

English 7-8

Course Expectations and Syllabus



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Damonte Ranch High School

Reno, Nevada

www.washoeschools.net/page/11797

2025-2026

English 7 & 8 (Sections 1251 & 1252) 2025-2026

Instructor Information:

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Availability: Typically, 15 minutes before the start of classes, during lunch, and 45 minutes after school except Wednesdays.

Course Description:

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements. By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students can only gain this foundation when the curriculum is intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to their future success.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

English 5-6 or a third year of high school English

Required texts, course materials:

Textbook: We are being introduced to a new textbook *HMH to Literature, Grade 12*, which will be slowly integrated into our curriculum. and other works selected by the teacher.

Laptop computers: students must bring a laptop computer to class. If they do not have their own, they may check one out of the library for use throughout the school year.

Standard size lined notebook paper (8½ x 11 or 8 x 10½). All assignments must be submitted on the same size paper. When required, typewritten papers must be submitted on white bond paper (8½ x 11 only).

Black or Blue Pens

Red, green, or purple pen for peer-evaluating

Three-ring binder (this need not be exclusive to

English class and may be shared with other subjects if permitted by other teachers, so long as it is adequately divided into subjects. Spiral bound notebooks may not be used.



Unique class procedures /structures:

Standards of Preparation

Document preparation will follow the rules of the Modern Language Association (MLA). Generally, here are some of the more important rules for written work assigned in class:

1. If it is an in-class assignment, the assignment must be written in **black or dark blue** ink.
2. If it is an in-class assignment, the assignment must be written on standard plain, lined paper (see above). Undersized or oversized paper will not be accepted.
3. If it is a homework assignment, the assignment must be typed on white 8½ x 11 paper.
4. When an assignment is typed, it must be typed entirely in Times New Roman using 12 point font, including titles and headings.
5. All assignments must be double-spaced unless otherwise instructed in class.
6. All assignments must include a margin on all four sides of at least one inch.
7. All assignments must include the student's first and last name in the upper left corner, remembering to keep the one-inch margins intact. On the next line under the name and single-spaced, you must write your class and period number (i.e., English 7-8, P. 2). On the next line under the class number you must write the date the assignment is due.
8. After skipping a line after the date, centered on the paper, the student must write the name of the assignment or title of the paper, article, essay, or story.
9. If the assignment uses more than one page, the students name and page number must appear in the upper right corner of each additional page and all pages must be stapled together.
10. The assignment is not turned in timely if it still needs to be printed after coming to class.
11. If a student is late for class because the student is printing the assignment elsewhere, the assignment will be marked late.
12. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Unless otherwise instructed, work done at home must be placed in the homework basket near the door.



Classroom Rules

Students, especially seniors, are expected to act like adults. However, because people sometimes forget where they are, they sometimes be reminded on how to act. Below are the seven essential rules for student conduct in the classroom:

1. Be at your seat and working by the time the bell rings.
2. Talk only when I allow it.
3. Remain in your assigned seat unless otherwise directed.
4. If it's not yours, don't touch it.
5. Do not eat.
6. Leave your cellphones in the designated storage space. If not, I will send it to the Corral.
7. Do not throw. Anything. Ever.



Another Word About Personal Electronic Devices



Personal electronic devices, such as cellular telephones, iPods, electronic tablets, laptop computers, MP3 players, etc., may not be used at any time during class without express permission of the teacher. All such devices must be powered off and placed in a student's backpack, purse, or locker. Cellphones must be kept in the designated storage space upon entering the classroom. They may not be kept on the student's person. If the teacher observes a student with such a device without express permission, that device will be confiscated by the teacher sent to the Corral where it will remain until the end of the school day. If the student refuses to relinquish the device when demanded by the teacher, the student will be escorted to the Corral and a discipline violation will be made a part of the

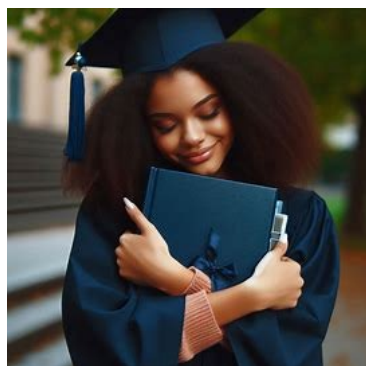
student's official record. Parents who must contact their students during class may call the office and ask that a message be relayed to the student. **THIS RULE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED AT ALL TIMES.**

Student Learning Outcomes:

This course will prepare students to become College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Language as follows:

They demonstrate independence.

Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. They build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood. Without prompting, they demonstrate command of standard English and acquire and use a wide-ranging vocabulary. More broadly, they become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.



They build strong content knowledge.

Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise. They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking.

They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

Students adapt their communication in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They set and adjust purpose for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use as warranted by the task. They appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience should affect tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning. They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in science).

They comprehend as well as critique.

Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author’s or speaker’s assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning.

They value evidence.

Students cite specific evidence when offering an oral or written interpretation of a text. They use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to the reader or listener, and they constructively evaluate others’ use of evidence.

They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.

Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use. They tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently, and they integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline. They are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and can select and use those best suited to their communication goals.

They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.

Course Requirements:

All grades fall in two weighted categories:

Mastery assignments	50%
Practicing standards (classwork, homework, etc.)	30%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Criteria, Scale, and Standards:

DRHS/WCSD grading scale:

- A: 90% - 100%
- B: 80% - 89.9%
- C: 70% - 79.9%
- D: 60% - 69.9%
- F: <59.9%



Make-Up Work

- Make-up work is defined as scheduled tests, scheduled quizzes, homework assigned on the day the student was absent, and/or a description of the topic(s) covered in class while the student was absent and possible resources where the student can obtain information on the topic(s).
- It is the responsibility of the student to request make-up work after returning from an absence and return the completed work within the designated deadline.
- Students are provided the length of the absence plus one day to complete any make-up work assigned. For example, if the student was absent for four days he/she will have five days to complete and submit the make-up work.

- Students who do not request or return completed make-up will not earn credit on missed assignments.
- Make-up work need not be identical or equivalent to that missed due to the absence but will ensure that the student has the opportunity to meet the academic standards.
- Previously assigned work that was due on the day the student was absent is NOT considered makeup work and is due the day the student returns to school.
- The teacher will provide make-up work to the student within 2 days of the student's request.

Late Work

Being present and on time to class are imperative to the student's success in this course. Assignments are due at the beginning of class; otherwise, it is considered late. Furthermore, the following are NOT considered valid excuses: computer crash, printer failure, somebody else will bring it after school, etc. Late assignments may lose 10% per day late up to 50% of the grade.



Homework

Homework will be assigned from time to time, and students are expected to do their own homework. Neither parents nor anybody else should help with homework. However, a parent/guardian may answer a question about what is expected of a student to complete the homework. **Do not lose any sleep over your homework. Sleep is important, and you will learn nothing if you are tired or sleeping in class.** If you cannot do all of the homework, do as much as you can. It is better to receive some credit rather than no credit, and you will better understand the instruction in class the next day.

Course Calendar / Unit Outline:

The following is an approximate outline of the various “units” taught throughout both the fall and spring semesters in the order shown and with the major assignments associated with each unit.

- Fall Semester (English 7):
 - Introductory Lessons and Classroom Procedures
 - Imagery
 - History of the English Language and Early English Literature
 - Introduction to the Neo-Classical Era and Satire
 - Major Assignment: Satirical Essay
 - Later Neo-Classical Era and Argumentation
 - Introduction to the Romantic Era and MLA Rules
 - Major Assignment: Argumentative Essay
 - First Quarter Assessment (Roughly near the Fall Semester Break)
 - Creating a Better Thesis
 - Major Assignment: Five-paragraph theme paper
 - Personal Narratives (this unit has the double purpose to improve students' ability to write powerful college application essays.)
 - Major Assignment: Personal narrative essay
 - Novel Study: *Anthem*
 - Major Assignment: minor projects throughout the unit.
 - English 7 Final Exam

- Spring Semester (English 8):
 - Rhetoric
 - Major Assignment: Research paper using rhetoric that proposes a solution to some aspect of human suffering
 - Debate
 - Major Assignment: Participation in a major debate as part of a team. Students that are absent on the day of their debate must write a 1,000-word research paper on their team's assigned topic due three days following the date of the absence.
 - Academic Reading
 - Understanding and Creating Poetry
 - Major Assignment: Five-paragraph essay explicating a free-verse poem
 - Major Assignment: Student-created free-verse poem
 - Shakespeare: *Othello* or *Hamlet*
 - *Othello* or *Hamlet* Quiz
 - Major Assignment: Thematic Project based on either *Othello* or *Hamlet*
 - Make-up and Semester Review
 - English 8 Final Exam

Communication is Key:

My email address is **pnohrden@washoeschools.net**. If you have any questions of me while we are not in class, send me an email and I will do my best to answer you. I check my email frequently throughout the day and evening and before I retire for the night. I will try to answer every email before midnight, so long as I receive it before 11:00 p.m.

Special Note:

Nearly everything you need to know about the class can be found on my website at www.washoeschools.net/page/11797.

Damonte Ranch Academic Integrity Policy

Cheating means gaining unfair advantage by using unauthorized information.

Cheating is further defined by but not limited to:

- **COPYING** someone else's homework, classwork, or test answers
- **ALLOWING** someone else to copy your work or test answers
- **USING** any kind of unauthorized device, study aid, or cheat sheet
- **POSSESSING** or **VIEWING** a copy of an exam beforehand
- **SHARING** test information with students who have not yet taken the test or course
 - This includes taking answers/questions from a test out of the classroom without the permission of the teacher.
- **CHANGING** your answers or someone else's when correcting in class
- **MISREPRESENTING** work done by others as your own work.
 - This includes using AI. In most cases, Grammarly is A.I.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as one's own without citing sources.

- **YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING** when you copy a phrase, a paragraph, a page or an entire paper.
- **YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING** when you copy from a published source, i.e. Internet or print.

- **YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING** when you copy from someone else's work.

Minimum consequences for cheating are as follows:

- **REFERRAL** to Student Services
- **PARENT CONTACT** by the teacher
- **LUNCH DETENTION** with Student Services
- **NOTATION** made in school discipline record

Additional consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Student will receive a **ZERO** on the test or homework assignment
- Student will receive an **"F"** in citizenship for the quarter and depending on the severity of the infraction may receive an **"F"** in citizenship for the semester
- Alternative assignment, to be determined by the teacher

Be Responsible. Make Wise Choices. If you are unsure, ask your teacher for guidance.



Common Marks Used on Papers in Dr. Nohrden's English Classes

Ⓜ	Writer is missing a dynamic opener or hook.
ⒸⓈ	Comma Splice. This is when you improperly join two sentences with only a comma. Add a conjunction or break it in two.
ⒻⓈ	Fused sentence. This is one sentence that should either be two sentences or properly punctuated.
Ⓣ	Need transition.
ⓈⓅ	Misspelled word.
Ⓒ	Not following rules of capitalization. Either you failed to capitalize when required or you capitalized when you should not have.
Ⓟⓐ	Pronoun agreement problem (ex.: using "they" for one person).
Ⓕ	Fragmented sentence.
ⒻⓋ	Too many linking verbs.
Ⓕ	Vary your sentence types. Too many simple sentences in a row makes your writing feel like one is reading a list.
ⒶⒹ	Need adjectives or adverbs or other descriptive language or maybe the adjectives/adverbs you use are meaningless (e.g.: very, really).
ⓈⓅ	Paragraph too short.
Ⓟ	Need new paragraph.
ⓈⓋ	Subject-verb agreement problem.
ⓌⓌ	Wrong word.

I.O.V.C. Writing Traits Rubric

Teachers explain IOVC and then use it as a rubric for evaluating the students' essays. The students first assess their own writing. They also evaluate one another's. This will help them to focus on what is important. Each trait is generally scored at 25% of the total grade for the paper.

Writing Trait #1: Ideas

Ideas are the heart of the writing. It's the message that is being conveyed. A writer must show he or she knows about the subject matter because it is connected to his or her experience or else has thoroughly researched the topic. A student should think about whether the topic is small enough to handle. The person reading the essay should find out something new. It should include interesting tidbits that make the writing lively. The writer should *show* rather than just *tell* what is happening. A reader should easily be able to understand what the point of the paper was.

Writing Trait #2: Organization

Organization gives direction to writing. It provides the backbone and enhances the central theme or story line. There should be a good opening that gets the reader's attention. Every detail should add a little more to the main idea or story. All the details should fit together in order, like a puzzle. The writing should not drag on, but rather end at a good spot. It should leave the reader with something to think about. Organization requires a good sense of paragraphing and transitions.

Writing Trait #3: Voice

The reader understands who the writer is through the voice in the writing. Voice gives the piece personality, flavor, and style. It should be expressive and engaging. The writer should be honest and courageous and put a personal stamp on the piece. Strong conviction and individuality become apparent. Readers are left feeling that they know the person behind the words.

Writing Trait #4: Conventions

Conventions are the mechanical corrections. A writer generally prepares the writing so that it can easily be read by others. The writer makes sure to use good grammar, spelling, paragraphing, punctuation, and capitalization. Each paragraph is indented to show where a new idea begins.



Linking Verbs

I spend a lot of time talking about linking verbs. So that I do not need to remind you each time, here is a handy list.

is	did
are	does
were	go
was	goes
be	went
am	get
have	got
has	gotten
had	put ¹
do	

¹ This is not a true linking verb. Avoid using it anyway.

Turning in Assignments for English 7 & 8

Worksheets and short writings:

Place in the homework basket unless otherwise instructed.

Essays, research papers, and other long writings:

Upload to Turnitin.com

Class ID: **49106587**

Enrollment Key: Nohrden

Projects (all must be digital):

Email to pnohrden@washoeschools.net

Missing assignments:

Look on Canvas or on teacher's website (<https://www.washoeschools.net/page/11797>) for the day you missed. Any assignment and turn-in instructions will be there with the due date.

If you are not certain where to turn in your assignment, send an email to pnohrden@washoeschools.net

