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Room 223

From the Instructor: Welcome To Mrs. Miller’s Language and Literacy Class!
Mrs. Shawnie Miller
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Room 223

From the Instructor:
Welcome! My name is Shawnie Miller, and I am excited to be here with you during my eighth year teaching Communications at Pittsburgh Public Schools. I will be helping you get used to the atmosphere here just as you are transitioning into Middle School as a sixth grader or continuing your positive experience as a seventh grader at Obama 6-12. I feel extremely lucky to be your instructor and am looking forward to having a very successful year. Please feel free to contact me at any time in order to discuss this syllabus or to address any other questions or concerns that you may have.

Course Overview:
Students will be engaged in various types of literature from the Elements of Literature reader and novels which are assigned throughout the year. Reading strategies will be provided to strengthen the students’ ability to increase fluency and comprehension. Some areas we will focus on are word recognition/decoding, making personal connections, analyzing character and plot, making inferences, and becoming an independent reader. Students will have formative assessments throughout the lesson, followed by a summative assessment at the end of each unit. Formative and summative assessments involve student participation and reflection to measure various aspects of their performance. Students will also practice grammar and writing skills by using the Houghton Mifflin English book and writing various essays. There are no opportunities for extra credit work.

Language and Literature Assessment Criteria
Criterion A – Analyzing
Criterion B – Organizing
Criterion C – Producing Text
Criterion D – Using Language

DAILY Required Materials for class:
To be successful in L class, you must be prepared for class daily. To ensure the smooth operation and organization of your student, please make sure they acquire these necessary supplies:

- Student Google account or a flashdrive
- Pencils
- Planner
- Post-it notes-any color
- Loose-leaf paper
- Three-ring binder
- Personal reading material: grade appropriate novels
- Any textbooks or reading materials that may be assigned for cross-curricular assignments

**READER WRITER NOTEBOOK/BINDER:**
Students are required to maintain a neat portfolio in a three-ring binder in order to keep notes, completed work, and work-in-progress properly organized. The portfolios will be checked periodically and given a grade towards class preparation to ensure that students are revising work or reviewing notes as necessary.

**Evaluation, assessments and our grading policy:**
Assignments should be submitted on time. Language and Literature work will only be accepted until the last day of the week.
- Rubrics devised from IBMYP and District standards will be used to evaluate assignments and tests.
- The Pittsburgh Public Schools grading scale will be used (90-100%-advanced {A}, 80-89%- above average {B}, 70-79%- proficient {C}, 60-69% {D} and 0-59% {E}).
- Citizenship refers to work habits and class demeanor. Students are required to adhere to all school and classroom rules and will be evaluated accordingly using the standard scale (O-outstanding, S-satisfactory and U-unsatisfactory.)
- If learning or teaching is disrupted in the classroom, a verbal reminder will be given. If the reminder is ignored, a phone call will be made so that communication is kept open and the student’s progress is supported. If all communications with student and parents fail and inappropriate behavior continues, lunch detention will be assigned. If the behavior continues, a referral will be written. An immediate referral will be issued for physical fighting.

**CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**
Be prompt
Be prepared (pencils, binders, and an attitude for learning
Raise your hand and wait your turn to speak.
When adding to a conversation, be respectful and use accountable talk.

***ABSOLUTE ZERO POLICY FOR BULLYING-AN IMMEDIATE REFERRAL WILL BE PLACED TO ADMINISTRATION***

**INCENTIVES:**
Along with consequences, incentives are in place to keep your student motivated throughout the school year. For students that are prepared, on task, and following classroom rules, raffle tickets will be periodically handed out. Students can place their name on the ticket for the monthly drawing, where they can win prizes. The more tickets earned means the more chances to win!

**HOMEWORK**
- Homework will be assigned four times a week, Monday through Thursday.
- Daily agendas will be distributed in class, and generally will be finished in class. Students are to keep these agendas because we will continue the next day with them. Sometimes, finishing the agenda will be required as homework
- Homework will be assigned Monday thru Friday
• Late work will be accepted for half credit. *Extra credit assignments will not be given.*

**GRADING PROCEDURES**
Rubrics devised from IB MYP requirements and District Standards will be used to evaluate assignments and texts according the four IB Language & Literature criteria: Analyzing, organizing, Producing Text and Using Language. The grading guidelines for individual assignments are as followed:

**Portfolio/Culminating Projects** 20%
- Classwork 35%
- Speaking/Listening 15%
- Assessment 20%
- Homework 10%

**IN-CLASS and AT HOME READING:**
Leisure:
The last fifteen (15) minutes of class will be spent reading as time allows. Each student MUST bring a piece of literature to read for this 15 minute slot. IT CAN BE ANYTHING THAT IS AGE APPROPRIATE AS LONG AS THE STUDENT IS PREPARED TO DO SILENT READING. I encourage students to read a book from beginning to end instead of starting a new one each day.

Students are required to read at least 20 minutes a night, Monday-Thursday, outside of school. Weekly reading logs will be distributed and the parent is required to initial the timeslot in the space provided daily.

**Culminating Assignments and TYPING AND REVISING:**
At the end of each unit, students will be required to produce a written piece that encompasses all the skills that were taught throughout the unit. Students will be required to draft, edit and review their pieces, and the drafts may be composed in pen or pencil, but the final paper must be typed. All students will produce a written draft of writing assignments and will be instructed to revise and type assignments. Any work that is to be handed in for a grade must meet the short paper length requirements: proper heading, typed in size 12 point, Times New Roman font, and double-spaced unless other specifications are made. Students will be given information about how to format short papers as well as the rubrics for writing assignments. All drafts must be kept and placed in the student portfolio with subsequent revisions.

**Example of a Proper Heading LEFT:**
- Student Name
- Date, Class Section
- Concept or Title of the paper

Please keep in mind that by seventh grade, students are expected to write/type short papers complete with MLA in-text citations and reference page. The short paper is a minimum of 2 full typed pages in length. A number of other projects will be given with both oral and printed instructions at the beginning of each unit so that they are aware of expected learning outcomes and can plan for the end of the unit assignment. Once a due date is assigned, students will be docked 5% for every day late thereafter. If it is a printer or computer issue at home, the student MUST come to me so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. In the past, flash-drives were burdensome due to losses, inability to save material properly, and forgetting to bring it to class on workshop days. This year, it is
highly encouraged that students create school Gmail account and utilize the free services that Google provides. Along with email, Google Docs is also readily available for students to utilize anywhere, even on their phones. This will help them meet deadlines that could have previously been a problem with computer issues.

**EXTRA HELP** for this course will be available on request and will take place either after school or during lunch in Room 223. Please come prepared to do work for my class or any other during the entire period unless time must be split with another extra help session.

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN**

By completing the information below, I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to the information and policies outlined in the MS English syllabus.

Date: _________________

PRINT Student Name

______________________________

Student Signature

______________________________

PRINT Student e-mail (optional)

PRINT Parent/Guardian Name

______________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature

PRINT Parent/Guardian e-mail (optional)

Home Phone: _________________

Work Phone: _________________

Approved: Ms. Aisha Robinson, Director