

English 9/10 ATYP  
Western Michigan University  
Kendall Center, Battle Creek, Michigan

Instructor: Ruth Valdes  
(rrvaldes1@sbcglobal.net)  
517-629-4616 Home  
517-414-9645 Cell

If you need to talk to me, please feel free to call me. I prefer you call me at my home number, but I can be reached on my cell phone in an emergency. Students who are absent for any reason need to contact me in order to receive any assignments missed. I am currently very busy in the day; however, I am a night owl. I actually prefer you call me at night. Please, don't call after midnight. Use my email for quick questions. I check my email twice a day, but I like to handle things over the phone or face to face when possible.

**Grades:** In general, grades will be determined by the following guidelines. Each class develops its own personality, and adjustments and modifications in the grading system and the syllabus may be necessary.

Major Writing Assignments/tests:	50%
Homework, Daily Work	20%
Journals, Vocabulary	20%
Other including participation	10%

During the second semester the research paper using MLA guidelines will be a significant portion of the grade. As a rule, late work is not accepted. In case of an illness or a family emergency, a parent contact is necessary.

**Required Texts:**

- Patterns of Writing*
- To Kill a Mockingbird* (summer reading)
- Raisin in the Sun* (summer reading)
- Of Mice and Men* (summer reading)
- Things Fall Apart*
- Animal Farm*
- Romeo and Juliet*

**Course Description:** Writing I is a course designed to introduce students to advanced composition skills. Students have weekly writing assignments that include formal and informal essays, quick writes, book reviews, and essay tests. All students are assigned weekly writing assignments using a variety of writing strategies. The following list includes some of the strategies studied by the students: anecdote/ personal experience, narrative, description, explication, definition, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and persuasive. Throughout the entire course students will be required to read numerous literary and nonfiction essays, short stories, and poems. Students will be expected to maintain a vocabulary and a reading journal.

Although Writing I emphasizes building good writing skills, quality literature is also a strong component of the course. Literature is used to provide examples and to serve as inspiration for various writing assignments. For independent reading, students are required to read books from a list recommended by the College Board. Some of the major works studied will include *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Raisin in the Sun*, *Things Fall Apart*, *Animal Farm*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. During the second semester,

students will finish the year with a unit on poetry emphasizing works by American poets. As part of the poetry unit, students will read and write their poetry as part of a creative writing unit. Some of the major poets studied will include the Harlem Renaissance poets especially Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, and Countee Cullen.

During the second semester, students will research and write a major research paper using MLA guidelines. Throughout the semester, students will continue to read classic and modern literature. As students practice improving their writing skills, a special emphasis will be placed on developing an argument.

#### Semester One

1. Writing I students are introduced to the practices of good writing. In addition to regular writing and reading assignments, students are expected to keep a vocabulary notebook and a reading journal.
  - A. Discussion of the summer reading *To Kill a Mockingbird/Raisin in the Sun/Of Mice and Men*
  - B. Vocabulary, syntax, and diction choice
  - C. Grammar review of common mistakes made by adults
  - D. Writing process
  - E. Review writing on standardized tests/AP.
2. Types of Expository writing. Students will complete formal and informal assignments using a variety of writing techniques. Students will use a college reader to study sample writings by professional authors. Some of the authors students will read will include Annie Dillard, Malcolm X, Sandra Cisneros, and E. B. White. The following is a list of the different methods of development studied by the students:
  - A. Anecdote and personal experience
  - B. Narrative and description
  - C. Explication
  - D. Definition
  - E. Cause and effect
  - F. Compare and contrast
  - G. Process
  - H. Persuasive
  - I. Reviews
3. Although Writing I emphasizes good writing skills, quality literature is a strong component of the course. Literature from a variety of classic and modern writers is studied. In addition, students are required to extensive independent reading. From their independent reading, students are required to present oral and written reviews. The following is a list of some of the major works studied.
  - A. *To Kill a Mockingbird*
  - B. *Raisin in the Sun*
  - C. Shakespeare's sonnets and *Romeo and Juliet*
  - D. *The Piano Lesson*
  - E. *Things Fall Apart*

#### Semester Two

During the second semester, students will build on the strategies and skills that they learned during the first semester. A seven-page research paper using MLA guidelines is one of the major projects for this semester. During this semester, students will be introduced to more literature including an additional novel and many shorter works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. At the end of the semester, students will complete a creative writing unit with an emphasis on poetry.

1. Augmentation/research paper
  - A. Developing an argument
  - B. Researching an augment
  - C. MLA Style/documentation/issues of plagiarism
  - D. Outlining/planning
  - E. A report v. a research paper
  - F. Writing and revising
2. Literary Analysis I--an allegorical novel
  - A. *Animal Farm*
  - B. Censorship issues relating to controversial literature including *Huckleberry Finn*
  - C. Understanding allegory

- D. Historical background to the novel
- 3. Literary Analysis II--poetry
  - A. Poetry terms and structure
  - B. Harlem Renaissance poets
  - C. Edgar Allan Poe
  - D. Robert Frost
  - E. Carl Sandburg
  - F. Emily Dickinson
  - G. Phillis Wheatley
  - H. Other poets
- 4. Literary Analysis III/short stories/nonfiction
  - A. Edgar Allan Poe
  - B. Shirley Jackson
  - C. O' Henry
  - D. Alice Walker
  - E. Langston Hughes
  - F. Other authors including student selected
- 5. Writing Workshop While students are reading poetry and short stories, they will begin a unit on creative writing while will run parallel to the units on poetry and short stories.
  - A. Creative writing handouts
  - B. Review literary terms and techniques
  - C. Students will write a variety of poems
    - Found poetry
    - Clipped poems
    - Other teacher assigned poems
  - D. Students will write a completed short story