrs. Steele for any assistance, if needed.

## RULES & STUFF

### **General Rules**

## TEACHER INFO

Mrs. TillieAnn Steele  
Room D125  
[steelet@meridianhawks.net](mailto:steelet@meridianhawks.net)  
217-764-5233 ext. 132

## HELPFUL LINKS

**Mrs. Steele's  
Classroom Website:**



**TeacherEase:**



**Email Mrs. Steele:**



- Follow all written and oral instructions from the school district and Mrs. Steele
- Respect others, school property, and yourself
- Be kind
- Come to class on time and prepared
- All rules and policies set forth in your Student Handbook

### **Policies and Procedures**

In-depth explanations on my classroom policies and procedures (including tardies, late work, call phone policy, and more) can be found on my classroom website ([sites.google.com/meridianhawks.net/steele](https://sites.google.com/meridianhawks.net/steele)) on the “Classroom Management” page in the form of a Google Presentation/PowerPoint. Also available by scanning the QR code labeled “Mrs. Steele’s Rules & Policies.”

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones have continued to prove to be a distraction for students in the classroom. This year, I am implementing a “Cell Phone Parking” policy. Details about this are located in the “Classroom Management” presentation (scan the Rules & Policies QR code or visit my classroom webpage). There is a question **for parents/guardians** about this on the contract.

### **year overview**

#### **What we are covering**

Our schedule is constantly changing, shifting, and evolving. The following are units that I *plan* for us to cover this school year in this class, in no particular order:

- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- Style, Tone, and Voice with various essays
- Power & Propaganda with various dystopian novels
- A variety of contemporary short stories by various authors
- *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer* by Fredrick Backman
- *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon
- Storytelling off the page with various media forms
- And more...

### **Content Disclaimer**

The purpose of this class is to analyze current society and humanity through contemporary literature. Many of these novels are written and geared towards teens. These novels contain content in them that reflects the modern world. We are not focusing on the actions and words of the novels, but the meaning and message. The point of this class is to dig deeper into these texts and how they reflect society, so there are no alternative texts or assignments available. Students should be aware of possibly sensitive topics (loss, love, abuse, intimacy, friendship, authority, etc.) that will be involved in the reading and discussions of this course.

### **How to Stay Up-to-Date**

As our schedule will sometimes shift, please do not assume our class Planbook link is entirely accurate multiple weeks into the future. I recommend bookmarking my Planbook link to your browser to easily access it.

### **MHS Student Handbook:**



**Mrs. Steele’s  
Rules & Policies:**



**Mrs. Steele’s  
Planbook Link:**



# Syllabus Contract

## STUDENT AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read this class syllabus. I have asked questions on anything I didn't understand and I now understand what this class entails and what is expected of me. I understand that failure to meet these expectations will have a direct impact on my grade.

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

I, parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's printed name), have read this class syllabus. I have asked my student any questions I have and reached out to Mrs. Steele with any other questions or concerns. I now understand what this class entails and what is expected of my student. I understand that failure to meet these expectations will have a direct impact on my student's grade. By signing this agreement, I am also indicating that I give automatic permission for my student to watch videos, clips, and movies in the classroom rated up to PG-13 without prior notification. I understand that separate permission forms will be sent home for anything rated above PG-13.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## PARENT/GUARDIAN CELL PHONE AGREEMENT

If you feel that your student cannot handle the option of having their phone at all during the class period and/or that their phone will become an issue, you can opt in to have your student automatically on the "must park their phone at the beginning of class" list. Please contact me with any questions. If you would like to do this, please check the box and sign on the line.

\_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT INFORMATION

Please use this form to indicate how you prefer to be contacted and when.

### Check your preferred contact method(s):

- Email
- Phone call
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Day/Time that is best for contacting you (circle your choice or write it in):

**Day:** Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri.

**Time:** Morning Afternoon Evening

Mrs. Steele  
Contemporary Literature Syllabus

# PLAGIARISM CONTRACT

**This plagiarism contract applies to all current and future writing assignments.**

## **Let's Define Plagiarism**

The dictionary defines plagiarism as the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. This basically means that you are submitting another person's words, ideas, images, or data as your own without giving the original author credit. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Using phrases, quotes, or ideas that are not your own without giving credit to the original source/author.
- Paraphrasing the work of the others even though you may have changed the wording.
- Using facts or data not considered to be common knowledge.
- Cutting and pasting phrases or sentences from a website without giving credit to the original source.
- Using AI technology, or other technologies, to write your content for you.

## **Consequence for Plagiarizing**

Plagiarism is considered cheating and will not be tolerated. If a student makes the choice to plagiarize, his or her parent/guardian will be contacted and the student will receive a zero on the assignment. The student may elect to resubmit the assignment in a timely manner with a deducted maximum grade, should the option be available for that particular assignment.

## **Utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Please note the following regarding AI in the classroom and how it will be handled.

- The student handbook states, "AI is not suitable for school work that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers or complete other school work without permission of a teacher administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for the aforementioned purposes will be subject to the district's Academic Integrity policy where plagiarism and/or cheating are concerned."
- Students are expected **not** to utilize AI **at all** unless given instructions to do so for the assignment.
- When work is submitted and suspected of being written by AI, the teacher will run it through an AI detection software. Work that is flagged as AI will receive the same penalty as plagiarized work.

## **Acknowledgement**

I have read the above information. I understand that if I plagiarize, I will receive a disciplinary consequence. I will receive a zero on the assignment and can elect to redo the assignment in a timely manner with a deducted maximum grade, should the option be available for that assignment. The specific requirements/details of redoing the assignment will depend upon the assignment and Mrs. Steele's discretion. I understand that if I have any questions regarding plagiarism, it is my responsibility to ask my teacher for guidance.

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_