

**English 11 - Academic  
Altoona Area High School**

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**Objectives:**

- Academic English 11 focuses on thinking about and responding to selected novels, short stories, drama, nonfiction writing and poetry more critically.
- Students won't just dig for the surface level facts in a text; they will discover *why* and *how* a written work has meaning. They will learn to read, think and write with depth, focus and insight.
- Students will learn how to organize and express their thoughts as concisely and clearly as possible through classroom discussions and informal and formal writing assignments.

Three areas of focus:

- 1.) Grammar – Grammar matters. Poor grammar is a disservice to readers, the SATs require a fairly in-depth understanding of grammar and proper grammar usage demonstrates the pursuit of excellence. Grammar is difficult, but our goal is to make our writing as clear and functional as possible and to develop attention to detail.
- 2.) Writing – Students will learn how to organize and express their thoughts on paper, focusing especially on clarity, precision and analysis. I will assign short, informal and long-term formal written work that focuses on informing, exposing and or persuading.
- 3.) Reading – Critical reading may be the most important skill you may ever learn and develop in your life. To be successful in any area of study or profession, you need to digest written information as accurately, thoughtfully, and efficiently as possible. This is why we will practice close-reading-- individually, in small groups and as a class. We may cover the following works and works by the following authors:

Longer pieces: *Night* by Elie Wiesel, *Odyssey* by Homer, *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers, *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles

Short stories/essays/articles: Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, Toni Cade Bambara, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ray Bradbury, W. W. Jacobs, Jonathon Franzen, Zadie Smith, Jon Krakauer, Michael Finkel

Poetry by: William Blake, Brian Turner, Wilfred Owen, Sylvia Plath, Shane Koyczan, T. S. Eliot, Langston Hughes, John Keats, Gwendolyn Brooks

**Classroom Rules:**

My classroom rules are simple and easy to follow:

- 1.) Treat the teacher and your fellow students with dignity and respect.
- 2.) During class time (as opposed to a private conversation), raise your hand and let me call on you.
- 3.) Give your very best effort in class and when completing any and all assignments—in-class assignments, homework, projects, essays, warm-ups, etc. This also means to come to class prepared and on time!

If you break my rules, I will follow this disciplinary procedure:

- 1.) Strong verbal warning
- 2.) A private conference and a seating change
- 3.) Teacher Detention where student will fill out a Pink Slip\* (I'll explain this further)
- 4.) Communication with parent or guardian
- 5.) Referral to assistant principal

### **Late Homework/Project Policy**

My job as an educator is to encourage excellence in all areas of a student's life, including punctuality and organization. For this reason, there must be consequences for not turning in work on time or at all.

- I DO NOT accept smaller assignments (10 points or less) that are turned in late unless you have an excused absence. I do this to teach students that everything matters—how you present yourself, what you think about, whether you choose to do “small assignments.”
- I DO accept larger assignments (more than 10 points) that are turned in late, but I deduct a letter grade each day that it is late. For example, if you turn in an assignment 1 day late, the maximum score you can possibly receive is 90%. You will not lose any points if you have an excused absence.

### **Tardiness and Unexcused Absences**

Your chances of learning increase when you come to class on time all the time. You are considered tardy or absent without excuse if you don't have a written excuse from school faculty or staff. Period. Refer to the student handbook if you do not know the consequences for unexcused absences and tardiness.

### **Grading:**

The breakdown for grades:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Essays, tests and major projects       | 50-100 points per assignment                       |
| • Quizzes, smaller projects/written work | 20 points per assignment                           |
| • In-class assignments                   | 5 points per assignment                            |
| • Homework                               | 5 points per assignment                            |
| • Participation                          | 10% of total grade (entered end of marking period) |

### **Academic Honesty Policy:**

Academic dishonesty in any form—plagiarizing, cheating on a test, helping other students cheat, etc.—will not be tolerated in my classroom. Cheating will generally result in immediate failure, a call home and potentially a referral to the assistant principal depending on the scale of the cheating.

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I have read the above syllabus in its entirety and agree to the procedures and rules.

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**Student Signature**

**Date**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature**

**Date**