

Senior English
Mr. Rigler

Senior English is an opportunity to engage classic and contemporary literary texts as part of an ongoing dialogue about the ways in which we make “meaning(s)” and understand the world around us. While we will discuss the text in detail at great length, we will also explore broader-reaching issues about power, justice, and identity, among others. Ultimately, the goal is for each student to gain a better understanding of themselves as writers, speakers, and most importantly, thinkers.

I look forward to getting to know each student through our work in the classroom as well as individual conferences. I am always available to meet with you about anything from status in the class to questions about a particular text or assignment. My assignments, calendars, and other handouts for the class are on a blog exclusive to this class: <http://riglerseniorenglish.blogspot.com/>. It is available through my DHS school website. My phone # at school is 224-632-3131, and my e-mail is nrigler@dist113.org. I will return calls and messages within 24 hours.

Major texts:

- Classics
 - Oedipus the King
 - Antigone
- Shakespeare
 - Hamlet
- World Literature
 - The God of Small Things
 - Things Fall Apart
- Contemporary Literature
 - Life of Pi
- “Philosophy”
 - The Stranger
 - Man’s Search for Meaning
- Films
 - (To be determined)

Grading and assessment will be determined using the following percentages:

Learning and classroom habits	10 %
Papers and projects	80 %
Notebook and reflective essay	10 %

Assignments.

- **Formative assessment:** The goal of formative assessment is to *monitor student learning* to provide ongoing feedback. This is useful for me so I can adjust what we do in class based on the needs of my students. More importantly, it is useful to you so you can improve your learning. This type of assessment will help you to identify your strengths and weaknesses, as well as target areas in need of work.
 - During our study of a text, there will be a series of journal entries, both as homework and in-class work. When I look at these shorter works, I will use a rubric to indicate your competency with a particular skill. I will also write feedback comments on them, including questions, prompts for further exploration, observations, and suggestions for improving your writing.
 - I will keep track of these in Infinite Campus. While there are numbers in the different categories they are intended to show the level at which you demonstrated that skill on that assignment, but **they will not factor numerically into your grade**. even though they are not worth any points.
 - When you look at your scores you should do so with a specific eye towards determining which components of your writing need attention and further work.
- **Summative assessment:** These are graded assignments, used by me to evaluate your learning at the conclusion of a unit, based on the standards I set. Graded essays will be returned to students in time for the feedback to be useful for the next major assignment.
 - You will learn to write four types of essays in this class:
 - A single-text analytic essay, on a topic of your choice
 - An inter-textual analysis (2 or more texts), on a topic of your choice
 - A “hybrid” essay, combining personal narrative, a close look at a text, and related issues, examples, themes, or ideas.
 - A non-paper, non-traditional assignment. I will supply you with a list of potential options, but of course you’ll be able to create your own.
 - It is up to you to determine which assignment you would like to write / create at the completion of each text. (There is not a major essay / assignment due for Oedipus – the typed explication is all that is due.)
 - All of your summative assignments will go into your Quarter 2 grade. The letter grade you receive for Quarter 1 will be a progress report, reflecting your grades up to that point. The Quarter 2 grade will then also include the essays you wrote during Quarter 1. Your semester grade will be 80% from Quarter 2 + 20 % of your semester final.
 - Please note that I will look at your progress and growth over the semester, and your grade is not simply a numerical average. If you write a bad essay, but then improve on the next ones, you’ve done the right thing - learned from your mistakes!
 - At the end of the quarter, you will write a **reflective essay**, focusing on your strengths and weaknesses as a writer, observations about patterns and trends in your thinking, and the ways in which your work in this class helped you to arrive at a sense of meaning and understanding.
 - I will also collect your **notebook**. The emphasis will be on completing the assigned work and your depth of engagement with ideas and text. In your notebook, you will take the time to raise questions, explicate passages of text, suggest connections to both other texts and personal experiences, and explore the themes that arise through our reading and conversation. For second quarter, I will check in your journal entries each week. Your journal grade will be 20% on-time completion + 80% quality.

Make-up and late work procedures

- Assignment sheets and in-class work and prompts are posted on the [class blog](#). It is your responsibility to check the blog when you are absent.
- If you have an excused absence, you must make up the work you missed.
 - **It is your responsibility to contact me when you return to class to arrange a time to make up quizzes / writings.**
- You will have homework every night. For longer assignments, you are expected to submit them on the specified date and time to turnitin.com unless a hard copy is required. If a hard copy is required and you will not be in school, arrange to have someone hand the assignment directly to me. Do not just leave papers in my mailbox.
- **Late papers will be penalized 10% per day. If you have special circumstances for me to consider, you will need to speak with me and we'll determine a late work "contract," to include the penalty (up to a maximum of 50% off) and due date. It is always better to turn in work late than to take a zero.**
- All four major assignments are required components of the class. Missing one or more of them will result in an "Incomplete" for the semester.
- **Computer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late work.**

Expected behavior - These statements should be true for you in this class (and beyond)

1. **Active listening in class** - During sharing and discussion, I am attentive and engaged, following the line of conversation, valuing the opportunity to benefit from others' good thinking by taking notes in my text and notebook.
2. **Making my voice a regular part of classroom discussion** - Whether in large group, small group, or partner work, I am a contributor when we share our writing and ideas.
3. **Using class time for inquiry and pursuing answers** - My notebook writing composed in class reflects my intellectual curiosity, my commitment to writing generatively and for the purpose of discovery, including posing questions and exploring multiple possible answers.
4. **Completing and submitting homework** - I arrive to class with assigned work in my possession. When reading is assigned, I carefully and actively complete the reading assignment, marking important text to show my critical, analytical approach to the reading. When writing or some other product of my thinking is assigned, I put forth a full, thoughtful effort in order to demonstrate my best, most complete thinking.
5. **Meeting due dates and deadlines** - I complete assignments and other course responsibilities in full and on time, whether reading, writing or any other commitment I may have to the class or a group of my peers.
6. **Respecting all others in the room/Speaking only when the moment is mine** - I am generous with my attentiveness and thoughtfulness. When a person is speaking, I look at her or him and listen. I do not talk to others around me when someone else has the floor of the classroom. In responding to my classmates' and/or teacher's ideas—whether in large group or in smaller groups—I do so with thought, acknowledging their ideas without judging or condescending. I validate and affirm others' ideas in the same manner I might challenge or disagree: with kindness and care. I refer and speak to people in the class by name.
7. **Arriving to class on time** - When the bell rings, I am in the classroom and ready to go. I respect that the time in the classroom is not just my own; there are 25 other people to whom the time also belongs.
8. **Respecting the classroom** - I may eat / drink in the classroom when appropriate as long as I am not disruptive and the room remains clean. I take a minute at the end of class to throw away that bagel wrapper, cream cheese container, and diet coke bottle. (Please make sure that you deposit it into the proper container (garbage or recycling).) This is a privilege that can be revoked if violated. I know when it is or isn't appropriate to go to the bathroom or get up out of my seat to throw something away. If we are in the middle of a discussion or activity, and I would cause a distraction, I think twice before I decide to act.