

Welcome to Freshman English

Mrs. DeRaps; hderaps@mtbluersd.org

First and foremost, I would like to say that I am quite excited about this course. I feel that we are going to have lots of fun this year because we'll be venturing down some new and intriguing paths together. Of course, we are going to be working at a vigorous pace, but we should still have time to squeeze in *some* excitement now and again.

To being with, I would like to go over our classroom expectations and requirements.

1. **Respect:** This will be required of everyone in our classroom at all times. RESPECT means that we will not use foul language, that we will not make anyone in class feel uncomfortable or unsafe at any time, that we will be considerate of the material objects that belong to our classroom, and that we will listen to one another.
2. **You are expected to be here on time every class period.** You will be excused the first two times you are late without a pass. On the third occasion and every one thereafter, you will be issued a detention.
3. **You are expected to be prepared for class once the bell rings.** You need to be prepared with materials required for this class every time we meet. Our time together is precious; please honor our starting time!
4. **Readings, class work, and homework will be completed on time.** If you are absent or missing work for whatever reason, you need to make arrangements with me to complete your work. You may visit our class blog at www.derapsclass.blogspot.com to see what you've missed in class.
5. **Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated.** If you are found to be copying someone's ideas or work, you will receive a zero on that assignment and we will be having some long discussions.
6. **You may eat and drink in this classroom.** That said, if your eating and/ or drinking becomes a distraction you will be asked to put your food and/ or drink away.

General Overview of What We'll Cover

As a student in this course, you can expect:

- To evaluate yourself as a learner
- To participate in class discussions and group work
- To complete formal and informal assessments
- To complete polished pieces of writing in several genres
- To read a variety of works from various genres
- To be challenged

The topic of this course is the exploration of your beliefs and character through various pieces of literature. Through these works, we will be learning from a variety of perspectives. Here are some of the works that we will be reading:

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson
Day of Tears by Julius Lester
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
Witness by Karen Hesse

Writing is also a huge part of this course. We'll work to complete two common assessments, the Five Paragraph Essay and Double Entry Journals. All freshmen will complete these assignments, so you're not alone. At the end of the year, you'll work toward completing a multi-genre project, which will be composed of your original poetry and your writings from various genres.

Grading

It is important to remember that no one grade will ruin your chances for success in this class. No grade for complete work will receive a grade less than a 50%. Any work that scores below a 50% will be entered into the grade book, but you will have the opportunity to improve upon it. Work that is not handed in will be marked with a zero. You will have the opportunity to finish incomplete work and/or missing work through the Extended Day Program during the school year to gain credit for this class. If work is not completed by the end of the school year, you will be recommended to the Extended Year Program.

Also, if you are having trouble understanding or completing work on time, I am available to help you during periods 1 and 3 on both gold and blue days. **IF you make arrangements with me AHEAD** of time. You will need a pass from me to come in for extra help during these periods as there may be others needing my help and attention.

Here are the categories under which you will be graded this year:

Academic Initiative (Learning Practices Rubric and homework): 10%

Formal Assessments (Major projects, papers, tests): 45 %

Informal Assessments (Smaller projects, writings, quizzes): 45%

**A standards-based report card will be issued at the mid-point and end of this school year.

First Assignment

Your first assignment for this class is to bring the next page back to me next class signed and dated by yourself and a parent/ guardian.

Please share the previous pages with a parent and/or guardian.
Please sign and date in the appropriate fields below to show that you and your guardian feel you understand the information explained in the previous pages.

Parent/ Guardian:

Date:

Please give an email address where you can be reached for updates and information:

Please give a cell phone number where you can be reached:

Student:

Date:

Open House for this course is going to be held on **Wednesday, September 2nd** in **Condo 5** (the brick one).

If you are unable to meet at this time and would like to schedule an alternate meeting time with me, please feel free to email me at hderaps@mtbluersd.org or phone me at school at **778-3561**. Even though students are entering into high school, they still need support from both home and school in order to make it to graduation day!

Thanks in advance for your support and communication,

Mrs. DeRaps