

## **Writing Fundamentals – Paul R. Koch**

### **Overview**

Welcome to our classroom! I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with you this year, and I am excited to begin right away. I appreciate you taking the time to read this course overview and familiarize yourself with the expectations of the class.

This course will function as a safe place for you to explore Independent Reading and writing in a variety of genre. We will spend most class periods using a writing workshop model and you will choose pieces that are your best to complete a writing portfolio for the year. We will also practice test-taking genre and discuss the elements of the SOL and SAT that require a writing component. This course is based upon the [Curriculum Guide](#) for Loudoun County Public Schools. The LCPS curriculum is based upon the [Standards of Learning](#) from the Virginia Department of Education.

This one-semester course is designed for students who want extra help beyond the regular English classroom in developing their writing skills to become comfortable with the process of writing sentences, paragraphs, and essays. It provides a skills-based writing foundation including instruction in grammar, mechanics, and punctuation as well as strategies for the development of ideas for writing. The course enables students to write across the curriculum. A positive, congenial classroom atmosphere is established so that students feel safe to explore and improve their literacy skills. The emphasis of the course is on developing students' writing skills and promoting students' growth toward their individual writing goals. Grading is based on individual student growth toward literacy goals and the effort each student makes to achieve his or her goals

### **Learning and Assessment**

We collaborate to determine your grade for this course. Through regular formative and summative evaluation, and frequent conferencing, we will measure your understanding of the material, along with your performance trends in class. Each assignment will carry a point value, and you can keep track of your performance on Phoenix or by conferencing with me. All assignments begin with a rubric; your score will be determined using the same rubric. Letter grades on report cards will reflect the LCPS grading scale.

You will have many types of assignments for this class, and they will come in a variety of formats including:

- [Process Writing Project](#) – this is the most used method of evaluation in our class

For this project, students must choose one of six genres, ensuring that they cover each genre at least once over the course of each semester. We believe that the most important part of this project is the opportunity for continual revision of work; students may earn a grade on a paper, but they are able to revise the paper as many times as is necessary to ensure that it meets the standards set.

Papers submitted to the teacher with a minimum of two drafts will receive one of two responses:

- An “A” indicates that the paper is accepted, and is of generally publishable quality, and results in a score of 100% (depending on the point value of the assignment).
- An “R” indicates that a paper needs revision. The student should use writer’s workshop time in class, as well as their own time, to revise the paper. An “R” will result in a score of 75%. Students may resubmit as many times during that quarter as needed to receive an “A” or accepted.
- If a student does not submit a paper, the student will receive a 0, and late work policies may apply.

The grade is completely within the student's control; using the rubric and responding to teacher feedback, the student should engage in meaningful revision and resubmit the paper (along with all previous drafts) for assessment. The procedure can be repeated. Students who demonstrate a commitment to the revision process through meaningful thought and revision will be successful with this process.

Ultimately, this project is designed to emphasize the importance of revision and to give students the opportunity to meaningfully engage in the writing process. This will be very beneficial as students prepare for 10th grade, where more independent revision will be necessary prior to individual submission of papers.

- Participation (virtual and physical)
- Reading/Writing Conferences

### **Communication**

I will utilize the Loudoun County Public School webpage to post contact information and a link to my Vision webpage. My Vision site contains vital syllabus and course information as well as an updated calendar. Parents may expect that I will make calls home to recognize positive behaviors as well as offer corrective feedback and help. Parents and students are encouraged to contact me if there are academic or behavioral concerns regarding their student.

### **Grading**

Students and parents may access Phoenix to monitor student progress in my class. In Phoenix you will see assignments recorded as Formative assessments and Summative assessments.

- Formative assessments measure student growth and summative assessments measure the mastery of material. Formative assessments may include: homework, response logs, exit tickets, warm up activities, etc.
- Summative assessments count toward a students' grade and may include: essays, projects, tests, demonstrations, performances, etc. Students at Rock Ridge High School are graded according to their mastery of material using summative assessments.

### **Late Work**

- Late work will be accepted one week after the due date, and it will be 10% off the grade earned.
- Any work submitted after the week deadline will be 50% off, and each quarter will have a set deadline/late work will not be accepted.
- If there are extenuating circumstances, please speak to the teacher.

### **Summative Assessment Re-take Policy [non-weighted classes only]**

- I will utilize formative assessments to measure student readiness and mastery prior to a summative assessment. Retakes are intended to allow my students a chance to demonstrate mastery on unit summative assessments.
- A student must have completed all of the homework and formative assessments relating to the unit in order to be eligible for a retake.

- Students eligible for a retake will arrange a time to meet with their teacher and agree upon the necessary re-teaching methods, components and the timeframe.
- The retake will be a single attempt.
- Retake scores will replace the original score.
- Retakes will not be offered for Semester Assessments and County-Wide Assessments.
- Students eligible for a retake will arrange a time to meet with their teacher and agree upon the necessary re-teaching methods, components and the timeframe.

## **Homework**

Homework is a necessary component to instruction and comprehension. I believe that homework must be an extension of learning which utilizes critical thinking components. It is my expectation that students will complete homework consistently. If students need reinforcement in completing homework, they may be assigned a homework completion class, Friday or Saturday School.

## **Materials**

Writer's Notebook - **You will need a writer's notebook for this class.**

Writing Supplies

An active email address

## **Classroom Procedures**

A daily calendar and agenda is always available on VISION. Check it everyday and come prepared.

I encourage an active classroom, and there are a few guidelines that must be in place so that class can be as exciting and productive as possible.

1. Be respectful. This is an all-inclusive rule.
2. No heads on desks. I can't stand it.
3. Come to class, and get here on time. The absence and tardy policy in this class reflect the policy in the student handbook.

## **Other Information**

Once again I welcome you to our Writing Fundamentals class, and I hope this course will be a wonderful experience for you. If you come to class with a positive attitude and an open mind we will have a fantastic year. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact me via email [pkoch@lcps.org](mailto:pkoch@lcps.org) or by telephone at (703) 608-2556. Students who wish to receive help after school may schedule appointments with me in advance.

For other information, see the [Hack This Class](#) tab on the classblog.

Thank You,

Paul R. Koch

**Please sign below indicating that you have read this material.**

**Student**

Last Name, First Name

Signature

Date

**Parent**

Last Name, First Name

Signature

Date