

Two Rivers High School
English 10: Defining & Exploring the
American Experience/American Dream
2012-2013

Teacher Information:

Mrs. Genal Hove

Room #329

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Please use E-mail to ask questions as needed! You can certainly talk to me in person whenever you need to; you can also send me questions and concerns at any time of the day.

Available Hours: My prep hours during the day are 1st and 7th.

I am available before school by appointment. I usually arrive at 7:30, but I can be here earlier if need be.

I am available after school from 3:10 until 3:30. I can be available after 3:30 by appointment, but you need to make the effort to set this up.

Course Description:

English 10 is meant to be a course that helps develop literacy and critical thinking skills so students can be successful throughout high school, and hopefully in their personal lives as well. English 10 will explore the American Dream as it has played out throughout American history. We will look at what the dream is, but more importantly, we will explore how individuals have been able to find success and happiness because of the opportunities that America offers.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to—

1. Understand and effectively utilize the writing process.
2. Use proper sentence and paragraph structure.
3. Develop logical and organized essays for a variety of purposes.
4. Learn to analyze literature to explore author's purpose.
5. Learn to break down how an author creates and develops a piece of literature.
6. Begin evaluating reading by explaining personal understandings and judgments.
7. Develop literacy skills (inferring, questioning, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing) to help improve critical reading and response.
8. Work towards improving standardized reading and language scores.
9. Synthesize how our personal lives connect to the dreams and desires of our ancestors.
10. Analyze the American Dream—how individuals have different hopes and dreams and how America provides the needed rights and freedoms.

Required Reading and Texts:

What we read will change as our year progresses depending on student interests and skills.

Units and Major Assignments:

Unit I: LITERARY REVIEW—In this unit we will review the different types of literature (short story, poetry, non-fiction, drama) and we will “brush up” on literary terms.

Major Unit Assignments:

1. Independent Novel project
2. Songs and poems that tell stories project
3. Fiction and Poetry Test

Unit II: Defining the American Dream—In this unit we will develop a working definition of “American Dream.” We will look at a few examples from history to help us understand what America offers to individuals.

Major Unit Assignments:

1. Definition Essay
2. Rocky Film Reading and Analysis Essay
3. My Personal Dream portfolio
4. Biography Project

Unit III: Immigration and Struggle—In this unit we will dive into America as a melting pot—a collection of individuals from *all* walks of life living together with one common goal: happiness. Class reading will center around the struggles individuals have had to endure to finally find success in America.

Major Unit Assignments:

1. My Immigrant Story project—you will research a specific immigrant group and present to the class as if you *are that immigrant*.
2. Drama reading—we will read and respond to an American play that captures a specific struggle in American history.

Unit IV: War and Preserving the Dream.—It may seem weird to think of war as a part of the American Dream, but as we explore this unit we will see that our freedoms often have to be fought for. This unit will cover the experience of war, from the soldiers who fight the battles to the wives and mothers who lose the men they love.

Major Unit Assignments:

1. We Were Soldiers film analysis essay and reading project
2. War Literature personal portfolio
3. War reading journal portfolio
4. Novel reading and group discussions

Unit V: Enacting Change—In this final unit, we will talk about the need to create change in our communities and our personal lives in order to truly achieve our personal dreams. We will look into specific protests and movements throughout history, but more importantly we will explore what we need to try to change about our current world.

Major Unit Assignments:

1. Thematic Novel Reading Project
2. “I Have a Dream” or “Graduation Speech” assignment
3. Change in History personal essay

One of my biggest hopes is that each individual student’s ability to think, reason, plan, organize and voice their own opinions will grow throughout the course of this class. ACT scores and the ability to perform well on standardized tests are a big indicator of this type of growth. Therefore, improving ACT scores will be a main focus throughout every unit we cover. Even students not planning on attending a type of post high school education will benefit, as employers look for the skills the ACT measures when they are trying to find managers or upper level employees. In a way, a strong ACT score is a good indicator of success in a career as it shows you ability to think, reason and understand complicated ideas.

GRADING POLICY:

This class will use the traditional grading scale:

90%-100% = A

80%-89.99% = B

70%-79.99% = C

60%-69.99% = D

59.99% and below = F or INC

Students often ask, “What will I be graded on?” While daily work will be a part of your grade and is necessary to improve your skills in reading and writing, more emphasis will be placed on major assignments. Completing daily work is what will help push you from a high C or B to a low B or A. Developed assignments are any assignments that we will work on over an extended period of time (projects, essays, portfolios, research, discussion, etc.). These assignments will almost always be polished, revised, reworked and presented to the class.

Semester Grade Breakdown:

Quarter 1 = 40%

Quarter 2 = 40%

Semester Exam = 20%

HOMEWORK: I will never assign busy work or homework just so you have something to do; in fact, if you use your class time well, you should seldom have homework. I try to give plenty of time in class to get *most* work done; that said, should you fall behind, you need to make up missing work. My general rule regarding late work is a small percentage deduction for every day it’s late; if you come and talk to me and explain the issue making your work late, we can negotiate a solution. ***To be clear, I care more about the quality of your work and the skills that you practice more than a due date. However, there will be times (end of a quarter or a semester) when due dates are non-negotiable.***

CLASS ROOM RULES AND POLICIES:

All rules are posted on the wall in the front of the room, but I will touch on a few specific rules now.

1. I encourage you to bring I-pods, cell phones, e-readers and laptops to class, however, they may not be “on” unless we are using them in conjunction with a class activity. If they are present as a distraction in my class, I will ask you to put them away. If electronics become a class problem, I will need to conference with you and a parent before I will allow you back into our class setting.
 - a. There *will be* opportunities for us to use our technology all throughout the year, however, so bringing your devices and phones to class everyday is a good idea. It may be a need to use the apps, the internet, or even just random songs during class. Sometimes we will conduct “text poll” activities as well, so having your devices handy is a good idea.
2. Fair is not equal. This is a rule that is embraced in the English class room. Simply put, it means that you will **not** all be graded the same. Some of you are strong writers, and you will be required to do MORE work and revising to earn the same grade as a student who turns in a slapped together essay. I do this as a way to push strong students while still expecting the same standards and objectives from struggling students. If you are concerned about your grade or how you are treated, please talk to me.
3. Cheating and plagiarism – ZERO TOLERANCE! If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing (this includes using parts of a book or a website without clearly citing your source), you will receive a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to redo it. A zero has a major impact on your overall

semester grade, so make wise choices. If you're not certain how to include source information without plagiarizing, talk to me (this is also a skill we'll work on this year!)

Finally, you're in high school...you know how to behave. *Respect for all* (yourself, classmates, the teacher, material things) rules the day in my classroom!