



## Freshman English

Syllabus - 2025 - 2026

Ms. Holtman

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Blocks, 2:45 pm- 4:00 pm



### Course Description:

Freshman English is an introductory course emphasizing the development of core language arts skills through the use of diverse texts, including but not limited to: poetry, novels, memoirs, fiction, nonfiction, and drama. This course guides students in becoming critical and responsive readers, and in utilizing different reading and note taking strategies to stimulate exploration, curiosity, reflection, conflict, and citizenship. Students will also show interpersonal proficiency through group work and presentations. The purpose of the exploration of each unit is to develop a solid foundation of skills students will use throughout their high school careers.

### Course Outline:

#### Unit 1: Survival

- **R.9-10.3** In literary texts, analyze how complex and/or dynamic characters develop, interact with other characters, advance the plot, or develop a theme. (RL) In informational texts, analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or argument, including the sequence, the introduction and development of ideas, and the connections that exist. (RI)
- **R.9-10.5** In literary texts, consider how varied aspects of structure create meaning and affect the reader. (RL) In informational texts, consider how the author's intent influences particular sentences, paragraphs, or sections. (RI)
- **W.9-10.2** Write text in a variety of modes:
  - a. Write arguments and literary analysis to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning, literary theory, and relevant and sufficient evidence which introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
- **W.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem that is rhetorically authentic and culturally-sustaining; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating an understanding of the subject under investigation.

#### Unit 2: Journeys of Transformation

- **RL.2** Objectively and accurately summarize texts, from a variety of genres, to determine one or more themes or central ideas and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.
- **W.1** Compose reflective, formal, and creative writing, which may happen simultaneously or independently, for a variety of high-stakes and low-stakes purposes.

#### Unit 3: Dreams, Dignity, and Distance Between

- **R.9-10.1** Cite relevant textual evidence that strongly supports analysis of what the text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences; develop questions for further exploration. (RI&RL) **R.9-10.2** Objectively and accurately summarize texts, from a variety of genres, to determine one or more themes or central ideas and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details. (RI&RL)
- **W.9-10.3** Create writing that utilizes: a. Organization: introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, analysis, information and claims to make important connections and distinctions. Establish and maintain a structure and conventions consistent with the mode of writing. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the topic, themes, and experiences presented in the text.

#### Unit 4: Crazy, Stupid Love

- **R.9-10.3** In literary texts, analyze how complex and/or dynamic characters develop, interact with other characters, advance the plot, or develop a theme. (RL)
- **R.9-10.5** In literary texts, consider how varied aspects of structure create meaning and affect the reader. (RL)
- **R.9-10.7** Analyze how a subject and/or content is presented in two or more formats by determining which details are emphasized, altered, or absent in each account (e.g., analyze the representation of a subject and/or content or key scene in two different formats). (RI&RL)

### Primary Resources:

Google Classroom  
SAVVAS Textbook  
Chromebook

**Grade Breakdown:**

Semester Grade	Practice	Formative	Summative
90%	0%	30%	70%
10%	Semester Exam		

**Grading Scale:**

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A+	97-100	B	83-86	C-	70-72
A	93-96	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
F Below 60					

**Late Work/Missing Work Policy:**

Mukwonago Area Schools believes that feedback is an integral component to student success in teaching and learning. Mukwonago High School expects that all students will turn in work by the intended due date to receive full credit and necessary feedback. Students will have the opportunity to turn in practice and formative assessments up to 2 school days late to receive partial credit.

- **Full Credit:** Students *might* receive full credit if the practice or formative assessment is turned in on the due date.
- **Partial Credit:** Students will receive partial credit if the practice or formative assessment is turned in up to two school days after the due date.
- **Zero Credit:** practice or formative assessment can be turned in past the two days to remain eligible for reassessment; however, no credit will be given.

**Assessment Policy:**

Assessments are used to measure student learning of essential learning standards within a unit of instruction.

**Cumulative Assessments** (Ex. Projects, Essays, Presentations, Semester Exams): These end of unit assessments are final products of learning in which students have had several opportunities to make adjustments based on feedback. Retakes are not provided for these types of end of unit assessments. **\*Not eligible for retake**

**Summative Assessments** (Ex. Test): This end of unit assessment uses various types of questions that students have studied but not previously seen. Students are eligible to reassess if the following criteria are met: practice and formative assignments for the unit have been completed and turned in prior to the summative assessment, student meets with their teacher to schedule a reassessment, and demonstrates relearning within 2 weeks of receiving the original assessment. The reassessment grade will replace the original summative grade, regardless if the new grade is lower than the original assessment. **\*Eligible for retake**

I will update the grade book weekly. Understandably, lengthy exams, projects, and written work require a longer time to assess than vocabulary quizzes, exit tickets, and other shorter answer responses. I encourage students to inquire about grades at any time if there are questions or concerns.

**Materials/Supplies needed:**

- ☐ Charged Chromebook: For digital assignments and access to Google Classroom
- ☐ Notebook: Notebook for English notes (any type)
- ☐ Bookmark: For in-class texts
- ☐ Writing Tools: Pens (blue or black) and pencils (lead and color) for in-class writing and assignments.
- ☐ Highlighters: A set of pink, blue, and yellow colors for annotating texts and marking important information.
- ☐ Folder: A folder or a 3-ring binder with pockets to keep your handouts organized.
- ☐ Sticky Notes: For making annotations and jotting down quick thoughts or reminders.
- ☐ Index Cards: Useful for vocabulary and important concepts.
- ☐ SAVVAS Textbook: We will provide each student with a textbook and reading materials during the first week of class.

Please bring these items with you to the first official day of school (no need for Freshman only day).

### **Expectations & Classroom Conduct:**

#### Class Procedures

-Before Class (*Be Engaged*) (*Be Responsible*)

-Check the slides for the daily learning targets, bell ringers, and expected homework.

-Bring required materials every day.

-During Class (*Be Engaged*): Participation is necessary to become fully involved in class discussions and activities. Your involvement shows me what you understand and what you do not. It is also important to keep the class flowing to develop the highest level of learning in our classroom. Former students often reflect that this is key to making this class easier and more enjoyable!

-Behavior (*Be Respectful*)

-All cell phones should be silenced and stored in backpacks at the beginning of every class. If you fail to follow this rule, you will be referred to the administration.

-Respect yourself and others at all times. The basic behavior rule to live by in our classroom is to be a civil, decent human beings. It is important that we are respectful of each other so that everyone can obtain the benefit of a positive learning environment. Any disruptive or insensitive behavior will be dealt with accordingly. Treat people with kindness. Make good choices. Be good people.

-Food and drink are allowed as long as they are handled in a mature manner. I reserve the right to take this privilege away.

-Tardiness will be tracked in Infinite Campus (IC), and the following steps will be taken for each occurrence:

1st Tardy: Verbal warning

2nd Tardy: 10-minute detention with the teacher (must be served within 2 days) and parent contact; administration will be notified through Educlimber.

3rd Tardy: Teacher will submit an IC office referral. Administration will meet with the student, assign an after-school detention, and contact the parent.

4th +: The teacher will submit an office referral in Infinite Campus (IC), and administration will determine appropriate consequences at their discretion.

#### Absences, Missing Work, and Late Work (Be Responsible)

Common Questions:

##### **Q: “What if I was absent today?”**

If you are absent, you have ONE school day for each day you were absent to make it up for full credit.

If you hand in work after your extra day/s, your assignment will be considered late.

If you are absent on the day of a formative or summative assessment, you must make it up quickly. This is your responsibility!

##### **Q: “If I’m ever absent, how do I know what happened in class on the days I missed?”**

All of the daily plans, as well as every assignment and handout, will be located on Google Classroom. You are fully expected to know what happened during the class that you missed. If asked, “What did I miss yesterday?” I will simply respond with, “Check Classroom.” I will only help if you have specific questions or if I made a website error.

From Google Classroom, you will be able to upload and print any handouts. If you do not have access to a printer, the handouts for the last week are always located on the colorful cart next to the door.

##### **Q: “I just didn’t have it done that day. What happens to me?”**

All late summative and formative work will earn no more than a 70%.

When you hand in late work (absent or missing), you must attach a late work form to the assignment and place it in the “late work” shelf assigned to your class. If you do not attach a slip, the assignment will be returned without a grade.

### **Academic Honesty:**

The Mukwonago Area School District emphasizes the importance of academic honesty and integrity as essential to education. Students are expected to complete and represent their work truthfully and are held accountable for academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, and misuse of artificial intelligence. Teachers review the academic honesty policy at the start of each course. Consequences for dishonesty vary by offense: the **first offense** results in a zero on the assessment, parent contact, administrative review, and permanent ineligibility for National Honor Society; the **second offense** leads to another zero, a parent meeting with administration, and ineligibility for valedictorian or salutatorian honors; a **third offense** results in withdrawal from the course with a failing grade or audit status, and loss of honors pass privileges.

### **Ms. Holtman’s Muk Way Matrix**



#### Tips for Success:

- Stay organized by using binders/folders for all your classes (color-code them by class period)
- USE Google Classroom or a planner to keep track of assignments
- Email me to schedule a time to meet before or after school for extra help before an assessment
- Use the writing lab. You can find me there during Purple Block 1st Semester!
- Check Google Classroom daily for updates and daily resources.
- If you are absent, let your teachers know—communication goes a long way!
- Communicate with me! I am here to help you!

#### Final Advice

Your years here at MHS constitute your formal high school education. **MAKE IT COUNT!** Take charge of your learning by remaining responsible and accountable, meeting and exceeding expectations, and finding ways to enjoy your classes and teachers. Become involved and participate in the many activities and events in order to nurture lifelong friendships.

I am here to make you a better reader, writer, and communicator, but more so, I seek to make you an even better person.

You may ask then, “**What do I need to be successful?**” You will find that answer first by **setting manageable goals** and then by making a strong **attempt** to reach them. If you do not try new opportunities, you are only opening the door for a lifetime of regret. **Take advantage of your limited time** and find who you are through **positive experiences and relationships**.

*All Mukwonago policies & procedures will be followed and enforced in this class as outlined in more detail in the [Mukwonago High School Student and Parent Handbook](#).*