

## **Honors Dramaturgy**

**Mrs. Spillane**

**Room A30**

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Welcome to Honors Dramaturgy and congratulations on your success so far that has landed you here. HDram is *the* destination for students who love theatre, research, language and collaboration. It is a half year course jam-packed with reading, writing, thinking, discussing and discovering. I am very excited you're here and can't wait to get started.

Here are just a few things to give you an idea of how our class can proceed most smoothly. It is not exhaustive and it is not a contract—we'll all need to be a little flexible as the semester progresses.

### **STUFF TO BRING/STUFF NOT TO BRING**

You've been here for three years; you're successful students. You know what to bring and what not to bring and what works best for you to keep yourself organized and involved.

Process is an especially important part of what we do in HDram so **SAVE EVERYTHING**. Don't crumple up papers and throw them away when you change your mind and start working on a new idea. You never know when you might want that other work.

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

HDram is, above all else, a class that requires collaboration. In order to collaborate we need to trust and support one another. I encourage debate, dissension, and deep thought in everything we do. The best way to figure out what you think in the world is to consider and question what you see around you, compare it to your own beliefs, and constantly reevaluate, reaffirm and refine. At the same time, we all need to be good human beings and honor one another. No one grows if we don't feel like a safe community. Be good to each other. But make each other be accountable for what you say and do.

### **ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS**

Be here—be here on time. For seniors, the biggest attendance issues often involve you go-getters being out on field trips, conferences, college visits, etc. Be diligent about checking with me and classmates upon your return. Please make up work in a timely manner. Be familiar with the THS attendance policy.

## **GRADING**

Honors Dramaturgy is a course that is highly collaborative. Your daily participation and accountability to our community will figure heavily into your assessment. This is good news because all the work you do with the group will strengthen your individual skills and work.

In addition to your collaboration, progress will be measured through: A) formative assessments which are designed to give you practice with skills and let me know where you are with your learning and B) summative assessments which give you the chance to show off your skills. Lastly, independent reading is a major requirement as dramaturgs need to be well-read in literature, non-fiction, and plays. Independent reading will be logged and assessed each quarter.

Major summative assessments will be assigned the greatest number of points per assessment but your processes will be as important as your products.

## **CONFERENCING & EXTRA HELP**

I am fortunate enough to be available for extra help most days during periods 3, and 6 - 8; this means I can meet with you during lunches and free periods as well as after school by appointment. If you'd like to come see me to review graded work, get help revising a piece before it's handed in, or anything else, please let me know. You should plan at least a day or two in advance.

\*Although we meet in A30, I am most easily found in my office upstairs on the C House side of the media center.

## **HONESTY & INTEGRITY**

Dramaturgy is a field that thrives on creative innovation and, also, giving credit where credit is due. Don't present others' work as your own. Do your own thinking so you can bring informed ideas to the group.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Oh, technology...it's our frenemy. It brings us riotously entertaining gems like Tedtalks, McSweeneys.net, and (my favorite) "Shark Cat Riding Roomba," but it also lures us to the Dark Side of SparkNotes, College Confidential, and facebook-when-we-should-be-doing-our-homework. It allows our moms to call us at all times—yaaaay!—but it is the Siren song of texting from under your desk when you should be considering the central theme of a play. It auto-corrects all of our mistypings so we don't look ignorant....except when it doesn't or it corrects what doesn't need to be corrected and then we look lazy AND ignorant. It lets us google and store anything we need so we never need to memorize a phone number or write down directions or wonder what the chief export of Albania is (it's chrome, by the way)....

My point is that technology helps us enormously but can also make us sometimes lazy and distracted. Let's make sure it helps and does not hinder us. I don't want to have to take away phones or delete silly comments to our online chats. Be wise and mature.

**So how will technology impact our class? So glad you asked...**

- We will establish and consistently utilize a google classroom for our class. I'm just starting to use this so you probably know more than I do. Help me out—don't make fun of an old lady!
- We will use Voicethread/Padlet/Kahoot and other fun stuff that lets us collaborate and learn together. Let me know what programs help you!
- At times I will share links with you for various sites that will be helpful in your dramaturgical studies or are just plain interesting and fun.
- I will continue to update my teacher website but that will be mostly for static content. Weekly updates and assignments will be posted on the classroom. Be sure to also always check the board in class. That will be the most up to date.
- As you know, THS has a BYOD policy for use of personal devices in class. I've always embraced the use of devices to help us learn when appropriate. Know the school policy, know that it's always my call about how/when we use them, and make good choices. Use your common sense. Our rule of thumb will be: phones are AWAY unless I've specifically said that we will need them and you should take them out. If you can't control yourself, get into the habit of putting your phone on my desk when you walk in.

### **Contact info:**

If we need to talk about something, we should talk about it....live and in-person (yes, I know....awkward). That's going to be our best form of communication. Don't chicken out and email me about something important when we should be having a face to face conversation. If you're out of school and need to reach me by email you should email me at my school email address which is [spillanj@trumbullps.org](mailto:spillanj@trumbullps.org) but know that I'm not plugged into this email all day and all night so a response probably won't be instantaneous.

**Honors Dramaturgy Syllabus**  
**Mrs. Spillane 17-18**

**Unit 1: Intro to Dramaturgy**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
*The Tragedy of Hamlet* by William Shakespeare  
Summative Task: written response to *Hamlet* question

**Unit 2: The World of the Play**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
*A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen  
Summative Task: *A Doll's House* proposal (collaborative or individual)

**Unit 3: Characterization and Relational Dynamics**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
A selection of one-act plays  
*The Clean House* by Sarah Ruhl  
Summative Task: Characterization presentation (on *The Clean House* or one of the one act plays)

**Unit 4: Conventions in Theatre (Symbolism, Imagery, Diction)**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
*A Long Day's Journey Into Night* by Eugene O'Neill  
Summative Task: close reading and blocking notes on *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*

**Unit 5: Dramaturgical Research in Theatre**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
The Century Cycle Plays of August Wilson  
Summative Task: Dramaturg's "To-Do List" for chosen Wilson play with one area of research completed

**Unit 6: Thesis Project—The Actor's Packet**

*Backwards and Forwards* by David Ball  
*The Art of Active Dramaturgy* by Lenora Inez Brown  
Play/musical of student's choice  
Summative Task: Actor's Packet (final project counts as course final exam, process pieces count for quarter 2)