

We the People of American Literature Honors Room C017

Mrs. Rejniak

Fall 2025

Emily_Rejniak@wrsd.net

The Wachusett Regional High School Educational Guide describes We the People of American Literature as “a study of literature written by a myriad of voices not typically included in the American literature canon, this course will examine ways in which American writers wrestle with the idea of culture, protest, and inclusion as the country continues to define itself in light of the American creed. Students will write at least one literary analysis.” This course addresses some very controversial topics about gender, race, and equality that will in turn create some provocative conversations. Due to this, it is required that students approach every unit with an open mind and have respect for everyone’s opinions by not participating in heated and hateful talk. While conversations may become provocative, they will not become heated, hurtful or in any way be made as an attack. **All students should feel safe, confident, open minded and eager to learn in this class.**

Required Readings and Units (subject to change- this is a preliminary list)

- **Unit One: Constructing Self-** Authors include but are not limited to- NY Times, Kingston, Platt, Gorman, Shakur, Alexi, Brooks, Fitzpatrick.
- **Unit Two: Understanding the Need for Diversity-** Authors/Sources include but are not limited to- NY Times, PBS, NEA, TED Talk, International Library Congress, Adichie, NPR.
- **Unit Three:** Feminism *The Feminist Mystique* Betty Friedan, *Clothes From Arranged Marriage* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, “The Flowers” by Alice Walker, “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” by Joyce Carol Oats, “Helen of Troy Does Countertop Dancing” by Margaret Atwood, “The Applicant” by Sylvia Platt, “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou, “A Litany For Survival” by Audre Lorde, “Looking Back in my Eighty-First Years” by Maxine Kumin, and “Living in Sin” by Adrienne Rich.
- **Unit Four:** The Pursuit of Justice/Ernest Gaines *A Lesson Before Dying* or Tommy Orange *There There*
- **Unit Five:** Founding Documents- Authors include but are not limited to Jefferson, Hannah-Jones, Marshall, Rockwell, Lincoln.
- Semester based research project class requirement

Goals and Responsibilities

1. Be respectful of your peers, teachers, and classroom materials. Also, be responsible for your own actions. Plain and simple-following these rules as a

WRHS CORE VALUES: Citizenship and Responsibility; Collaboration; Communication; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation

guide will keep you focused and out of trouble. Remember that if you give respect, you will receive respect in return.

2. Be on time for class. Tardiness will not be tolerated and will result in a teacher detention (students will be given at least 24 hours notice before having to serve a teacher detention). Arriving more than a minute late will result in the student being written up and having to handle the issue with a school administrator.
3. Come to class prepared with a chromebook, writing utensil and the appropriate open windows for the class lesson. Almost all assignments and resources used remotely can be printed, but this is not a requirement.
4. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the corresponding assignment. Plagiarism may also result in school disciplinary action.

WRHS VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY *All students' academic work must reflect their own honest efforts. Cheating and plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to copying homework, papers, lab reports, or quiz or test answers; acquiring or disseminating quizzes or tests before they are administered; or using information from the Internet or other outside sources without proper attribution. Any student known to have cheated will be subjected to penalties, up to receiving "0" for the work. Possible penalties will be made known to each class by the teacher and will be included in the course syllabus. Students who collaborate with others in cheating by allowing their papers to be copied or by other means will be subjected to penalties commensurate with their involvement, which may include the student receiving "0" for the work or suffering significant grade reduction. In all cases, the principal or the class administrator along with the department head and teacher will be informed about both the incident and the penalty imposed, and the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified. The administration reserves the right to impose other penalties up to and including removal from the course, removal from honor societies, and loss of eligibility for scholarships with "honor" as criteria.*

5. All rules in the WRHS Student Handbook apply in the classroom. The school discipline policy can be found within the handbook.

Grading and Assignments

Students' grades will be calculated on a total points basis. Each assignment will be granted a different point value. Below is a general guideline for the basic and most common assignments. Assignments that are missing due to absences will be logged in PowerSchool as a 0 until the assignment is turned in and or made up.

- **Homework, Class Work, Participation 10-50 points**

Students will receive homework/class work assignments each time the class meets. Students may be granted time in class to work with his/her peers or individually on an assignment. All homework and class work will be collected at the beginning of class when the assignment is due. If an assignment is more detailed it may be worth more points. Points will be announced when the assignment is assigned.

WRHS CORE VALUES: Citizenship and Responsibility; Collaboration; Communication; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation

- **Test and Quizzes 50-200 points**

Students will take various quizzes throughout the school year on vocabulary and the current literature. Students will most likely be tested at the completion of a unit. All tests will always be announced at least two days in advance and be accompanied by a study guide. Quizzes will be worth 50-100 points and tests will be worth 150-200 points. Any changes to the point system will be announced before the test/quiz.

- **Writing and Projects**

Throughout the course of the semester, students will engage in various projects and writing assignments in and out of school. Projects and writing will be assessed through the use of documented and distributed rubrics. Writing assignments may vary in length and complexity. Students will complete one critique. Due to the complexity of this assignment, critiques will be weighted **heavily**. Writing assignments and in class projects will typically be worth 100-150 points depending on the length and complexity of the assignment. Critiques and the research project will be weighted 300 points. All point values will be announced when rubrics are distributed.

Make-Up Work

If you are absent, please contact me through email. Please check the daily agenda for important announcements and general guidelines of what you missed. All work previously assigned before your absence is expected upon your return. All school rules regarding allotted time to make-up work will be followed.

Extra-Help

I am available for extra help before and after school and will schedule this individually or whole class sessions when necessary. Please email me and or see me in person to schedule extra help sessions.