

**Education Achievement Growth Lifelong-learning Ethical conduct Social awareness**  
**EAGLES**

Mrs. Spillane  
English 10 CP

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Welcome to English 10! I'm excited to be sharing this year of discovery, hard work, and fun with you! As the English Department Chair, I spend a good bit of my day in my office but the time I spend in my classroom is my favorite time of all...because of students like you.

English 10 is a place where you will be asked to not just read books and write papers about them but also to challenge yourself in your thinking and your communication. At the end of the year, I DO want each of you to be even better readers and writers than you are right now—but really what I want is for you to be individuals who think, who are confident enough to say what you think and articulate enough to say it powerfully. Language, in all its forms, is power (the good kind, not the kind that brought Darth Vader to the Dark Side) and I really want each of you to be empowered in your life. In English class, literature is the medium we use to practice and progress in this goal all year long, but this is more a class about life, passion, human beings, and the world.

To accomplish the above lofty goal, there are policies and procedures in place to keep our journey in order. Please read on!

#### **STUFF TO BRING & NOT BRING**

We'll talk about this. It's pretty common sense.

#### **CREATING A HAPPY PLACE TO BE**

Creating a happy place to be is pretty easy—just be a good person. I want each of you to be comfortable expressing yourself in class. You need to be respectful of me and of each other, and each other's ideas and beliefs. You can disagree on issues and interpretations all you want—just do it kindly and respectfully. Becoming a stronger, more empowered communicator is tough work and takes practice—it becomes that much more difficult when communicating is a painful experience.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

You need to be here—not just physically but also mentally and spiritually here. But physically your body has to be in my classroom. If you are absent, it is YOUR responsibility to see me the day you return to get missed assignments and arrange for make-ups of missed assignments. One-day type assignments are due the day following your return to school. If you're out just one day for a brief illness or an appointment, you might want to call a classmate to get the assignments (especially reading) that night so you don't fall behind.

Please be sure you're familiar with the THS attendance policy.

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**PASSES**

Visits to your guidance counselor, house office, etc. can't happen during English so don't ask, please. Keep trips to the lav to a minimum (no daily trips) and try to ask for a pass at the beginning or end of class only.

**TARDINESS**

Don't be late.

**BYOD**

The BYOD policy is still an adjustment for all of us. I'm looking forward to seeing how devices can help us learn and communicate better. Be familiar with the school policy and know that it's always the teacher's call as to how and when devices can be used, and always use your common sense. You know what's right and wrong.

Generally, our rule is this: phones away (not on desks) when class begins. If we have occasion to use devices, I'll let you know. If you can't control yourself when your phone is around, put it on my desk.

**ASSESSMENT**

Assessments can be generally broken into four categories:

**Major Tasks**—tests, major writing pieces (assigned 3 – 7 days in advance and having gone through a writing process) projects, presentations, etc. Usually, these assignments will have a rubric with focused assessment areas and will be evaluated using the rubric.

**Formative Assessments**—these include responses and writing tasks and also homework and quizzes. These help me to know how you're doing with skills and ideas we're working on.

**Accountability (also known as "participation")**—a holistic area that will be assessed 3 times during the quarter. This score reflects how well you contribute **POSITIVELY** and **PRODUCTIVELY** to our class and our learning, including but not limited to: quality contributions to small group and whole class discussion; active notetaking; enthusiasm and attitude; effort on assignments, being prepared for class everyday, etc. In short, are you making our class a better place to learn or are you just taking up valuable oxygen?

**Reading (R)evolution**—if we're dedicating 10 minutes per day to our reading with more time outside of class, it should count for something. The reading logs, reading ladder (one quarterly) and one book review will contribute to your grade as well.

We'll spend more time during the first few weeks looking at how different assessments will have different points assigned to them. The most important thing you can know about assessments is that I want you to continue to grow as readers, writers, and thinkers. I encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to revise your work.

I'm always available to review assessments and performance with you so that you know how you're progressing.

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**CONFERENCING & EXTRA HELP**

I'm available during periods 1 and 6 – 8 most days—this is a great time to get my undivided attention. I'm also available after school by appointment. I encourage you to make an appointment with me if you'd like to review a graded piece of work to discuss your concerns and/or my comments, to discuss recent readings, or anything else pertaining to class. Help on drafts of writing pieces before they are due is also available both in class (during writer's workshop) and during lunch and after school. Plan to make an appointment one or two days in advance to ensure that I can meet with you. We'll discuss all this as we get going on our writing. The most important thing to know is that you can always come to me for assistance outside of class. I also encourage you to utilize Mrs. Netting in the Literacy Center. I'm always available to help you, but please do not send me emails at 9:30pm asking for help on an assignment due the next day. I will not see that email until the next morning and sending it does not excuse you from the assignment. As a rule, it's better for us to talk in person than by email. If you want to chat after class, you can always send me an email that asks, "Can we talk after class today?"

\*While I teach in A30 periods 2, 4 & 5, I'm not there the rest of the day. If you need to find me any other time, look in the upper media center. If you go in the C-House side, my office is back on the right. There's a message board if I'm not there. Feel free to pop by and say hi anytime.

**HONESTY & INTEGRITY**

Sorry to bring it up, but I must. You are always expected to do your own work. It's the only way you learn for yourself. Familiarize yourself with the THS Plagiarism Policy (short version: We're against it.). I abide by this policy and don't take kindly to cheaters. Papers, ideas, one-sentence comments and other information "borrowed" from other sources are examples of plagiarism. If you reference information from another source in a legitimate research assignment, it needs to be properly cited. We'll review more but if you are unsure, ask me.

Using sources such as SparkNotes or Shmoop instead of reading and thinking about the work assigned is also cheating. If I want you to access outside sources and opinions other than your own, I'll make that quite clear; otherwise, it should be coming out of your own brain in your own words. Plagiarism in all its nasty forms will be dealt with severely. It's also one of the few ways you'd lose my respect and have a hard time earning it back. I'd never ask you to do anything beyond your abilities so don't tell yourself you need to cheat to achieve.

So, let's end on a happy note. It's going to be a great year! We're going to learn a lot from each other and have a few laughs in the process. Welcome!

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"D'oh! English?! Who needs that? I'm never going to England!"

--Homer Simpson