**English Language and Composition (11/12)**

**New Paltz High School**

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*I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.*-Pablo Picasso

Introduction

Welcome to English Language and Composition. This class is a graduation requirement, and counts as a half-year English credit. An English elective will fulfill the other half-year requirement.

This course is based on research and understanding of informational texts as well as literature. Argument is a key component in English Language and Composition 11/12. We will explore the many facets of persuasion and argumentation. We will discover, read, and write arguments. Using an inquiry-based approach, we will also complete various forms of research.

**Overall essential question for the course:**

How are language and communication power?

Pool of Texts[[1]](#footnote-1)

*Station Eleven* (St. John-Mandel)  
*Age of Miracles* (Thompson-Walker)  
*War Dances* (Alexie)  
*A Handmaid’s Tale* (Atwood)  
*Brave New World*  (Huxley)  
*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (Safran-Foer)  
various short stories, poems, blogs, podcasts, visual texts, and essays

Sample Writing Assignments  
Personal Narratives  
Blogs  
College Essay  
Process Writes  
Research Paper  
Reaction Papers  
Rhetorical Analyses  
Electronic Portfolio

*“To repeat what others have said, requires education, to challenge it,*   
*requires brains.”* –Mary Pettibone Poole

Goals

Students will:

analyze the form and structure of a text,  
become literate in current cultural, political, sociological events,  
conduct inquiry based research,  
develop voice, clarity and precision by writing a variety of multi-purpose pieces,  
analyze rhetoric,  
develop authentic writing through various publishing venues including digital platforms,  
learn how to collaborate effectively,  
develop professional communication skills, and  
incorporate mindfulness into written and verbal communication.

Evaluation

Class Participation 10%

Homework/Classwork 40%

Test/Quiz/Assessment 50%

Core Curriculum[[2]](#footnote-2)

* Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
* Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
* Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
* Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

The best way to improve your writing is to read good writing. Remember that “writing” is a verb...it is a process. It is like any other skill; with practice we improve. *Come and see me for one-on-one conferences.* Read. Write. Revise. Revise again.

*“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter. ’tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”*–Mark Twain

### English Language Contract

Please read the syllabus and the following contract carefully.

Expectations for the course include (but are not limited to) the following.

Students will:

* agree by signing this contract that all work handed in is the student’s original work (plagiarism is a serious crime)
* communicate effectively in the classroom by respecting the opinions of others and listening actively
* engage in mature, intellectual discussion (citing ideas, issues, values inherent in a text)
* make the teacher aware of planned absences so that assignments may be given in advance
* be responsible for any notes, assignments, activities, et cetera that occur during an absence (including field trips).

Failing to complete assignments will result in a zero. **Late work will be deducted 10% per day.** Certain requirements will remain the same throughout the course, and they include the following:

* All assignments are to be word processed or typed unless otherwise indicated.
* Assignments that may be handwritten must be completed in blue or black ink only.
* All assignments must include a heading with the student name, teacher, course, date, in the upper left-hand corner of the paper.
* All handwritten assignments must be handed in on white loose-leaf paper, and word-processed assignments must be in a standard font of twelve-point size.

Any assignment not meeting the above criteria will be returned for ZERO credit.

**======Detach here. Save the upper portion. Return the lower portion. ========**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the policies stated in the English Language syllabus and contract.

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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student signature parent/guardian signature

1. All readings are subject to change based on student need and teacher discretion. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a full list of Common Core Standards see: http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)