

# Course Syllabus Fall 2011

## Contemporary Literature

“Literature is the Thought of thinking souls.” – Sir Walter Scott

“Take the whole range of imaginative literature, and we are all wholesale borrowers. In every matter that relates to invention, to use, or beauty or form, we are borrowers.” – Wendell Phillips

Welcome to Contemporary Literature! This syllabus has all of the important information that you will need to know for this class, so hold on to it!

**Contact information:** Room 235  
815 625-6886 extension 170  
lawsonl@rfhs301.org  
<<http://www.rfhs301.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/Academic%20Departments%7C%20English%3E%3EMr.%20Lawson>>

**Rules:** You are seniors and therefore I feel no need to enumerate any specific rules. Act like adults. Respect everyone else in the room. These are very general, but there are a “big four” set of issues that I will be adamant about enforcing **from day one until the end of the semester:**

- No talking while I or someone else is talking
- Cell phones (see below)
- Tardies (see below)
- Planners (see below)

**Cell phones:** The policy set forth in the Student Handbook will be strictly followed with no exceptions. Simply, if I see it, hear it, or *am aware that it is being used*, I will take it. I will turn it in to the office.

**Late work:** Any homework that is not submitted or checked in at the time it is due, can be turned in any time before the **END OF THE FOLLOWING DAY for HALF CREDIT. After this time no late work will be accepted and the assignment will be recorded as a zero.**

**Tardy policy:** If you are not inside the **threshold of the door** by the time the bell finishes ringing, you will be considered tardy. School policy dictates the punishments for the **fourth** and all subsequent times tardy, and the consequences for the first three in any of my classes are:

- One – Warning
- Two – 15 minute detention
- Three – 30 minute detention and a parent contact

Detentions must be served within 36 hours of the offense and may be served either before or after school in room 235.

**Supplies:** Each day you will bring these items to class

- Whatever book we are currently reading
- Paper to write on
- Something to write with
- A folder containing *any and all handouts that you have been given **all year*** as well as returned assignments
- Your Student Planner

**Bathroom use:** You are given ten opportunities to use the restroom or get a drink per semester (barring emergencies). For each of these ten that you don't use at the end of the semester you will receive fifty extra credit points. I will keep track of the number times you leave the room, and oh, yes, without a planner do not bother even asking.

**Absences:** If you miss a day for any reason, it is up to you to find out what you have to make up, and then, actually do it. That's all.

**Assessment:** Your final grade will be broken down this way

- 10% - 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Assessment
- 10% - 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Assessment
- 10% - Participation
- 20% - Writing
- 50% - Tests, quizzes, projects, in-class activities, etc.

**Prep period:** My prep periods are 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> periods. Feel free to come by then before or after school, with proper permission, and talk about the class or anything else. I'll be happy to answer any questions during these hours; however, *do not stop by my room during any other hours to ask questions*. None will be answered because I will not interrupt my classes for any reason.

**Participation points:** I will be giving everyone 30 participation points per week... providing you don't do anything to lose them. Each infraction of any of the following – as determined by me – will result in a five point deduction from your weekly participation points:

- Talking while I'm talking
- Putting your head down
- Not working on assigned work when given time
- Not knowing "where we are" when reading together as a class
- Anything insulting or offensive to another student in class (or teacher)
- Not having completed a homework assignment (*this in addition to late or no credit for the assignment*)
- Leaving anything in the classroom (with certain exceptions)

And Finally...

- NOT BRINGING MATERIAL THAT IS NEEDED TO CLASS!!

This includes all supplies listed above.

Last but not least...

**Plagiarism:** Don't do it. It is that simple. If you do try, I will catch you. I am able to tell the difference between something written by a high school author and something taken from a book or website. And I know all of the tricks, spelling something wrong, changing just a word or two, so again, just don't try it. Even if all that is taken from another source is just one sentence, it still counts! Repercussions for plagiarism are also detailed in the Student Handbook.