

Welcome to 8th grade Honors English!!! I am very excited about this year and what we will be doing together in class. We will be exploring and analyzing all types of literature. We will be expressing ourselves through writing, including narratives, explanatory essays, & argumentative essays.

Remember that if you ever need any help or have a question, concern, suggestion, or problem, please talk to me. I am usually available during A lunch on Gold and Black Days. If you wish to see me before school, be sure to check with me the day before to see if I will be available and also to get a hall pass to come to my room. If you wish to see me after school, check the posting on my door to find out which day(s) I'll be available. Of course, if you are planning to do work after school, be sure you have contacted your parents so they know where you are.

The objectives of this class are obviously to help you become highly skilled readers, writers, speakers, and thinkers. In order to do all of this, we will be reading and analyzing a number of short stories, novels, poems, plays, and informational texts. We will also be doing many types of writing including narrative, expository, and argumentative writing, as well as literary analysis pieces.

In order to make sure that you learn as much as possible, I expect you to adhere to the following McLoughlin **IN THE ZONE** expectations:

① **Be Safe**

② **Be Respectful.**

③ **Be Responsible.**

<i>Example IN THE ZONE behaviors for Ms. Hodge's class:</i>	<i>Be SAFE</i>	<i>Be RESPECTFUL</i>	<i>Be RESPONSIBLE</i>
<i>Be kind to others.</i>			
<i>Make wise decisions.</i>			
<i>Keep hands, feet, & objects to self.</i>			
<i>Treat classroom & school property with care.</i>			
<i>Always do your best.</i>			
<i>Wait for your turn to speak. Listen while others speak.</i>			

If you have difficulty demonstrating safe, respectful, and responsible behavior in class, possible consequences include a lunchtime chat with me, a phone call home, lunch detention, referral to the office, a meeting with team teachers, and/or a meeting with your parents. If there are any problems, I will communicate with your parents/guardians as early as possible to avoid major consequences. I also encourage you and your parents/guardians to contact me if there are issues you wish to discuss with me.

There are also some basic policies and procedures that I expect you to follow. Here are some that you probably want to know about now. Others, like where to put finished work, will be covered in class.

Basic classroom policies:

- 1. Absences:** If you are absent, it is your responsibility to check the "Make-up Work" crate to see what we did in class and what you missed. I will also be sending an explanation of what you missed to your Gmail account, so please check your Gmail when you are absent. You may talk with me or with a classmate if you have any questions about what you missed, but you must do so at an appropriate time. If you missed a test or quiz, talk to me at an appropriate time to reschedule the test or quiz. It is also your responsibility to remember to hand in the work you missed and any work that was handed in while you were absent.
- 2. Tardies:** At McLoughlin, we expect you to be **in your seat** and **working on the warm-up activity before** the tardy bell rings. It is also important to come to class prepared and ready to begin class with all the

materials you will need for learning – **binder, paper, writing utensils** (*sharpen your pencil before class begins!*), **SSR book, reading notebook** (*spiral, 70 pages, college ruled*), and **writing notebook** (*provided by teacher*). The reading and writing notebooks will be stored in class.

3. Planners: Each day you will record the following in your planner: the **lesson topic/objective**, a reminder to **read 20+ minutes**, and your **homework assignment** (when assigned).

By reading your planner notes, your parents/guardians should be able to get a feel for what we are studying in class and what your homework assignment is.

Parent/guardians, please note: There will be occasional homework assignments for Honors English class, but I will not be assigning homework every day. However, if your student does not have an official homework assignment for the night, then he/she will be expected to do at least 20 minutes of independent reading at home.

4. Independent Reading: The McLoughlin expectation is that each student will read at least one book each month. For Honors English, the expectations are higher, including reading more challenging books. More information will be provided when we go over Independent Reading expectations (which will come home soon). Remember, you will get SSR (silent reading) time in your Advanced Foundations class two days each week and on average once every two weeks in English class. That means that in order to finish a book each month, you will have to read at home. **The McLoughlin expectation for at home reading is at least 100 minutes per week.** It is your responsibility to create time in your schedule for at home reading. To track your reading, I will collect a monthly bookmark from you, and there will be literary analysis writings done in class which will check your comprehension of the book as well as your ability to analyze the book's literary elements.

5. Grading policy: This year, 8th grade English teachers are using proficiency based grading to determine students' grades. The basic premise of proficiency based grading is that we score assignments and tests based upon how well students demonstrate proficiency in the standard being assessed. Grades are no longer determined based upon the collection of assignment grades, including things such as participation points, turning in parent signatures on book logs, and group projects. They will be determined based upon what each student individually demonstrates he/she knows and can do based upon a specific standard (learning target).

- **Mastery Level** = 95% = *Through extensive evidence, the student consistently surpasses the proficient level and demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the standard.*
- **Proficient Level** = 85% = *The student regularly meets the standard and demonstrates a working knowledge of essential skills, while there are still some weaknesses, the strengths are dominant.*
- **Approaching Level** = 75% = *Though student is occasionally demonstrating a working knowledge of the essential skills that encompass the standard, there are still more weaknesses than strengths.*
- **Developing Level** = 65% = *Partial understanding and some skill demonstrated with greater omissions or errors evident.*
- **Beginning Level** = 55% = *Extremely low to no understanding or skill demonstrated yet.*

One very positive aspect of proficiency based grading is that students are allowed to improve their proficiency level scores by retaking assessments and redoing assignments in order to demonstrate that they have improved their level of knowledge and/or skill. Sometimes this means they need additional instruction and support from the teacher. Sometimes they just need additional practice. Knowing this will be important to Team 82 Honors students who are used to getting A's because it may be harder this year to attain an A because you have to truly demonstrate that you have mastery level understanding and skills.

The standards that will be assessed this **first quarter** in Honors English are the following:

Category:	What you will see in Gradebook for this standard:	Description of Standard: <i>I Can</i> statement	Standard Codes:
WRITING	Inform.Organize	<i>I can</i> write an informational literary analysis paragraph/essay that is well-organized, which means the topic is clearly introduced, the order of ideas makes sense, appropriate transitions are used, & a concluding statement or section is provided.	W.8.2 (W.8.2a, W.8.2 c, W.8.2f)
WRITING	Inform.Ideas/Content	<i>I can</i> write an informational literary analysis paragraph/essay that <u>thoroughly</u> examines a topic/concept/idea, which means that I develop the topic by providing relevant details and examples.	W.8.2 (W.8.2b)
READING	Textual Evidence	<i>I can</i> support my analysis of what I am reading by citing (giving) several pieces of evidence from the text.	RL.8.1
READING	Line.Event Analysis	<i>I can</i> analyze how specific lines of dialogue and specific incidents in a story reveal aspects of a character. <i>I can</i> analyze how specific lines of dialogue and specific incidents in a story propel the action or provoke a decision.	RL.8.3
READING	PointView Analysis	<i>I can</i> identify the point of view of the story and analyze its effects.	RL.8.6
LANGUAGE	Conventions	<i>I can</i> write using correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	L.8.2

I know that there may be many questions about proficiency based grading. Feel free to contact me at any time to discuss questions you have.

That's a lot of information, but I hope it gives you an idea of what I expect from you and what we will be working on in Honors English class this year.

Best of luck to you this year!

Goooooo Bulldogs!!!

Contact Information:

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I have read and understand Ms. Hodge's classroom policies and expectations.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Comments for Ms. Hodge: