**Course Syllabus**

**Vineyard Academy, Windsor High School**

**Mr. Mehew**

**tmehew@slzusd.org**

**timehew@gmail.com**

**Office Hours:** After school on “B” Days. Please check in with me on the day of. I strongly encourage you to utilize office hours.

**Course Description**

The emphasis of this course is to improve students’ overall critical thinking and communication skills via reading, writing, and public speaking. Students are expected to fully engage in the writing process, learn the traits of good writing, and practice a variety of writing forms. This includes practicing their skills in syntax, grammar, and vocabulary to better equip them to make stronger and more informed analysis. In regards to reading, students are expected to participate in all assigned class reading as well as to engage in independent reading. Students will need to log, respond to, and gain parent verification of reading over 1,000 pages throughout the course of the year. Students will practice reading comprehension strategies using a variety of texts, including poetry fiction, non-fiction, and film. Vocabulary is emphasized and students are expected to develop fluency with words and academic literary concepts. Participation in class and group discussions, presentations, and cooperative learning activities will enhance students’ abilities to speak effectively and become active listeners and students will be expected to present and speak in front of the class on a regular basis.

**Course Objectives:**

* Students will read and understand grade-level appropriate material.
* Students will analyze, respond to, and critique a variety of literature.
* Students will continue to increase their knowledge of vocabulary and use their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words.
* Students will write coherent and focused essays that demonstrate a clear thesis and well-defined perspectives.
* Students will progress through the stages of writing to create a polished final product.
* Students will become more fluent readers and understand new concepts and vocabulary
* Students will become more efficient communicators and become comfortable while speaking publicly

**Required Materials**

* A student planner
* A class folder dedicated to English/Language Arts **OR** a section of a larger binder. The folder will be used to hold “Do-Nows”, handouts, current assignments, and completed assignments.
* Writing materials: Binder Paper, Pens, and Pencils.
* Independent reading materials (i.e. a book: students may choose to use the campus library).
* USB Flash Drive (recommended)
* Students will be required to bring copies of class reading material to class everyday

**Academic Expectations**

Students will be prepared to learn each time they come class. This means being equipped with all necessary materials as well as staying current with independent reading and all other homework assignments. Daily assessments will occur randomly and students will be expected to strive for their personal academic best on each assignment.

There will be a lot of writing in this course. Students will be expected to engage with the texts on reflective and analytic levels and explore concepts used to make observations in each unit. Discussions will be a bit more casual but will be a critical element in the learning process and will therefore require the participation of the entire class. Again, students must be prepared for discussion and written class work by staying current with all reading and homework assignments

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic Dishonesty is defined as cheating, plagiarism, collusion, etc. and is contrary to the principles of personal responsibility and integrity. Students who have committed academic dishonesty will be subject to academic sanctions and school disciplinary actions.

**Behavioral Expectations**

As your teacher it is my duty to protect the learning environment of this classroom at all costs. Students should feel comfortable to share their personal readings and expect tolerance for their differences. This equates to a classroom built upon mutual respect for everyone involved in the learning process and holds that **anything in opposition will not be tolerated**. Students whose actions disrupt this environment or obstruct learning from taking place should expect swift consequences. Those that respect their classmates and the learning environment will be treated with equal respect from their teacher. Proper conduct is to be considered the base expectation in this classroom, by which no one will succeed without.

Students will also be expected to abide by established school rules and I will implement consequences as needed. Overtly defiant behavior will not be tolerated. These students will be dealt administrative punishment. **No food or drinks are allowed in the classroom. Multiple cell phone infraction will result in a referral.**

**Attendance/Late Work Policies**

Students will be expected to attend class regularly and will only get a chance to make up assignments when their absences are excused. Absent students will be held accountable for all class notes and general information given during the time of their absences. You have my email address and Jupiter at your disposal. **USE THEM!** Students who are tardy will not receive points for the daily ‘Do-Now’ activity.

While it is important that students complete all work on time, if a student does not turn in an assignment on time, it is still important that he/she complete the assignment. Completing **ALL** course work allows students to be eligible for full credit and allows me to assess whether the student has met the standards. The following is my late work policy:

* Late work will **NOT** receive full credit without an excused absence.
* Late Project or paper with due dates scheduled in advance may not receive full credit **even with an excused absence**.
* **Late assignments are deducted 15%**
* Arrangements will be made with students with a significant amount of excused consecutive absences

**Grading Policy**

Assignments will be graded using an accumulated point system and then averaged to determine the course letter grade. I use the following grading scale to determine this component of their overall grade:

100 % = A+ 88 – 89 % = B+ 78 – 79 % = C+ 68 – 69 % = D+

93 – 99% = A 83 – 87 % = B 73 – 77 % = C 63 – 67 % = D

92 – 90% = A- 80 – 82 % = B- 70 – 72 % = C- 60 – 62 % = D-

Credit recovery assignments are available for students who have received an insufficient amount of credits.

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**Please sign, tear off, and return with student.**

**Keep class syllabus for your reference.**

**I (We) the parent(s) / guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have read and reviewed, with my (our) student, the course syllabus for the 2014-2015 school year.**

**Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**In Addition:**

**\_\_\_\_Please check here if you (and your student) have access to a computer at home**

**\_\_\_\_Please check here if you regularly (or plan to) check Jupiter**

**Phone #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**