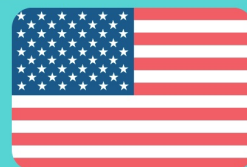


AS Level English Literature, II

Fall 2015-Spring 2016



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Course DESCRIPTION

"Writing, to me, is simply thinking through my fingers." (Isaac Asimov)

This year, we will be working together to beat the Cambridge AS Level English Literature exam. With this objective always in mind, we will immerse ourselves in a number of stories—in the forms of prose, poetry, and drama. These stories will invite us to reflect, to discuss, and to transform our mind's instincts into clear, informed, and logical written responses. Writing is an activity that forces thought—you cannot write without first activating your thoughts. To write is to arrange our thoughts into meaningful units—into sentences, phrases, poems, and narratives. To become good readers and writers, we must first and foremost become deep thinkers.

Over the year, we will read:

Prose: The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

Poetry: Poems by Wilfred Owen

Theater: two of the following plays

Dilemma of a Ghost and Anowa by Ama Ata Aidoo

Antony and Cleopatra by William Shakespeare

Absurd Person Singular by Alan Ayckbourn

As this course will take place during your senior year, we will also devote a lot of time to preparing your BAC. Students must stay organized as we move between both Cambridge and BAC material.



Course GOALS

I. To read, and to reread, closely and actively.

The reading process requires that we use our own experiences and knowledge about the world to help us further understand the book or poem. However, reading changes us.

Close reading/annotation—first, most imp step in analysis

A note on the importance of rereading:

"The examiners will set questions that allow you to demonstrate your knowledge, understanding and skills. If you re-read your texts carefully, and follow the advice contained in this guide, you have every reason to be confident about your performance in the examination."

II. To be curious—to examine every text for meaning.

To be curious about literature is to be curious about life. What is the author saying about life? What does this text tell us about the human condition? What insight into life is revealed?

III. To ask how the writer develops the insight you claim.

In other words, what techniques does the poet use to create meaning? How do the writer's choices of form, structure and language shape meaning?

IV. To put together a toolbox of terms that will help us think about the author or the poet's techniques.

V. To transform our deep thinking into form analysis which communicates our understanding of the text.

Dividing a whole into its parts to better understand the whole

To find your voice

VI. To develop a thirst and an appreciation for reading and to search for your writer's voices.

What can I learn from this text, this writer about how to express myself?

VII. To use error as an invitation to improve.

"We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master."
(Ernest Hemingway)

VIII. To beat the Cambridge exam through the application of everything above.



Required Materials



A binder and dividers to make 6 sections



A "warm-up" notebook



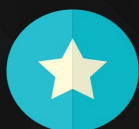
Pens of different colors, post-it flags, highlighters.

Sections will be labeled as follows:

- 1) Classnotes (includes handouts and annotated texts)
- 2) Vocabulary and Grammar (including graded quizzes)
 - 3) Critical Terms
- 4) Assessments and Portfolio Work
- 5) BAC Materials
- 6) Cambridge Exam Prep Materials

Every class will begin with a warm-up writing, grammar, vocabulary, or speaking activity. Notebooks will stay in the classroom and will be graded each grading period.

You must show up to every class with at least one pen. Having a variety of note-taking materials is encouraged in order to make your notes and annotations visually interesting and memorable to you.



*You MUST write your name and the date on everything in and out of your hands.
You MUST keep your materials organized and well done as they will be checked and graded.
You MUST bring the texts we are working on in class. Failure to do so results in negative credit.*

Grading Policy*

WRITING

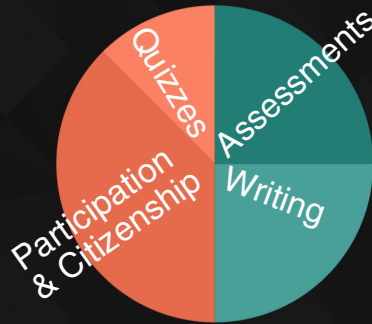
The most important objective in English class is to improve your writing skills, and so it follows that it must be an important part of your overall grade, equal to assessments. Writing includes any written work for homework.

Writing generally receives a coefficient of 2 or 3.

ASSESSMENTS

An assessment will follow a thematic unit or a novel study. Generally these assessments take the form of a timed essay response, like the ones you will encounter on the Cambridge exam. Oral presentations, book chats, interviews or creative projects may also be an alternative assessment of thematic units or novels.

Receives coefficient 2 or 3.



* Always remember, I do not GIVE grades ; you EARN them.

COMMENT ONLY GRADING
Sometimes, you will receive an assignment with my comments but without a grade.

You must fill in a reflection worksheet showing me that you've considered my comments before you are permitted to see your grade.

PARTICIPATION & CITIZENSHIP

We must think of literature less as a wall we must climb and more as an invitation into meaningful discussion.

If you are taking notes, contributing to class discussions, doing well on homework assignments and quizzes, working well in groups, and arriving to class on time with your texts and materials you are participating well.

Coefficient 3 or 4.

QUIZZES

Quizzes or short assessments will be given on assigned readings, key concepts, and vocabulary. From time to time I may give an open notebook quiz at the end of class to see how well you are taking notes.

Small (non-writing) homework and quizzes generally receive a coefficient of 0,5 - 1.

Late Work Policy

On the due date for an assignment, you must turn in SOMETHING.

There are special "Missing Work" sheets located in front of the classroom which must be filled in if you do not have your assignment.

Those who wish to benefit from teacher feedback must hand in their assignments on time. Other work will only receive feedback as time permits.

An assignment may be handed in only up to FOUR DAYS (including weekend days) after it is due. Late work will lose FOUR POINTS/day.

As mentioned before, all assignments must have your name and date marked in order to receive full credit.

Your parents will be contacted when you have missing work.

Make Up Work Policy

It is the student's responsibility to make up for missed work. Missed work must be made up within two days of due date.

Handouts will be kept in designated folders in the classroom and students are expected to quietly locate these materials themselves. Notes should also be copied from a buddy and the class blog consulted.

When turning in make-up work, the student should include a note to remind the teacher about the date and nature of his/her absence on the date of the assignment. Failure to do so may result in a deducted points.

If work is not made up or continues to be missing, your parents will be contacted.

If you feel that you are getting close to the edge, please let me know. I prefer you talk to me in person, or send me an email if need be. Nothing, not even my course, is worth the loss of your good health.

A NOTE ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Taking credit for work that is not your own is plagiarism. This includes paraphrasing without attribution, and copying internet material. You will receive a zero on any plagiarized assignment (which includes copied homework) and I must report the theft to administration.

DO NOT CONSULT OUTSIDE RESOURCES OR COLLABORATE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED TO DO SO. I want you to learn to THINK FOR YOURSELF!

"INSIST ON YOURSELF; NEVER IMITATE. YOUR OWN GIFT YOU CAN OFFER WITH THE CUMULATIVE FORCE OF A WHOLE LIFE'S CULTIVATION, BUT OF THE ADOPTED TALENT OF ANOTHER, YOU HAVE ONLY AN EXTEMPORANEOUS, HALF POSSESSION."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



Instructional Philosophy

In order to be successful in this course, students are expected to be active, motivated, trying-their-best participants. It is my goal to provide a positive and engaging classroom where all students have the opportunity to learn, succeed, and share their thoughts and opinions verbally without fear of embarrassment or ridicule.

As I want this class to be one of the best in your schedule, I must insist that we are kind to each other and respect each other. If you humiliate or attempt to humiliate another, I will have no other choice but to ask you to leave immediately.

Expectations

1) Be respectful.

Treat everyone with proper consideration, regardless of whether he/she is in the classroom at the time. Use respectful language, in writing as well as in discussions. Show respect for your environment by keeping the classrooms clean and neat.

2) Be responsible.

Arrive at class on time and with all necessary materials. Complete assignments on time, ask questions when necessary, and stay aware of deadlines. Be prepared for the start of class each day. Do what is right, regardless of what everyone else in class is doing.

3) Be appropriate.

Conduct yourself as a mature, well-mannered young adult. Think before speaking, and make sure all contributions to the class dialogue should be meaningful and pertinent. Take care of personal business when the time is appropriate. Use your privileges wisely.

4) Be involved.

Participate to the fullest extent that you can. Stay awake. Take part in discussions. Ask questions. Answer questions. Stay on task. Take notes. Keep your head up. Do your homework. Use class time efficiently. Listen. Watch. Participate.

5) Be honest.

Do your own work. Do not cheat, and do not plagiarize. Do not attempt to sneak around the rules. Avoid inventing excuses to cover up for your mistakes. Accept consequences for your mistakes, and learn from them.

My 'pet peeves'

*Do not talk when I'm talking.
Do not make excuses.*

*Do accept responsibility for your actions.
Do ask lengthy personal questions after class or after school.
Do take notes.*

Do complete group work and work in general seriously and with care.



Food and Drink Policy



Food and drink are allowed as long as they do not become a distraction and you can show me that you are paying attention, taking notes, etc.

Students must be sure to clean up after themselves. All wrappers etc. must end up in the trash and tabletops cleaned.

This privilege may be revoked at any time, for individuals and full classes who abuse it, at the teacher's discretion.

Cell Phone Policy



Phones must be out on the desk in front of you, turned face down. As with the food and drink policy, you are allowed to have your phone out as long as it does not become a distraction to you.

I will take your phone away as soon as I see it becomes a distraction to you and you will get it back when I see fit.

This privilege may be revoked at any time, for individuals and full classes who abuse it.

Music Policy



When students are working on group activities, I like to play music while you work. Sometimes I like to choose the music to introduce you to new things. Other times I'm happy for students to quietly choose the music (as long as it is in English and is appropriate). You may also listen to music with headphones during individual activities (but not assessments).

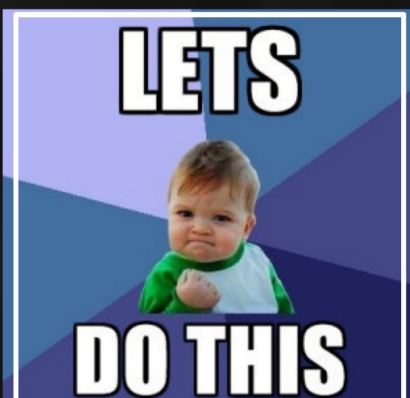
This privilege may be revoked at any time for individuals or full classes if I see that it takes away from their focus in class.

"He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher." (Walt Whitman)

A NOTE ON LIFELONG LEARNING

My hope is that you do not need me after you leave this classroom and years from now you will read often, think about what you read, and talk about what you read. I also hope that whenever you are called upon to write, you may do so without fear. If you leave here wanting to read and writing with confidence, you have honored my style.

You will be tested on the contents of this syllabus. Please review it with care and note the date of the assessment. You and your parents must also sign a contract which says you have reviewed the syllabus together and that you will behave according to its rules. This will remain on file in the classroom.



Lastly, NEVER LOSE THIS SYLLABUS!

Let's conclude by reflecting on this question: how could this course be useful for your present life and your life beyond St Denis? What do you want to get out of this class?