

MST Pre-AP English 10

Sam Greene
Camas High School
26900 SE 15th St.
Camas, WA 98607

Room 710 / 360.335.3000 X 78401
Conference Period: 2:25 - 2:55 P.M.
E-mail: sam.greene@camas.wednet.edu
Class Web: <http://www.mistergweb.com>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Pre-AP English 10 MST course is largely based upon the study of literature and composition with special emphasis on developing student understanding of research writing and process. Its primary focus is to help develop students' ability to critically read, think, research, discuss, and write about the world they live in. Wherever it is logical and possible, activities and assignments in this course will be integrated either thematically and/or topically with the MST AP Biology course or other MST coursework. Some of the coursework and time in this class (approximately 20%) will be devoted to students developing their MST research project(s) for their sophomore year. Students should expect to complete at least one multi-disciplinary MST project in this course for each semester.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The state of Washington has established Grade Level Expectations and learning outcomes in content areas to guide instruction and facilitate student success in the classroom and other arenas. The following are some but not all of the core goals and objectives for the English portion of this course:

- Analyze and evaluate the great literary works from a variety of cultures to determine their contribution to the understanding of self, others, and the world.
- Evaluate traditional and contemporary literature written in a variety of genres.
- Evaluate reading progress and apply goal setting strategies and monitor progress toward meeting reading goals.
- Evaluate books and authors to share reading experiences with others.
- Analyze and evaluate the reasoning and ideas underlying author's beliefs and assumptions within multiple texts.
- Analyze informational/expository text and literary/narrative text to draw conclusions and develop insights.
- Develop a topic or theme; organize written thoughts with a clear beginning, middle, and end; use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas; write coherently and effectively.
- Understand and apply content/academic vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text, including vocabularies relevant to different contexts, cultures, and communities.
- Know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization
- Use a variety of forms/genres, including but not limited to memoirs, essays, research papers, proposals, satires, editorials, blogs, etc.
- Analyze effectiveness of own writing and set goals for improvement.

MAJOR UNITS OF STUDY/ MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

Students will use a variety of resources and learning materials to build their knowledge and skill base in the language arts. The following is a list of major anchor novels and texts, but it does not include all of the texts and resources we will draw from this year. Please feel free to preview the literature and email or call with any questions or comments you may have.

- *Elements of Literature 4th Course*, Holt, Rheinhart, and Wilson.
- *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer
- *The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan
- *Julius Caesar*, William Shakespeare
- *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding
- *Macbeth*, William Shakespeare
- *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Malcolm Gladwell
- *Poetry Out Loud Anthology*, NEA, Various Authors
- *Secret Life of Bees*, Sue Monk Kidd
- *Separate Peace*, John Knowles
- *The Best American Science Writing 2007*, Various Authors (Excerpts)

Students will need to supply the following materials for this class.

- 1 spiral-bound, 8 ½ x 11, college ruled notebook for in class notes or activities. It must be dedicated to this class.
- 50-100 3x5 or 4x6 (one or the other) note cards for research paper with ring binder OR card box to organize.
- A student email account to enroll and participate in Turnitin.com and the class blog/forum.

HOMEWORK POLICY:

Homework is a tool in the teaching and learning process when it has purpose and meaning as an extension of the learning in the classroom. In my classroom, work may be assigned to be completed outside of the normal school day for a number of reasons (absence; completion; extension; practice; preparation). In sum, studying at home enhances student achievement, helping to develop self-discipline and good work/study habits. Students in my classes should expect approximately 15-30 minutes of homework for every hour of time spent in class. Actual time spent on homework obviously varies greatly based on the individual and the degree to which they choose to maximize any given learning opportunity.

SUBMITTING COURSE WORK:

- Many of the written assignments for this course will be submitted via turnitin.com. Students will need to have a valid email address to use this function. Files may be submitted in a variety of formats. If this is problematic for any reason, please meet with me early in the year to see about possible alternate arrangements or modifications to this process.
- Students may re-write any extended take home writing for a revised grade. Revised work will only be accepted if the original, graded copy and rubric is attached to the final revised copy. Additionally, a brief paragraph summary of revisions must also be submitted with the revised work as a cover page.

GRADING POLICY:

A student's letter grade in a course is just one of the ways progress and learning in a subject is measured. Progress report and semester grades will reflect work done up to that point in the grading cycle. In accordance with the school's grading policy, letter grades will be awarded using the standard grading scale in the CHS Student Handbook.

Grades are based on work done in the following weighted categories:

- **Homework and Projects:** This category accounts for *40 percent* of the student's grade in the course. Any assignment covering multiple days or one assigned for completion out of class falls into this category. The bulk of homework assignments will come from weekly readings and related assignments, including extended, take home writing tasks assigned for completion outside of class.
- **Daily Class Work:** Totalling *20 percent* of the course grade, this category covers student participation in and completion of in class activities and assignments. This could include participation in teacher led discussions, student led inner/outer Socratic seminars, forum/blog posts completed in school or out, cooperative learning activities, simulations, review projects, or any other work assigned in class and completed that day or over the course of several days.
- **Quizzes/Tests:** Students are expected to demonstrate accountability in weekly reading assignments, the acquisition of relevant skills, and development and mastery of skills and content presented in class and practiced at home. Students will be assessed in various formats to achieve this goal, both formatively and summatively, but the main modes will include essays, short answer, some multiple choice and/or matching, and timed writings. This category is *20 percent* of the student's grade.
- **Seminar/Research:** This category covers participation in our occasional weekly seminars and at other points during the year when time is devoted to working on research projects. During this time students will hone their understanding of the research process and seek out connections between the disciplines and world we live in. Major "performances" in this category would include the MST research paper and attendance at the Magnet Student Research Symposium and other possible research showcases/competitions. This category is *20 percent* of the student's grade.

LATE WORK / ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Unexcused late work is not acceptable. While I encourage and expect every student to complete each assignment and/or project to the best of their ability, partial credit will be awarded, at my discretion, for incomplete work submitted on time, but not for work turned in late without prior arrangements having been made.

Missed quizzes must be made up by the following Wednesday to receive credit. While this may be difficult for some students to adhere to, doing so allows us to review old quizzes in class as part of our ongoing assessment and review process. Students may make up quizzes before school, during lunch (provided instructor and student have the same lunch), or after school during the daily conference period from 2:25 – 2:55. Arrangements for make up quizzes should be made ahead of time to ensure coordination of schedules.

As always, late work issues not specifically covered in this policy will arise due to family emergencies, extenuating circumstances, etc. Students should see me with any individual concerns they may have, preferably prior to due dates. Please make every effort to minimize unnecessary absences. It is impossible to replace the learning situations and whole

class activities students miss while out of the classroom. For specifics on the CHS attendance policy we adhere to, consult the student handbook. *Please note the following: Generally speaking, for each day of excused absence one day is given to complete or make up work.*

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Plagiarism occurs when a person passes off someone else's work as his or her own. This can range from failing to cite an author or source for ideas incorporated into a paper to handing in a paper or assignment copied completely or partially from the Internet, a book, or another person's work. To be clear, collaboration is encouraged and desired in this course, but this should never be substituted for a student doing and submitting their original work on any given assignment. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person's intellectual property, consciously or not, as his or her own. *For the purpose of this class, this would also include the academically dishonest practice of cheating on a test or stealing another person's answers or work.*

Based on guidelines adopted by CHS, students caught plagiarizing or being academically dishonest will receive zero/"0" points for that assignment and a failing grade in the course until the assignment has been made up or original worked has been submitted. Additionally, students will be referred to CHS administration for disciplinary action. Depending on the degree, severity, and nature of the offense, an opportunity may be presented to the student by the instructor to earn back some but never all of the lost credit. We will spend a good deal of time in class addressing the issue through activities and discussion meant to clarify the nuances of the subject, but ultimately the responsibility lies with the student. They should protect themselves by erring on the side of caution and discussing questions they might have on the topic or specific instances with the teacher.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

A student's introduction to AP/Pre-AP can be a harrowing event without an informed awareness of the course. Indeed, it is a challenging and demanding experience that has the potential to become unmanageable quickly without lots of encouragement and the proper support structure. For sure, there will be growing pains for all involved. That being the case, I highly encourage parents, guardians, students, and peers to work together as a team towards achieving success. Please, if you find yourself struggling, look at it as an opportunity to grow and learn; come see me early on so we can figure out a corrective course of action.

The following is a list of suggestions for doing so:

- Set aside a regular time and a quiet place at home to study and do homework.
- Form study groups with your peers that meet frequently and regularly.
- Set goals and deadlines for work to be completed and reward yourself when you're done
- Build a daily habit of reading, writing, and completing homework.
- Take small steps on large projects ... don't procrastinate.
- Contact me via e-mail for clarification of assignments, projects, or progress
- Access the class web page at www.mistergweb.com for links to assignments and updates on class happenings and goings on.
- Take ownership over your grade and check the online grade program regularly.
- Find a reasonable balance between the academic, social, and extracurricular; don't focus solely on one at the expense of the others.
- Relax and take a break from studying every once in a while ... go play.

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

If you have any questions regarding this syllabus, assignments, materials, or your progress, please feel free to contact me at school via phone or preferably e-mail. I am looking forward to working with you this year to create a positive and successful learning experience.

Good luck!

Mr. Greene

Dear Parents & Students,

From now to the end of the year, I'd like to pilot a program designed to help students develop their writing, learn how to use new communication tools in an academic setting, and explore their interests by sharing their writing with an audience of their peers and possibly others. To do this, students will be using personal weblogs ("blogs") to post their writing and assignments to the Internet.

A weblog, or blog as they are commonly called, is a special type of Web page that can be created and easily updated using a Web browser and an internet connection. Each new entry has its own date stamp. And each entry has a comments section where visitors (most likely the teacher and other students in the class) to the blog may leave comments and feedback for the author. We will be using the free blogging service provided by www.blogger.com, a site associated with Google.

Having a real audience is one of the key components to this program. In addition to receiving comments from their classmates and me, parents are also invited to visit the blogs and respond to the writing assignments we'll be working on. Potentially, anyone on the Internet could respond to our blogs, however, it is not likely that the world at large will stumble across them OR be very interested in the work we do on them.

For our first foray into the blogosphere, we'll be keeping a media blog. In this topic students will be collecting examples of media messages and commenting on use of persuasive strategies we are learning about in class.

Security

This blogging project is designed to minimize risk to your student. The only personally identifying information included in the blog will be their first name. There will be no mention of our school name or our location. Students are allowed to post their interests and opinions, but not their age, email address, photographs of themselves, or other sensitive information.

There are different levels of permissions that can be set to tailor comfort levels with this project. I'll be working with individual students on customizing this if they choose.

Assessment

The regular blogging assignments we do will be part of your student's English grade this term. As with other major projects and assignment we will work on this year, students will receive a scoring rubric that explains the expectations and assessment guidelines for these assignments. Very often, however, grading for this type of work will be done on an informal "participation" basis: if the student participates authentically, they will receive full credit.

Adherence to the "Blogging Terms and Conditions" posted at the end of this document is essential. Paying attention to these guidelines is a crucial part of the assessment process, as well as, potentially, part of the discipline process at CHS if the terms and conditions are violated.

Closing Thoughts

For most of us we are what the technological world calls "digital immigrants". We weren't born into this world of technology that our "digital native" students feel so comfortable with. To be sure, technology is transforming the classroom, and this is a wonderful opportunity to take advantage of some of the digital opportunities that are possible for students in the Camas School District.

As with any assignment we have in class, if you have any questions about this or would like some clarification, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Sam Greene

Blogging Terms and Conditions

1. Students using blogs are expected to act safely by keeping personal information out of their posts. You agree to not post or give out your family name, password, user name, email address, home address, school name, city, country or other information that could help someone locate or contact you in person. You may share your interests, ideas and preferences.
2. Students using blogs agree not to share their user name or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents. You agree to never log in as another student.
3. Students using blogs are expected to treat blogspaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate for your blog. While we encourage you to engage in debate and conversation with other bloggers, we also expect that you will conduct yourself in a manner reflective of a representative of this school.
4. Student blogs are to be a forum for student expression. However, they are first and foremost a tool for learning, and as such will sometimes be constrained by the various requirements and rules of classroom teachers. Students are welcome to post on any school-appropriate subject.
5. Students blogs are to be a vehicle for sharing student writing with real audiences. Most visitors to your blog who leave comments will leave respectful, helpful messages. If you receive a comment that makes you feel uncomfortable or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away. Do not respond to the comment.
6. Students using blogs take good care of the computers by not downloading or installing any software without permission, and not clicking on ads or competitions.
7. Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in future technology based activities.