

# Honors English

Nerd Up

Respect      Responsibility      Prepared

**You are responsible for the information detailed in this syllabus. Put this someplace safe and available to use when needed. The calendar and book/movie list is subject to change.**

**Honors English** is a full year senior literature and composition class that takes the most advanced elements from each of the other senior electives and puts them together with serious debate and discussion, informational reading and other classical literature that is not taught in any other class. It is rigorous and should serve as ample preparation for college literature and composition classes. If any honors student wishes to take the AP exam at the end of the year we will spend extra time during lunches in the spring preparing.

## **Books:**

*Henry IV Part I*

*Henry IV Part II*

*Henry V*

*Life of Pi*

*Oliver Twist*

*Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy*

*Cold Mountain, Snow Falling on Cedars,  
or The Power of One*

## **Movies:**

*Moneyball*

*Anonymous*

*Independence Day*

*Live From Bagdad*

*Snow White, Beauty and the Beast, The*

*Little Mermaid, or Sleeping Beauty*

## **Reading**

One of the essential elements to your English education is to be able to read, comprehend, and connect to different texts. One of the current pushes in education is to abandon novel based English education and focus on informational reading. We will NOT be abandoning novels and literature, but we will be focusing more heavily on informational reading and how it connects to the novels we read.

## **Writing**

Beware. You've stumbled into a writer's world. My bucket list contains the words "write the next great American novel." Until I do, I will focus my time and energy on making every student a better writer. We will write essays, position papers, stories, reports, letters, poems, and anything else that I can, or you can, think of to write. I have a very specific expectations and a lot to teach you, even if you are honor's seniors.

## **Homework**

Since much of the class time will be spent in discussion or watching movies and documentaries, much of your homework will be writing and reading based. You will often be asked to come to

class with stories and ideas that you secure from the Internet or newspapers. If you do not have access to the Internet or to a newspaper at home then you must make arrangements to stay after school with Mrs. Shanks or myself.

### **Socratic Seminars**

In this class we will hold several Socratic Seminars. These will require you to come to class prepared with talking points about what we have been reading or discussing in class. Please see the attached handout about Socratic Seminars.

### **Movies**

As you can see we will view several videos and movies. If you miss a class where we are viewing a movie it will be up to you to come in and watch what you missed on your own time. Anything that we watch I consider important and will be a part of the tested curriculum.

### **Tests**

There will be tests and quizzes in this class. While I want to make sure that you understand the plot and characters in the books, movies and documentaries we study, only about half of each quiz or test will be asking those questions. At least half of each test or quiz will be looking for an understanding of theme. What are these stories saying about human nature, about life?

### **1<sup>st</sup> Semester Final**

While we will not have a comprehensive quarter test, there will be a semester final that will cover all that we read, watch and discuss in the class. I recommend that you have a separate folder or binder for your Honors English materials and that you keep everything for the entire semester. That includes all handouts, tests, quizzes and assignments whether they have been graded or not.

### **SSR**

You will have four SSR book assignments this year. The books should meet or exceed your current reading level. (This means second quarter *Divergent* and *Hunger Games* are out.) I have lists to help you if you are having trouble finding a book. The first quarter is "classic" literature. The second quarter is dystopian. The third quarter is memoir or biography. The last quarter is student's choice.

Each quarter you will be expected to complete an SSR project. This project is a comprehensive look at plot, character and theme in the book you chose. Please see more about this on the sheet titled "SSR"

Every early out will also be SSR days for the class. This means that you must bring your book and read through the period. Each SSR period is worth 10 points in the grade book and can be made up at home if you are absent. You must only bring a note saying that you read for ½ hour signed by a parent, guardian, or teacher.

### **Use of Technology**

I am a huge proponent of the school's cell phone use policy. I have witnessed the good that can come from the ability to access information, or to communicate with parents. That being said, if I

believe that you are abusing the use of the cell phone I will take it and you can retrieve it at the end of the period. If it happens twice you can retrieve it at the end of the day, the third time the phone goes to the office, and you will have to deal with them to retrieve it. Abuse includes playing games or texting during lectures, movies, discussions, or presentations or viewing inappropriate sites or pictures at anytime.

## *Honors Contract*

The honors program is about challenging oneself to go above and beyond the state mandated curriculum. In an honors program a student is held to a higher standard in both the work he/she completes, and the way that student presents himself or herself. With that in mind, an honors student exhibits traits that all students should aspire to: drive, timeliness, ability to multi-task, and a healthy sense of competition and inspiration to be the best in class. The student should be reading at a high level, be able to comprehend and think critically about texts, understand the verbiage associated with reading and writing, and be willing and eager to participate in a high level Socratic discussion about a myriad of themes and ideas. An honors student is above all mature and able to appropriately handle difficult themes and subject matter.

In order to join the honors program or to rejoin the honors program after failing to meet the standards you must: (Ninth graders can meet these standards first semester, honors begins second semester.)

To maintain eligibility in the honors program a student must:

- Have no more than one zero or missing or late assignment per quarter
- Maintain an 'A' or a 'B' for each quarter and receive an 'A' or a 'B' on all final exams
- Have zero unexcused absences
- Have no more than 2 unexcused tardies each semester
- Receive the equivalent of an 'A' or 'B' on each portfolio paper per.
- Meet proficiency on all English standards

If you fail to meet the eligibility requirements you will be removed from the program and placed in a regular English class at the quarter or semester break. You can earn your way back into the program by completing each of the items in the first list above.

I have read this contract and agree to the terms listed above.

Student name Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

Student name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name Signed

## Parent Permission and Signatory Section

It is very important to me that parents and guardians know what is being taught in the classroom. Please read the list above and make sure that you know what your son or daughter is reading and watching. If you have any questions about the material don't hesitate to contact me, If you are uncomfortable with any of the above listed books or movies, I will give your student an alternate assignment. Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

I also ask for your support with my policies. Please read the syllabus and I am available if there are any questions at [charliea@bigfork.k12.mt.us](mailto:charliea@bigfork.k12.mt.us), or 406-837-7420 x242 Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

I wholeheartedly believe that tardiness is unacceptable. This being said I will keep track of those tardies as the school year progresses. If I must, I will keep your son or daughter after school to make up time lost for being late. 5 tardies = one hour after school or before school with Mrs. Shanks or myself. More than 2 unexcused tardies will result in removal from the honors program. Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, I also think it is important to stay in touch with parents during the school year, not only when problems arise, but to make sure problems do not arise. If you would like to be a part of my E-Mail list, please put it on the line below. It is also important that you know your son or daughter's PIN number for checking the PASS system and his or her My Big Campus login information.

This piece of paper is the first assignment of the year. It is due by Friday of the first week of the semester.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Parent Name (If Applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Parent Signature (If Applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian E-Mail

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Parent E-Mail (If Applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

