Ms. Kerri Mauer **Pre-IB English 9A Course Overview**  Fall 2018



**“It is not that I am so smart. It is just that I stay with problems longer.” –Albert Einstein** [Kerri\_L\_Mauer@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Kerri_L_Mauer@mcpsmd.org) Room 138 (240) 740-2633 (English Dept. Office)

***Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,*** *Welcome to English 9A. This is an exciting course that focuses on the craft of writing. As stated in the MCPS English Language Arts Curriculum Guide,* ***“writing [is] at the forefront of classroom instruction****… and students explore and develop their voices as writers, writing every day for different purposes, in multiple modes, and to varied audiences...” We will create a safe and supportive environment where all students write in personal journals to express themselves and document their lives, and learn to support each other as they use the writing process to help them grow as writers, especially as they tackle various types of academic writing: narrative, analysis, and argument each quarter.  
 This semester students will complete many writing tasks, though not all will be graded, and not all will go through the same level of drafting and revision. In preparation for English 9B and for success in their high school English careers, students will also be required to read and closely annotate a variety of short stories, news articles, and essays. While students will read at least one novel during semester one, the majority of the reading in this course focuses on using shorter texts to allow students to study how writers use language to create meaning. Class texts will also serve as models for students as they write.   
 I see my role as part of a* ***team*** *here to help you and your child transition to high school and find that success follows effort and risk. My goals include making sure your child is engaged and challenged every day. I look forward to a successful, rigorous, and fun semester, helping your student reach his/her full potential and prepare for future advanced Honors, AP, and IB English courses.   
   
 Sincerely,  
 Ms. Kerri Mauer*

*P.S. I will be teaching students the techniques and providing them the time on a weekly basis to practice mindfulness to help them find balance and reduce academic stress. Research shows that this practice in a school setting can lower stress and improve academic performance.*

**Supplies:** loose-leaf paper, black or blue pens, agenda book, and a binder dedicated to English. Students must bring to class a composition notebook for journaling. One yellow highlighter is required. Post-its recommended.

**Common Tasks:**

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| **Quarter 1:**   * **Narrative: A fictional narrative that achieves a particular effect (Centrally reported during Quarter 1)** * **Argument:** An evaluation or a review of a work of art * **Analysis:** An informative essay on the history or background of a topic |
| **Quarter 2:**   * **Analysis: An analytical response to a text, including a discussion of style (Centrally reported during Quarter 2)** * Argument: An argument that incorporates alternative or opposing views * **Narrative:** A narrative about a significant event in the life of another person |

**Make-up Work and Tardies/Absences:**  
It is your responsibility to get the assignments and schedule make-ups when you are absent. You have as many days as you were absent to turn in missed work. Because we will move at a quick pace, I recommend that you exchange email information with a classmate and check myMCPS Classroom to keep up to date with work.

# **Grading Policy:** Late Work

All work submitted *after the due date but before the deadline* and will be assessed following MCPS guidelines. After the stated deadline, work will not be accepted. When not stated otherwise, the deadline and the due date are the same. All homework is due and is not accepted for credit after the date it is due (since its purpose is often to review or prepare for the following day’s lesson/activity). Longer pieces of writing (common tasks) must be submitted as a paper copy or shared electronically as a Google Doc, *and* submitted to Turnitin.com. Papers not submitted to turnitin.com will earn a zero.

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| **Types of Assignments and Relative Weights** | **Assignments that may appear in these categories include but are not limited to:** |
| 10% Completion | Warm-ups, homework for completion, class work for completion, journal entries |
| 90% Evaluative\*  *This category will include both formative and summative assessments.* | Common tasks, oral presentations, Socratic seminars, graphic organizers, one-pagers, exit cards, dialectical journal entries, quizzes, written responses, drafts of papers (There will be NO reassessment opportunities given for summative assessments.) |

**Reassessment:**

Reassessment opportunities are identified by the teacher and occur within an instructional unit. Assessments/tasks that indicate a final measure of learning (Summative assignments) may not be reassessed. When reassessment is offered, all students may be reassessed, regardless of grade on original task/assessment if they meet county requirements. The assessment grade replaces the original grade.

*The following grade scale will be used:*  
A:   89.5-100% B: 79.5-89% C: 69.5-79% D: 59.5-69% E: 59% and lower

**Classroom Standards:**

* Show respect to others AT ALL TIMES. Do not talk when others are talking. Use respectful language.  
  I will not tolerate inappropriate, discriminatory or exclusive language.
* Because this is a language course, you will be required to verbally defend your claims, opinions, and analysis. (Be prepared to speak in front of the class regularly.)
* Come to class prepared every day and give your best effort.
* Class will begin when the bell rings. **You will be marked tardy if you are not in your seat and ready to work (pen *and* paper *and* homework or journal on desk) when the bell rings.**

**Absences:**

* Only when you have excused absences (note turned in within three days) may you receive credit for make-up work. You have as many days as you were absent to make up your work. If you have missed a test or quiz, arrange a time outside of class time to meet with me.
* If you have an unexcused absence, you will receive no credit for work that was due during that period.

**Typing Requirements:**

* A proper MLA formatted heading belongs in the upper LEFT on ALL work. (Instructions are posted in class).
* All assignments, unless stated otherwise, should be typed, saved as Google docs, double-spaced; size 12 Calibri font; with one inch margins and adhere to all proper MLA formatting requirements (to be reviewed in class).

**EXTRA HELP:** I am available before and after school by appointment and at lunch Tuesday-Thursdays. If you have ANY questions, please do not hesitate to ask me for help. **For email purposes, please use my Outlook account listed at the top of this document.**

**Important Note:** Because ninth graders need to practice independent, respectful advocacy skills with their teachers, one of my goals is to support students as they learn to navigate their academic conversations. **Students are strongly encouraged to reach out to me in person or by email, rather than asking a parent or guardian to speak up on his/her behalf.**