

GOLDHAMMER

LA 10 HONORS

2009-2010

Scholars of Language Arts:

Welcome to LA 10! I am truly ecstatic to be joining you in your second round of academic adventure at MSHS. Over the course of the next two semesters we will all have ample opportunities to get to know each other, be amazed at the class' collective brilliance, and most importantly delve into the fascinating and life-changing world of language arts. The goal of this course is to enable you to read, write, and think competently and originally about literary, moral, philosophical, and emotional issues encountered in literature. Be prepared to read and write, participate in class discussions and presentations, and complete research in order to meet all course expectations. These expectations are stringent and you are expected to fulfill them in a *creative, independent, and responsible* manner. Get ready to work hard, increase your love for the written word, develop as a scholar of language arts, and have fun along the way. I am sincerely looking forward to sharing in the journey.

--Mr. Goldhammer

Course Content

-Required Course Reading:

**Oedipus and Antigone* –Sophocles

Julius Caesar –Shakespeare

A Separate Peace –John Knowles

The Catcher in the Rye –J.D. Salinger

Their Eyes Were Watching God –Zora Neale Hurston

Frankenstein –Mary Shelly

**All Quiet on the Western Front* –Erich Maria Remarque

The Importance of Being Earnest –Oscar Wilde

Lord of the Flies –William Golding

Although it is by no means required, it is recommended that students purchase copies of the course's major titles. This allows students to mark passages as they read, take notes in the margins, and highlight/underline key lines, etc.

* Indicates titles that are translated. Before you buy, be sure to check and make sure you have the correct version.

Other books may be added to the course content if time allows.

-Reading: Reading activities will focus on close textual examination and style analysis, including: tone and attitude, diction, detail, point of view, organization and syntax. A major goal of the course will be to ensure that critical assertions and interpretations are supported with textual evidence. With each work, a reading schedule will be provided and may include reading assignments over weekends and extended breaks. Students should be prepared to have nightly reading—often more than just one chapter.

-Writing: Writing activities will focus on the fluent presentation of sophisticated interpretations and will emphasize a coherent structure that adheres to the six-trait model (ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions). A major element in the study of each work will be the writing of an analytical essay focusing on some major aspect of the work. You will be given the opportunity to improve your writing by undergoing the multiple steps in the writing process and by completing numerous drafts of major papers. As the year progresses, we will focus more on peer and self editing with the goal of developing as critics and editors, as well as skilled writers.

-Other Activities: Other activities will include studying **vocabulary** from literature and specialized vocabulary programs, individual and group presentations focusing on major works, research, and regular **AP** and **standardized assessment prep**. All have been designed to increase the skills necessary to be a successful student of language arts and to prepare students for the demands of future courses.

Course Requirements, Expectations, & Other Important Matters

-Complete All Reading Assignments: Whether it is a 3-line haiku or a 57+ page selection from a novel, you are responsible for coming to class prepared to discuss, think, and explore the text/material at hand.

-Actively Participate/Be Attentive In Class: The success of this class lies on the shoulders of you, the students. In order for a dynamic, mature, and interesting classroom to exist, active participation is a necessity. Remember: taking a risk often leads you to the most interesting places....

-Be Prepared: Just as it is impossible to climb Mt. Everest in 3-wheeled roller-skates, it is extremely difficult to assess your genius if the proper materials are not at hand. Having the necessary textbooks, writing utensils, journals, etc. are a definite requirement.

-Complete All Daily Assignments, Homework, and Extended Projects: Your success in this class is highly dependant on your dedication to completing all assignments—no matter what their size or significance. Assignments are typically due at the beginning of class. With the exception to excused absences (see below), **late work is not accepted** without prior arrangement/communication with me.

-Absences / Make-Up Work: A daily summary of “what-was-covered” is posted online at “**The Daily Post**” section of penguinsandtoast.com. This portion of the website is **updated daily (right after school) and is designed for you to be able to access what was covered in class, from home.** It's a great resource for last minute updates, if you are ever absent, or if you find yourself confused about any specifics about homework, reading, due dates, etc. If absent, it is your responsibility to seek out any missed info/work as quickly as possible. With the convenience of the website, it is simple (and expected) to come to class prepared for—or at least aware of—the work you missed. If a class is missed—yet excused—you will have the same amount of days to make up the assignment that you were not present. Example: If you missed three days, you will have three days to make up the assignment(s). **Make-up work is not accepted without an excused absence.** If you have a school related absence, such as a field trip, it is my expectation that all work will *still* be turned in on that day and that any make-up work will be ready to be handed in at the start of class the next day. Of course, allowances will be made under special/emergency circumstances with proper documentation from a guardian. Note: A number of highly scientific and expensive studies have proven that a decrease in tardies/absences is directly linked to an increase in one's academic success.

-Excessive Absences: Your presence in the classroom is essential. Accordingly, if you miss more than 11 days during the course of a semester, you will not receive any credit for this class. Please see your student handbook for additional details.

-Plagiarism and Other Unpleasant Matters: In order to receive a score, **all major writing assignments must be submitted to Turnitin.com** prior to the actual due date. Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment (as well as allowing other's to cheat or plagiarize off one's own work) will result in a failing grade for that assignment regardless of its weight. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the term.

-Hall Passes: During class, it is your responsibility to decide whether or not it is a proper time to step outside for any personal reasons. All students leaving the classroom—for any reason—are **required to carry their planner with them at all times.** Remember: please do not leave class in the middle of instruction, failing to have your necessary materials is never an excuse to leave, and students should make a strong effort to use their time between classes as much as possible. Note: This is a system based on trust and maturity-- any abuses will result with immediate loss of privileges.

-Behavior: The behavior expectations for this class revolve around one guiding concept and principle: **RESPECT.** All specific rules can be found in the MSHS handbook. What applies to the school similarly applies to this classroom. Simply put: act like an adult and you will be treated like one.

Grading & Contact

-Important Notice: LA 10 Honors is a difficult class. The focus is not on the completion of work, but rather the quality of it. **Your grade is your responsibility**...stay on top of it, work hard, focus, push yourself, and make sure it is where you want/need it to be. **Earning an A in this course is challenging**—only a handful of students manage to do this each semester. **Extra credit is typically not offered**...don't ask. If extra credit opportunities present themselves, they will be offered to the entire class. **Grades are not rounded.** An 89.9% is a B+.

-Point/Grade/Class Breakdown: Your grade is broken down into the following categories/percentages. Grades will continue at quarter and start anew at semester:

Percentage	Category	Description (includes, but is not limited to):
40%	Assignments:	A compilation of scores that you will earn for homework, in-class activities, projects, and tests.
50%	Writing	All graded writing pieces. This category is solely limited to larger papers, of which you will have only five or six of these each term. With this in mind, be sure to recognize the weighted importance of these assignments and the effort that should therefore be afforded.
10%	Vocabulary	In-class vocab work, regular quizzes, etc.

-Grades: Letter grades are broken down by the following percentages:

A = 93+%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 60-66%	Failing = 59% and below

-Online Grade Access/Progress Reports: Ever lie in bed wondering if you brought that grade up from a B to a B+? Well, you are in luck. Current and up-to-date grades (with some exceptions) for this class are posted through the Snoqualmie Valley School District's "online grading" program. **Students and parents have the convenience of accessing their grades at any time** by following the links on Mt. Si's homepage...even at 3:17 in the morning.

-Class Website: The address for the class website is www.penguinsandtoast.com. In addition to being a one-stop source for all things LA, it is also updated daily, right after school with a description of what was covered in class and any homework that may have been assigned...that means you never have an excuse to be behind, confused, or unprepared—it's all right there for you. Check it regularly.

-Contact: If not in person, all questions, comments, or clarifications can be directed to:

Email: goldhammer@svsd410.org
Phone: 425.831.8176
Web: www.penguinsandtoast.com

Prep: 2nd period (8:40-9:40)