English II College Prep – Ms. DiFronzo

Spring 2020

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to English II, and welcome to Weddington High School! WHS is a wonderful place where excellence is valued and honored, and I hope you are as proud to be here as I am. I know this semester will be full of numerous successes and accomplishments, and I am looking forward to working with each of you in order to help every student achieve his or her best. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about my English II class, share my expectations, and explain the way I operate my classroom. I am looking forward to developing successful, collaborative relationships with all of you so that everyone has a role in the development and success of the student. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I have included my contact information below, and e-mail is usually the quickest method. **Students should keep this sheet at the front of their binders for the entire semester. Students and parents will sign the acknowledgment sheet, verifying that you both read and understand the contents and expectations of this letter.**

Sincerely,

**Ms. Marisa DiFronzo**

**Teacher Contact Info -** School e-mail: marisa.difronzo@ucps.k12.nc.us; WHS phone: 704-708-5530

(E-mail is the easiest and quickest way to contact me throughout the semester.) **Students, if you contact me after 4:00 PM, you may not receive a response until the next day. I send out daily “Homework & Reminders” e-mails, which are very effective in managing deadlines, receiving feedback, etc. Make sure you get in the habit of checking them daily from the beginning of the semester!**

**English II Course Description:** English II introduces literary **global perspectives** focusing on literature from the Americas (Caribbean, Central, South, and North), Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. This course enables students to immerse themselves in life experiences and **embrace differing perspectives from all over the world**, which supports the need for the continual use of **21st century skills**, inside and outside of the classroom, and the importance of **thinking and living globally**. While the literature will primarily consist of works that reflect the unique cultures of **countries all over the world**, we will also be reading various **informational texts** in conjunction with the literature. With literature and informational texts, we will be applying newly-learned **reading skills and strategies** in order to **analyze, interpret, delineate, and discuss** the texts. Through this consistent practice, students will be completely prepared for the **EOC (End of Course Exam)** at the end of the semester**. Students are required to pass the EOC in order to be promoted to the next grade, and the EOC is worth ¼ of each student’s final grade in my class.** Throughout the course of the semester, students will actively and regularly participate in numerous EOC prep activities and assignments. Additionally, in English II, there is also a focus on improving students’ skills in **written and oral communication through the study of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, research, and various types of formal and creative writing**. **The final grade in every class is an average of the three six weeks’ grades and the exam.**

**Classroom Rules:** In order to maintain a safe, orderly, and positive learning environment that is free from disruptions or distractions, I expect all students to follow the rules below at all times:

1. Follow all rules, policies, and procedures of Weddington High School. These are included in the Student Handbook in students’ agendas.
2. Be respectful of others’ personal space, opinions, and property. This includes both your teacher and classmates.
3. Respect everyone’s right to learn and gain an education by refraining from any behaviors that would be a distraction to students’ learning or the teacher’s instruction.
4. Bring a positive attitude with you to class every day in order to make each day productive and enjoyable.
5. Come to class prepared. Have all necessary materials with you, including your binder, notebook paper, composition book, writing utensil, highlighter, any assignment due, and the book/text we are currently studying in class.
6. Avoid interrupting or talking to others while someone else is speaking. Show the same respect to everyone in class as you would expect from others. Everyone will be treated fairly and respectfully in my classroom.
7. If you have to sharpen your pencil, get a tissue, go to the trash can, or go to the restroom, do so without disturbing or distracting others or interrupting instruction.
8. Pay attention and participate in class. Give me your all because I will give you mine every day.
9. Please remain in your seat until the bell rings. Packing up early and/or standing at the door is impolite. I teach bell to bell. ☺ Please be in your seat before the bell rings with your composition notebook ready to start class.

**Tardy Policy:** 1st tardy = Verbal warning; 2nd tardy = 15 minutes detention; 3rd tardy = 30 minutes detention. Each tardy after the third is handled by the administration (4th = 2 hours of Saturday work detail; 5th = 4 hours of Saturday work detail; etc.) The consequences are listed in the Student Handbook. A tardy of more than 15 minutes is counted as an absence from that class. All of these statements are in accordance with school policy.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of iPods, iPhones, cell phones, or similar electronic devices is **NOT permitted** in class, unless the teacher specifically makes an exception for an assignment.

**Grading:** Grades will fall into three main categories. They are as follows:

1. **General Assessments/Major Assignments** - 40% (This category includes tests, essays, major projects, etc. Think of it as “the big stuff” we do.)
2. **Quizzes** – 40% (This category obviously contains quizzes, but also included in it are in-class projects, presentations, seminar grades, and informal writing assignments.)
3. **Classwork/Homework** – 20% (This category includes vocabulary definitions, in-class activities, and homework assignments.)

**Required Materials:**

1. A three-ring binder – 1 ½ “ – Binders will get pretty think, due to all of the reading selections, test prep, etc. You should have a separate binder for my class.
2. College-ruled notebook paper
3. Composition notebook (The kind with stitched-together binding; not the spiral kind; “cow books”)
4. 5 dividers (Label as follows: **Literature, Grammar, Vocabulary, Writing, and EOC Prep.**)
5. Blue or black pens
6. Pencils
7. 3-pack of highlighters (at least 3 different colors are required, as we participate in numerous activities throughout the semester involving multiple highlighters of different colors)
8. 1 pack of multi-colored pens – You will use these for a variety of activities throughout the semester.
9. 1 pack of 3X5 index cards for SAT/ACT vocabulary
10. 1 pack of Post-it Notes
11. Tissues
12. A used book for peers your age that we can include in the classroom library – Remember, the goal is to encourage the love of learning, so please share an enjoyable read with your peers.
13. Packaged bags of individually-wrapped candy for prizes during interactive games, activities in class, and test prep review
14. **Wish List:** (Not required but extremely appreciated) Lysol, disinfectant/cleaning wipes, markers, colored pencils, crayons, construction paper, art supplies, novels, etc.

**Homework:** Students will regularly have homework in my class. Homework could consist of reading a novel, reviewing notes, studying for a test/quiz, working on a project, completing a written assignment, preparing using test prep, etc. Students will know of most upcoming reading deadlines, quizzes, and tests, so they should be mindful of those each night. Occasionally, there will be unannounced quizzes designed to assess students’ understanding of various content material and reading assignments. Nevertheless, students should always be prepared for any quiz or form of assessment by paying attention in class and reviewing class material regularly. When I assign a homework assignment that students will turn into me, I will make the deadline very clear. All homework can be found in my daily e-mails to students, parent update e-mails, and on the boards in class.

**Warrior Block:** Per administration’s expectations, all Warrior Blocks associated with an EOC class are required, regardless of the student’s current average in the class. We will maximize our Warrior Block time consistently.

**SAT/ACT Vocabulary:** In my English II class, we approach vocabulary in two different formats – weekly SAT/ACT Vocabulary and daily SAT/ACT vocabulary. There are many extra credit opportunities associated with vocabulary each week, including making flash cards and/or a vocabulary photo poster. Students’ weekly quizzes will assess students’ application and integration of ten vocab words, and students’ quizzes on the SAT Word-of-the-Day lists will occur every twenty words. Students will learn, practice, and integrate the following with each vocabulary list: definition, part of speech, connotation(s), connotation(s) explanation(s), contextual usage, spelling, etc.

**Honor Code:** Weddington High School has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism. A student who cheats, plagiarizes, or copies work from another student, in any way, earns no credit for his/her product, regardless of the amount of time spent on the product or the attractive appearance of the product. Additionally, students are expected to write the WHS Honor Code on every quiz and test. Points will be deducted for any test or quiz that does not have the Honor Code Pledge and student signature. I have the WHS Honor Code posted in multiple places in my classroom for students to see, use, and uphold.

**Make-Up Work:** Make-up work is the **responsibility of the student**. In accordance with county guidelines, a student who is lawfully absent has ***2 days*** to complete make-up work upon return. However, it must be understood that “make-up work” is ***work assigned while the student is absent***. **Any assignments given before the absence are due immediately upon return to school. If a student has prior knowledge of a test or quiz, and he/she misses it, the teacher may require the student to make it up upon return. Students should contact me via e-mail if they will be absent for more than a day or two, so I can help them stay on track. A student must make-up a test or a quiz no later than a week after the absence. We will work together to schedule make-up work. Students can get I keep all additional make-up work, such as notes, class activities, and assignments in a separate folder, so it is the student’s responsibility to get those materials from me when he or she returns.**

**Extra Credit:** I offer extra credit a couple of times each grading period, and **all students are given the same opportunities.** No extra credit is ever offered on an individual basis. These opportunities vary each grading period. Students have multiple opportunities with each vocabulary list to earn extra credit points.

**Inappropriate Material:** In accordance with school policy, if a project or assignment contains profanity, sexual innuendoes, illegal activity, etc., it will result in an out of school suspension of two days and a zero on the project/assignment.

**I am genuinely looking forward to collaboratively working with all students and parents in order to make this semester an academic success. Having your support and dedication moving forward will positively contribute to each child’s education.**

**Thank you, and let’s make it a terrific year! ☺**