

Course Syllabus 2011-2012

English II-A

Sophomore [soh-uh-mawr] *noun* 1. a student in the second year of high school or college

Sophomoric [sof-uh-mawr-ik] *adjective* 1. of or pertaining to a sophomore or sophomores. 2. suggesting of or resembling the traditional sophomore; intellectually pretentious, overconfident, conceited, etc., but immature.

dictionary.com

“Don't forget your please and thank yous, don't forget to smile
Don't pass this up, nothing is ever easy

Are you ready to work real hard?
Are you tired? It's just the start
Listen to me son, I'll take you far”
- Lucky Boys Confusion “Fred Astaire”

“The pen is mightier than the sword” – Edward Bulwer-Lytton

“I am an arms dealer, fitting you with weapons in the form of words” – Pete Wentz

“If you listen, you may learn something!” – Judge Joe Brown

Welcome to English II-A! 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>>

Textbook: *Elements of Literature* Forth Course

Literature: The literature we read in class is divided into units. We will be completing five units this year:

Breakthroughs
Hard Choices
To Kill a Mockingbird
Julius Cesar

Rules: The rules are quite simple:

- Be prepared
- Be polite
- Work your hardest

Also, all policies dictated in the Student Handbook will be followed precisely.

While I am sure that the vast majority of you know what it means to be responsible students in class, for those who are not 100% sure, I have laid out the basics of what behavior will be restricted in class:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Talking out of turn
- Derogatory language including insulting others, using racial slurs (**even when they are not directed at anyone in particular**), etc.
- Commentary that is out of place in the situation (e.g. asking about missed homework, to go to the bathroom, asking a question that's unrelated to what is being discussed, or telling a personal anecdote during instruction)
- Rude or inappropriate gestures
- Throwing, flinging, or in other ways launching items through the air, including throwing paper, etc. into the garbage cans without permission
- Disturbing other people's possessions or materials
- Sitting in the wrong seat
- Anything else that is deemed to be distracting to the class (e.g. squeaking chairs, tapping pens, or tearing paper)
- Not working on assigned class work
- Writing or reading notes
- Negative comments (e.g. "this sucks" or "this is stupid")

Punishments for violating these guidelines will be dictated by myself in proportion to the severity of the offense and can vary from instance to instance.

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 and I will turn it in to the office.

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.

Late work: For late work I'm using a very simple "no zeros" policy, used by other teachers in the building, including other who teach English II-A. Here's how it works:

- 1st Day-Ten percent off
- 2nd Day- Fifty percent off
- 3rd Day-Fifty percent off and academic detentions UNTIL ALL HOMEWORK IS COMPLETE!

Supplies: Each day you will bring these items to class

- Your textbook
- 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.

Prep period: My prep periods are 3rd and 6th 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.

Assessment: Your final grade will be broken down this way

- 10% - 1st Quarterly Assessment
- 10% - 2nd Quarterly Assessment
- 10% - Participation
- 20% - Writing
- 20% - Homework
- 30% - Tests, quizzes, projects, in-class activities, etc.

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.