NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Course Syllabus

**San Marin High School 11th Grade English**

**Mr. Swedlow**

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Welcome to Mr. Swedlow’s 11th Grade English class. This year the English department is excited to present an integrated and progressive introduction to high school English. We will thus be covering grammar, elements of writing, structures of the novel, poetry, and other standard factors in English. As well, we will be analyzing fiction and nonfiction texts for rhetorical issues and logical fallacies. I want to note here that homework occurs regularly on weeknights and most weekends. All students are expected to write the homework down in class and, failing that, call a friend.

**Course Goals**

Students will develop their skills in reading, thinking, writing, listening, and speaking through in-depth study of literature in a variety of genres and through researching informational materials. In addition, students will obtain introductory knowledge of rhetorical analysis, logical fallacies, and concepts in ideology and power (please see the NUSD course description for further details). By the end of the year, students will have an increased capacity to think critically, write rhetorically, and speak thoughtfully.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of American literature, analyzing recurrent themes in depth. Focus is also on characteristics of subgenres (e.g., satire, parody, allegory, pastoral), analysis of irony, tone, mood, style, voice, imagery, and figures of speech. Readings will trace the development of American literature from the colonial period forward, contrasting major periods, themes, styles, and cultures, as well as philosophical, political, and social influences of each period. Readings will enhance students’ study of U. S. history in the junior year.

2. Students will write coherent and focused essays that convey a well defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument, using clear, precise language. Major essays will include

• response to literature/literary analysis

• rhetorical analysis

• historical investigation report

• Synthesis

3. Students will demonstrate understanding of basic principles of the features and rhetorical devices of public documents. They will analyze the effect of organizational patterns and the use of diction and syntax on clarity and meaning, as well as make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author’s explicit and implicit assumptions and beliefs.

4. Students will write and speak with a command of standard American English conventions, including generally accepted manuscript form.

5. Students will deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine traditional rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description. Speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English. Oral presentations will include reflective presentation, report on historical investigation, multimedia presentation, and recitation of poems,

speeches, or dramatic soliloquies.

6. Students will develop their personal vocabularies by tracing the etymology of terms in political science and history by applying knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots, and discern meaning of analogies, comparisons, relationships, and inferences.

7. In addition to assigned reading in literature and research, students will read independently in a wide variety of genres and media, to include classical and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, and online information.

# Texts

* Mark Twain: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
* F. Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*
* Arthur Miller: *Death of a Salesman*
* Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
* Beers et al., *Holt Literature & Language Arts*
* Various short stories and poems
* Numerous nonfiction texts
* Numerous *self-chosen* texts

# Progress Reporting

Grades shall be reported at the end of each progress reporting period for all students. Progress reports will be mailed home and/or accessible to parents online approximately every five/six weeks. Whenever a student falls below a C- after the second Progress Report for either semester, the teacher shall arrange a conference with the student’s parent/guardian and/or send a written report. (Board Policy 5121)

**Classroom Policies**

All San Marin rules apply, which means that hats, iPods, cell phones, gum, and the all other such contraband are not allowed. If I see such items, I will keep them until the end of the school day, or I will give them to Mr. Casper (though this excludes gum, of course). If you want a warning, please reread the previous sentence quietly to yourself. Students are expected to come to class prepared, which includes having their homework, paper, writing implements, and texts ready for use at the start of class. As well, students are expected to follow all classroom protocols.

# Grading

My grading occurs on a weighted scale as follows:

Essays: 25%

Homework: 25%

Quizzes: 15%

Participation: 15% (grade dependent on following classroom protocols, paying attention, and doing whatever work you are to do.)

Final: 20%

# Homework

I give homework on most weeknights and many weekends.

**Classroom Tardies:**

SanMarin Rules Apply: a break or lunch detention

# Notebooks / Binders / Journals

Each student is required to have a three-ring binder with four dividers and blank paper, as well as a pen or pencil. The binder can be shared, but the dividers cannot. Please contact me if you will have trouble getting a binder.

**Classroom Protocols**

In my classroom, you will follow certain protocols that cover how the day will go, and *your entire participation grade* (15 % of your semester grade) will depend on the level to which you follow these processes. These protocols are designed to focus you and to get you prepared for life outside of high school, including college and work environments.

**Entering the Class**: When you enter the class, the procedure is simple and to be done quietly:

1. Check the agenda, and pay attention to the first entry: it will tell you what to do, which may include turning homework into the box, grabbing any handout that is ready for you on the desk in the front, or seat/activity.
2. Go to your desk and get out your materials, which will include your homework, a pen or pencil, your notebook, and any book that we are currently reading. Organize your desk appropriately. Homework in top right corner, current work in center, pen or pencil to side of current work.
3. Once at your desk, begin the activity noted under section one, which may include working on the handout, a do now, or any other thing indicated.

**During Class**: Never simply get up and do something. Always ask permission using one of the following signals:

**Student Signals**:

*Pencil Raised*: you need to sharpen your pencil

*Finger to nose*: you need a tissue

*One finger raised*: you need to go to the bathroom

*Two fingers raised*: you need a new pencil/paper (will count against your participation grade)

*Whole hand raised*: you have a question about what is being discussed

**Participating**: This large portion of your grade contains many aspects. You are to always pay attention to what is going, who is speaking, and your work at hand. Taking your time to get out work, pretending to pay attention, sitting slumped in your desk, or any other general act of non-engagement will detract from your grade. I also detract for being tardy and not having your materials or desk organized by the second bell.

**Exiting the Class**: Leaving the class does not depend on the bell; it depends on the teacher. You will listen to and track what I tell you about when the class is done. If I or another student is still speaking, you do not simply get up and go. If the class should be done early and there is no more work to be done, you should review your notes for the day. *The last thing you should do is get up or start talking; least of all, you should not go to the door and wait.*

**Materials**: You are to bring your binder and your personal book, every day. As well, you should have a number 2 pencil and a pen. You are also to bring whatever book we are currently reading. **No food or drink, other than water**. I will throw away any food or drink I see.