

## *Creative Writing*

*Mrs. Comp*

*Off Hours: 2 and 5; email or talk to me to set up times to meet/conference/get help-(I will have department chair meetings at least once a month during 2nd hour FYI.)*

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Please visit Mrs. Comp's ["About Mrs. Comp"](#) section, under "Home", in her Google Site, for more background on her!

"You don't write because you want to say something, you write because you have something to say." -F. Scott Fitzgerald

*"Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing."*

*--Benjamin Franklin*

"The very reason I write is so that I might not sleepwalk through my entire life."  
-Zadie Smith

"ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS WRITE ONE TRUE SENTENCE. WRITE THE TRUEST SENTENCE THAT YOU KNOW." -ERNEST HEMINGWAY

"Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart."

-William Wordsworth

"If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write."

-Martin Luther

"No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world." -Robin Williams' character John Keating in *Dead Poets Society*

*"Writing is really a way of thinking – not just feeling but thinking about things that are disparate, unresolved, mysterious, problematic or just sweet." -Toni Morrison*

"In writing. Don't use adjectives which merely tell us how you want us to feel about the thing you are describing. I mean, instead of telling us a thing was "terrible," describe it so that we'll be terrified. Don't say it was "delightful"; make us say "delightful" when we've read the description. You see, all those words (horrifying, wonderful, hideous, exquisite) are only like saying to your readers, "Please will you do my job for me."- C.S. Lewis

**Welcome to our *short* creative writing class where the primary text is your creative writing! Creative writing involves the development and discussion of student work-in-progress as well as reading and imitation of other works. There will be a number of directed writing assignments, experiments and exercises in addition to your own compositions. I believe this is a class that can be fun, but also give you some practice to hone your writing skills. I am not here to share how to do it *right*, but for you to be open to your own imagination and foster various writing voices. This class will work for you if you put in the effort! It will be more exploratory and we will work on various pieces, some that will be finalized.**

**Most of your compositions will be turned in through Google classroom, but some will be printed out and given to me or shared through a common Google document. Many of our freewritings will be done in class and you have the choice to type them or to hand write them in a composition notebook-I prefer the latter because there is more of a connection between your handwriting and heart and mind, but do what works for you!**

**You Need:**

- Outstanding attendance-see expectations below:

**Attendance, Absences and Assignments:**

Students are expected to be in class for face to face learning, and on time. There is a direct correlation between your success in this class and being present regularly. It is **YOUR** responsibility to make up and get any missed work. Because of our limited time, please try not to schedule appointments; *please* try to find other times that work.

Our English department has devised a department-wide attendance policy which states:

**Unexcused Absences:** Habitual unexcused absences will result in a contact home. If you have an unexcused absence, it is **your job to look at the Weekly agenda** to get your assignments; you will only get **up to** half credit from the grade I give you. Again, if you have an unexcused absence, it is your responsibility to do your work. Work that is due on the day you have an unexcused absence must get to me the next class period for half credit from the grade I give you.

### **Arapahoe High School Tardy Policy:**

Students are expected to be inside their assigned classes before the tardy bell rings each period. **Instructional time is valuable and students missing it when tardy will be responsible for the material and potentially have consequences as outlined below.** Parents must call the attendance office to excuse the student if their student will be late to a class. Teachers reserve the right to assign detention(s) for excessive tardies per the **AHS Tardy Policy:**

- **3 tardies in one class** = The teacher will either assign one detention **-or-** assign time to be served with the teacher.
- **5 tardies in one class** = The teacher will assign one more detention **-or-** assign time to be served with the teacher.
- **7 tardies in one class** = The teacher will refer the student to administration and the student will be assigned an in school suspension.

My #1 piece of advice when you miss class: It is **your responsibility to check Google classroom** if you miss class. The **weekly agenda** will be posted. You must do anything on the agenda, including free writing/prompts, unless it tells you not to. If you have questions over an assignment, please reach out for help. Also, arrange with me or turn in any makeup work you missed from an absence or get it submitted through Google classroom if that is the directive. Note that not *all* assignments will be turned in through Google classroom; I will always let you know the directive on the agenda.

It is imperative that you communicate with me! Being a part of this professional environment means that I expect you to be consistent with your work and to turn it in on time. However, life happens, sometimes unexpectedly, and we all have certain obstacles that we must face. The more you let me in the loop, the easier we can work things out. Please just communicate with me as I am not a mind reader and need to know what *you need* to best support you! We will work out problems together and find solutions!

**Late work:** Simply, **you have 1 week from when an assignment is due** to get it in. After that time, if you do not do it, it will go in as ½ credit since I have a 50% as my low.

My hope is that you stay current with your work and try not to procrastinate, as much of what we do builds off the previous, and again, we only have 9 weeks. Please make up your work as soon as you can! You can expect to be working 1-2 days a week on assignments given for this class; we will have plenty of work time in class too. Again, please advocate for yourself and be proactive.

**\*Always check Google classroom for our Weekly agenda for what we did in class and what homework/assignments are due! Get into good habits!**

If extended absences occur- you have a game, or you go on a trip, etc. you need to arrange with me, prior to the leave, for any work you may miss. You may have to turn in work earlier. **PLAN AHEAD!** If there are extenuating circumstances, contact me, and we'll work something out. With some papers and assignments, I will have flexible due dates; this will be established as we get going. Plus, I do allow for revisions/rewrites.

### **Active participation is a must for success in this class**

It is also important to know that I will ask you to share your writing at some point, with pairs, groups or the whole class, and I may pull people's writing anonymously for the purpose of modeling techniques. We will also be workshopping our writings together and I really want you to embrace the process of putting your work out there for others to see. I will not be the sole reader of your work. I understand some of you are more introverted and shy to voice yourselves, but please be open to pushing yourself and growing this skill. Discussion, collaboration and idea generation are a piece of what we do together, and I feel you will gain a lot from your peers and find more in yourself by stepping out of your comfort zone and doing the thing that scares you. I pride myself on fostering strong relationships and learning environments where people feel included, safe and respected.

Be open for:

- In-class participation (whether reading aloud, writing, discussing, sharing out freewrites)
- A willingness to share your creative work as well as as to give constructive commentary on the works of others

### **LPS/AHS Personal Technology Device Policy-See page 22 in student planner**

**At Arapahoe, our expectation in the classroom is the following:**

- 100% compliance of the use of wall pockets for cell phones
- Phones must be turned-off
- Phones are to remain in the pockets unless they are being used for an instructional activity directed by the teacher
- Smart watches that become a distraction will be expected to be turned into the wall pocket
- AirPods/earbuds/headphones should be stowed out of sight unless they are being used for a specific instructional activity directed by the teacher

**Consistent Consequences at Arapahoe Include:**

- After a teacher-student intervention of a conversation and a phone call/email home at a minimum, the following consequences may be imposed:
  - Teacher may hold the phone for the class period and call/email home as soon as they are able

- Teacher and student may call parent together from the student's phone
- Teacher may write a detention
- Teacher may refer student to grade-level administrator

### **Content:**

The focus of this class will combine narrative and fiction writing in various forms and genres-hence, we will write personal memoirs, descriptive essays and poems, commentary writings and stories you tell about *real and imagined* experiences, Students will examine precise word usage, tone, and format within their own writings. We will do about 3-4 final compositions during our time together, and we will quickwrite and have mini lessons, both directed and nondirected, often. Part of your journey is going to be about your own reflective writing, based on prompts I give you, as well. I am still refining and piecing together what I want to do for this class, so please be patient and open.

Just know, I am *not* looking for mastery. Hopefully, you can find that writing has so many purposes and styles. What you create will be in your hands. I hope you find this a class that fuels, transcends, or begins a love for writing and the creative process! Plus, it can show you a little about yourself and your mind and how you connect and see the world! This class is about creativity and what the creative realm can bring you.

### **Class Expectations:**

- Please *be present* and mindful during the time we have please;)
- Your voice and what you purvey matters to me, but please be aware that any content that I view that may be inappropriate, cause harm to you or others or makes me worried in some way, will be brought to counselors/admin. Be aware of how much you want to share. I want you to be vulnerable and open but sometimes students can overshare. I am an empath so I feel and carry some of your writings deeply. That is the one conundrum, for me, teaching a class like this.
- Respect one another-as individuals and the work created by your peers; do not disrupt others' learning; be a good human.
- Good attitudes are necessary along with your ability to be introspective, real and honest.
- Your effort and grit is all I can ask for-this is about a process and opening yourself to creating-not perfection or mastery; yet, take responsibility for you-come prepared to class and possess an open mind.
- Communicate with me if you are struggling, confused, stressed, or just overwhelmed by high school. I can help you more effectively if you let me know what's going on in your world. Your mental health is very important to me.
- Learn something for YOU.

- Trust yourself as a writer, thinker and human being with authentic feelings.
- Own your learning. Academic dishonesty/plagiarism will not be tolerated- copying another's work, AI ChatGPT. Take your education seriously.
- **Please have papers printed BEFORE class, especially if I am asking for a hard copy.**  
You will probably also submit most work, via Google classroom, but I will let you know if I require a printed version.

\*Please be aware of the content you write that is under your LPS email; I have had students occasionally get flagged for questionable content which then promotes conversations with counselors, mental health services and parents. I am a mandatory reporter, so if there is anything that shows harm to self or others, it will be reported.

### **Supplies:**

- Your creative mind
- Writing utensils
- Charged laptop

### **Grading:**

I will be giving a running point total for your grades and there will not be as many assignments or points in this class as you may have in others. We will have probably around 200 points for the whole quarter! I also have a 50% policy, which means you cannot get anything below a 50%, that includes not turning in work.

**What are you waiting for? If not now, when?**

**Let's get started!**