

Syllabus: Guide to a Great Year

*Welcome to American Writers! I'm excited to spend the semester with you guys!
Please read over the following guidelines and procedures for my classroom to help us have an awesome year.*

Contact me at Kimberly.gilbert@k12northstar.org

Course Goals

- Read, analyze, and discuss various literary forms, including prose, poetry, drama, and speech as a vehicle for examining and understanding culture.
- Compose and express ideas in written, speech, and creative form.
- Write over time and on-demand to develop the ability to express one's original ideas to authentic audiences.
- Become comfortable with the drafting, writing, and revising process, including working with peers to improve writing.
- Collaborate with peers over a variety of subject matter, ideas, and texts to expand and enhance a diverse worldview.
- Examine this semester's core question: **What is the American Dream and to what extent is it realized in the lives of past, present, and future Americans?**

Grading

*Show up, do the class work each day, and be a good citizen of this classroom,
and I will get you to 40%. The rest is up to how much you put into this class!*

Points Break Down will be approximately as follows:

- Citizenship ~ 15%
- Daily & Miscellaneous Work ~ 25%
- Writing/Speeches/Presentations/Projects ~ 50%
- Summative Project ~ 10%

Final - Your summative project will be your final exam, and will consist of a test and project portion.

Extra Credit

- Each quarter you may read a book on your own time to count toward extra credit. When you finish a book, you will schedule a Book Talk with me during lunch. During this Book Talk you will prove to me that you have read the book. Based on how intelligently and thoroughly you are able to talk to me about the book, you can earn up to 20 pts of extra credit per quarter.
- Your Book Talk must be scheduled with me one week in advance.
- If you are unsure whether the book you have in mind will meet the requirement, speak with me BEFORE you start reading! I reserve the right to refuse you extra credit if your book does not meet grade-level expectations.

Late Work

- Late Work will be accepted for **HALF CREDIT** after the due date, unless other extension plans have been discussed.
- I define LATE as turned in after I have collected the assignment.
- Life happens! If you have extenuating circumstances please contact me in person or via email ASAP and we will work together to develop an extension plan. If you show up to class without speaking to me first, you accept half credit for any late assignments.
- In-Class writes and presentations will not be accepted for late credit. If you are absent on one of those days, be sure to follow the Make-Up work procedures listed below.

Make-up Work

If you were absent, follow these steps before asking me what you missed.

1. Check the **class website** to find out what you missed. This can be accessed at:
mrsgilbertsenglishclass.weebly.com
2. On the website, view any presentations, videos, etc. that you missed. Take notes as necessary.
3. Collect any handouts you missed from the file folder in the classroom.
4. If you missed an in-class writing or presentation day, find out the make-up time from me.
 - YOU are responsible for scheduling this – DO NOT expect me to track you down.
 - Make-up writing/presentation days will only be allowed if you have an EXCUSED absence.
 - If you know you're going to be gone, speak with me and make make-up arrangements BEFORE you are absent. If you were sick, speak with me directly the NEXT day (regardless of whether we have class or not!) or email me from home if you feel up to it.

Citizenship: Respect others, this classroom, and yourself!

Respect others by...

1. Not talking while someone else is talking.
2. Being kind, encouraging, and respectful in word and tone.

Respect this classroom by...

1. Being on time.
2. Being prepared.

Respect yourself by...

1. Being attentive in class and ready to learn.
2. Doing your own work.

Violation of Respect Rules will result in loss of Citizenship points.

Citizenship points will be entered at the end of each week, up to 10 pts each week.

Learning Environment

- I'm not interested in babysitting you; I want to spend my time working with those who want to put in the work to learn and grow. I expect you to use your time well in class.
- I do not allow sleeping or phone misuse in my classroom. Expect to be at work and on task when you are in this class.
- I expect you to work hard each day up until pack up time, which I will always give you.

Each day you will need...

1. Something to write with
2. Loose-leaf paper for assignments
3. American Writers Notebook – notes, quickwrites, discussions, etc.
4. Assigned Texts

Phone Policy

- Phones should be out of sight (backpack, purse, pocket) as soon as the bell rings until I release you for pack up time.
- Earbuds should be out of your ears and put out of sight as soon as the bell rings until I release you for pack up time.
- If I see your phone or earbuds I will collect it/them for the rest of class. Refusal to comply with this consequence will result in a referral.
- If you think you need to use your phone for an academic purpose, please ask me first. This shows me you are respecting the classroom's learning environment.
- If you have a personal emergency you need to deal with, please communicate that to me before class or as soon as you are aware so I don't assume misuse.
- There may be some independent work times when I release you to listen to music with one earbud only. In this situation I will release you to put music on, and I expect you to put on a playlist and then return your phone to its out of sight location until pack up time.
- If your phone/music use keeps you OR others from having a distraction-free learning environment, you will lose the privilege of having it in your possession while in this class.
- Choosing not to deal with your phone/earbuds responsibly in this classroom will result in a loss of citizenship points and further disciplinary action if the issue persists.

Do Your Own Work...

Plagiarism, cheating, or copying the work of others will NOT be tolerated and will result in a ZERO for that assignment. Please refer to the Student Handbook for further consequences relating to this serious offense.

Tardies

- I define tardy as not inside the classroom door when the bell stops ringing. If you're late, you must go get a pass.
- Unexcused tardies and unexcused absences will negatively impact your Citizenship grade in increasing measure. If you have a legitimate reason for missing school, you need to report that to the attendance secretary.

Passes

- Unless it is a true emergency, please do not ask for a pass in the middle of a lecture, discussion, group work, notes, etc., as you will miss important information.
- A pass is for 3-5 mins. You should go where you have marked your destination and back.
- You will not need to take your phone on pass as phones are not to be used during class time. If I see it, you surrender it, as per classroom policy.
- No passes will be given within the first or last ten minutes of class, per school policy.
- Please be sure to ask if you can use the pass, don't just take it. When you leave the classroom on a pass, fill out the pass form completely before you leave and when you return.

Any questions about your grade, an assignment, or anything else? Come see me before school or during lunch. ☺