**Writer’s Craft**

Spanish Springs High School

Mr. Pettinari

2019-2020

Writer’s Craft is a creative writing elective designed for the passionate writer who can appreciate composition for both its technique and aestheticism. It will provide an introduction to basic methodology pertaining to fiction, the personal essay, and poetry. Students will be expected to write in their journals profusely, critique their peers regularly, and complete various exercises that drive imagination and polish writing skills. While final drafts are extremely important, the supporting assignments are just as imperative. Participation and enthusiasm are the key ingredients to success in this course, so let’s build relationships and create an amazing community of writers!

**Course Goal**

Writing is a way to externalize ideas and feelings. The ability to write well creates a well-rounded individual who can organize and express to others his or her thoughts and ideas. This class goal is to educate you on how to write creatively within different structures, to learn to enjoy the process of writing, and to find your own voice and writing style.

**The Writer’s Workshop Atmosphere**

* Participating in writer’s workshop requires an open mind, a tough ego, and the utmost respect for each other.
* It is critical to meet deadlines and demonstrate preparedness; otherwise, the workshop will fail. Late work will be penalized according to class policies and procedures.
* All or most writing will be shared in class, sometimes in small groups and sometimes to the whole class. Listening and a focused attention to detail are vital.
* The focus of a workshop is the writing, not the participants. Do not make any aspect of the experience personal.
* Sharing one’s writing often creates a sense of vulnerability, so it is important to offer criticism which helps your peers, not hurts them. Avoid the “It’s good,” and “I like it” statements. We all deserve better than that.
* We are all here to help each other strengthen our crafts.

**Course Structure**

* Daily Practice Exercises & Activities
	+ Sacred Writing Time/Journals
	+ Small group activities
	+ Imagination workouts
* Polished, Graded Compositions:
	+ Personal Essay(s)
	+ Fiction Pieces
	+ Vignettes
	+ Poetry
	+ Writer’s Choice Pieces
* Readings: An examination of the basic structure and elements of fiction and self-exploration
	+ Various selected short stories, essays and poems
	+ Mentor Texts
	+ Excerpts on Writing
* Vocabulary, Grammar, and Usage
	+ Word-of-the-Day using SAT words
	+ Image Grammar; Regular language analysis and practice
* Midterm & Final Exams: Final Portfolio, Craft Presentations, Writing Instruction

**CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND RULES**

Students are expected to:

* Be in their seat and *ready* to begin class when the tardy bell rings.
* Be respectful: respect each other, respect me, and respect the room.
* Use appropriate language (profanity /hate language will not be tolerated)
* Engage in personal business during personal time (includes use of electronic devices)

**DISCIPLINE**

If the occasion arises in which a student needs individual discipline, s/he will first receive a warning, then a meeting with me; thereafter, the parent may be notified and the student may be referred to the discipline office. Consequences can range anywhere from warning to suspension. My discipline policy is in accordance with Spanish Spring High School’s policies and procedures.

**ATTENDANCE AND TARDY POLICY**

Students need to be **present and on time** to class **every day**. This is crucial to have a **successful** year. The more class time a student misses, the more difficult the class becomes. However, in the case where a student may need to be absent due to illness or extenuating circumstances, s/he must first **check my website** for work missed, then contact me via email or another reliable source for any questions or additional information desired. Students must be present to class at least 90% of the instructional time or s/he will not earn credit for that class. Please see student/parent handbook for more details.

If a student is tardy to class, the school will notify parents that day. Lunch detention may have to be served for unexcused tardies to class.Additionally, tardies can result in a lowering of citizenship grade as well as missed instruction that cannot be made up.

**PASSES**

Passes are allowed for the *true* need to go to one of the following: bathroom, locker**,** nurse, office, or other classroom. Students should not abuse the privilege of using passes.

**ACADEMIC GRADING** **POLICIES**

Your grade will consist of a final worth 15% and the rest of your assignments will make up the other 85%. That means that participation (discussions, journal shares, writing workshops, use of class time), composition development (journals, rough drafts, reflections, final drafts), and language and vocabulary count as the majority of your overall grade.

*Note: The* ***citizenship grade*** *is based on a student’s ability to prove s/he has been an active, responsible, well-behaved, and positively involved member of the classroom community.*

**Class Assignments**

* **All final drafts must be typed.**
* **Presentations cannot be late**! You need to reflect professionalism and personal accountability by being prepared on time.
* If you are at school on the day a major paper or project is due, it should be submitted—*regardless of whether you came to my class or not.*
* If you are absent when a big paper, project, or presentation is due, it is your responsibility to communicate as soon as possible to avoid penalty
* **Make up work** – In the case of an absence, a student has the amount of time missed to make up the assignment.
	+ If you were here when it was assigned, it is due immediately upon return.
	+ Make up tests/quizzes should be arranged with me; students are expected to make these up outside of class.
	+ Finding out about make up work is the responsibility of the student. Always check the class website for daily agendas & assignments.
* **Late Work**

*Work is considered late if a student turns an assignment in past the due date and time.*

* Homework and class work will be accepted 1 class period late for 60% credit.
* Major papers & projects will be penalized 15% (one full letter grade) for every day (not class) it is late.
* **Cheating and/or Plagiarism will result in a zero for everyone involved, a lowering of the citizenship grade, and disciplinary consequences.**

**SUPPLIES**

Students in my class will be asked to **keep everything and maintain organization**; therefore, they will need a journal and a 3-ring binder with sections labeled: *Language & Vocabulary, Literature & Other Texts, and Composition.* Each section of the binder should have ample lined paper. Students are also expected to have a pencil or pen (blue or black ink).Work written in colored ink (with the exception of journals) may result in a zero.

Lack of preparedness and participation can affect student’s academic and citizenship grades; therefore, it is imperative they be ready to learn.

**All students are expected to adhere to the course rules, requirements, and procedures.**

**Sacred Writing Time**

Every class will begin with five to ten minutes of sacred writing. Sacred Writing Time is when a person writes in response to a prompt continuously. It is important to write for the whole time. It is not important to continue to stay on the prompt or worry about grammar or spelling. The whole idea is to just move the pen and to see where you end up. The purpose of this is three fold. First, it will help you get in the habit of writing every day. Second, it will help you get in the “writing mood.” Finally, it will be a place for you to generate ideas for writing. All sacred writing exercises are to be done in your journals.

Journaling Requirements

* Bring one letter size journal to every class (you will not be given a pass to go get it).
* Write in it every class.
* The grade will be based on length, effort, and participation; each entry is worth 10 points and must be school appropriate.
	+ Length – 1 page minimum
	+ Effort – sincerely try; regularly push yourself
	+ Participation – must share with an audience in class at least 10 times per semester to receive maximum credit
* Journals will receive a cumulative score every 20 entries.

**I LOOK FORWARD TO A GREAT YEAR WITH YOU!**

Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have:

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