

English 11

2008-2009

Mrs. Lisa Huff

e-mail: lhuff@batesvilleschools.org



See the Layers.

READ actively. THINK critically. LIVE thoughtfully.

Class wiki: <http://filamentlaunchpad.pbwiki.com>

Class blog: <http://pearlsandonions.edublogs.org>

Course Overview

Welcome to junior English! I hope to make this year a rewarding experience for all of us. The success of the class hinges on your cooperation, so I hope you will approach the class as an opportunity to grow both personally and academically by challenging yourself and energetically engaging in the reading and writing we will do. My goal is to make you better critical thinkers, active readers, skilled writers, effective communicators, life-long learners, and savvy technology users—attributes that will help you to succeed in whatever endeavors you undertake.

The English 11 curriculum is standards-based, focusing on teaching students the skills and strategies outlined in the Arkansas English Language Arts Standards and the National Educational Technology Standards for Students. The class incorporates Lit Labs, a workshop style environment that immerses students in reading and writing, offering a balance of teacher- and student-selected texts and writing topics. Students read a balance of classic and contemporary texts, fiction and nonfiction. Rather than the traditional lecture format, students learn new skills and strategies through mini-lessons in writing, reading, speaking and listening, research, technology, and collaboration. Students then have opportunities to practice these skills in group and individual settings and to undertake projects that allow them to create real-world products that encourage problem-solving and higher levels of thinking. Research has shown that students learn more deeply in this type of environment and are better able to transfer their learning to new situations.

All juniors, as mandated by the state, will take the End of Level (EOL) Literacy exam March 10-11, 2009. Throughout the year, students will practice and prepare for the exam, which tests students' mastery of the Arkansas English Language Arts frameworks throughout grades 9-11. The state requires students to pass the exam with a score of "Proficient" or "Advanced." Students not passing the exam, must enroll in remediation during their senior year. Thus, one of our year-long goals is to prepare students for success on the exam.

Classroom Rules:

- Show respect.
- Show responsibility.
- Show self-control.
- Show honesty.

Following the rules and expending effort in this class will result in a successful learning experience. However, the negative consequences of breaking the rules are listed, but not limited to:

1. Student/teacher conference,
2. Phone call to parent/legal guardian,
3. Noon detention with Mrs. Huff,
4. Referral to the administration.

Needed Supplies:

1. 3-ring binder with eight tab dividers and loose leaf paper
2. Pen or pencil
3. Dry erase markers (Students bring their own to use with the in-seat whiteboard exercises—where each student has his/her own whiteboard.)
3. Highlighters (green, yellow, pink)
4. Sticky notes
5. Flash drive (This is not required but will be very helpful in saving all your computer work and transporting between school and home. We'll be doing several multi-media projects, which can be difficult to save on disks because of their large file sizes.)

** Please use loose leaf paper only, no spiral bound paper. This helps keep our room clean!

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Classroom Procedures:

1. Bring everything you need for class, and be prepared to learn. You need your Independent Reading material and three-ring binder with you **EVERY** day.
2. Enter the room quietly and on time.
3. Attend to home group job assignment (distributing hand-outs, checking absences...).
4. **Begin working immediately on the bell work assignment.**
5. Daily, write assignments in planner.
6. Follow directions and participate in class.
7. When working in groups, work quietly and productively.
8. When transitioning from one activity to another, do so quickly and quietly without disrupting other learners.
9. Remain in seat until dismissed by teacher.
10. Leave room in the same condition you found it.

Homework Policy:

Completing assignments is crucial not only for students to master learning objectives but also for students to experience academic success and score a passing grade; therefore, I maintain a **ZERO TOLERANCE homework policy**, which requires students to complete ALL work assigned. Each nine weeks students receive one late homework pass, allowing them to turn in one homework assignment late—without penalty. If a student fails to complete an additional homework assignment, the student will have an opportunity to turn in the assignment the next class period for a letter grade deduction. If the student fails to turn in the assignment the next class period, he or she must attend “**lunch labor**” in my classroom during lunch, allowing him or her time—and if needed help from me—to complete the assignment. If a student repeatedly fails to complete assignments, I will request a conference with the parent to discuss ways we can work together to help the student succeed in completing assignments.

Make-Up Work:

I adhere to BHS handbook policies (p. 39 of the Student Handbook) on make-up work. After an excused absence, it is the student's responsibility to make up all work missed. Students may access all homework and missed assignments in their home group folder in the classroom. Homework must be completed and turned in within two class days following the student's return to school. If a student fails to turn in make-up work within two days, the student must attend “lunch labor” in my classroom and receive a letter grade penalty. BHS policy states that students will not receive credit for unexcused absences. Note, however, that because I have a zero tolerance homework policy, I still require students to complete the work, even though they will not receive credit for doing so. If in-class activities prohibit students making up missed exams during class, students must schedule a time before or after school or during lunch to make up exams within two class days of being absent. This prevents them from missing valuable instruction in class and getting further behind.

Late Work:

Realizing that life sometimes gets in the way of deadlines, I give each student one late pass each quarter. Students may use a late pass on any assignment (other than an exam) to extend the due date to the next class period. Students may not, however, trade, borrow, or lend late passes to other students. Teaching students to be responsible and to meet deadlines is a critical job and life skill; therefore, beyond the late pass, students will lose a letter grade for late work. Note, because of my zero tolerance homework policy, students must complete and turn in ALL assignments.

Assessment:

The course uses a system of assessment that evaluates students throughout the learning-- throughout a variety of activities and projects—and encourages students to revise and polish their work. Grades will be calculated as follows:

30%	Reading/Writing (R/W) Workshop	Reading Journals Bell Ringers Daily R/W Exercises Active Participation in Literature Circles and Large Group Class Discussions Reading Log (on goodreads)
20%	Vocabulary	Practice Exercises Quizzes (every two weeks)
40%	Special Projects & Exams	Research Assignments Literature Circle Projects Blogs Other Assigned Projects Portfolio
10%	EOL Exam Exercise	Practice Multiple Choice Practice Open Response Writing Practice Timed Essays

Semester grades are calculated as follows:

- First Nine Weeks grade 40%
- Second Nine Weeks grade 40%
- Semester Exam 20%

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