**English 2B Syllabus**

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**Theme of study: Identity**

Who are you? Who are you becoming? What values are important to you? What are universal experiences and lessons of growing up, interacting with others, and making life choices? How is individual identity impacted by society? Is it important to “fit in”?

**Units of Study**

Class discussion is a major component of all the units listed below. Through speaking with each other about the literature we read, what we believe, and what we have experienced, we can broaden our understanding of ourselves, of each other, and of the world.

• **Relating with universal themes**

* Review information about Shakespeare and the historical Julius Caesar.
* Practice deciphering Shakespearean language.
* Read and analyze William Shakespeare’s play *Julius Caesar* (setting, character development, themes, and other literary aspects); we will read much of the play aloud--you will be assigned parts to read.
* View selected scenes of film versions of the play; compare and contrast the film treatments with the written text.
* Note the influence of the play on English-speaking culture.
* Write a literary analysis essay, complete with textual evidence, about the play.
* Create a project—graphic, written, or performance--that portrays themes and situations from the play.

• **Making judgments**

* Read and analyze Reginald Rose’s play *Twelve Angry Men* (setting, character development, themes, and other literary aspects); we will read the play aloud--you will be assigned parts to read.
* Write reflections about the characters’ behavior.
* Learn about the American jury system.
* Complete a creative writing project relating to the play.

**• Expressing opinions**

* Read the print version of *Des Moines Register* along with selected online newspapers for approximately two weeks, with special emphasis on the opinion sections.
* Become familiar with newspaper terms and writing style.
* Consider the role of newspapers in a democracy.
* Through journaling and discussion, summarize the messages of published opinion columns and express your own reaction to them.
* Write an opinion column that would be appropriate for the *Boone High Spotlight*, the *Boone News-Republican*, or the *Des Moines Register.*

**• Making choices**

* Read and analyze John Steinbeck’s novel *Of Mice and Men* (setting, character development, themes, and other literary aspects).
* Learn about the historical setting of *Of Mice and Men* (the Great Depression).
* Take quizzes to check comprehension of the novel.
* Write a literary analysis essay, complete with textual evidence, about *Of Mice and Men.*
* View a film version (directed by Gary Sinise, 1992) of the novel; compare and contrast the film treatment with the written text.
* Write a monologue in the voice of a character from the novel.
* Read and analyze Robert Burns’s poem “To a Mouse,” noting the thematic connections of the poem and novel.

• **Growing up and considering how others view us**

* Write a personal essay of introduction (this will be done during the first week of second semester; students will refer back to their essays as we begin our reading of *The House on Mango Street*).
* Read and analyze Sandra Cisneros’s novel *The House on Mango Street* (character development, themes, writing style).
* Consider the elements (such as the use of vignettes and poetic language) for which the novel is known as a groundbreaking contemporary work of literature.
* Free write your own vignettes, using Cisneros’s stylistic techniques, in response to topics relating to childhood experiences, beliefs, family, community, hopes, fears, growing up, and more.
* Revise, polish, and finalize some of your own vignettes.

**Info related to grades**

Graded activities include written assignments, quizzes, independent reading requirements, and small- and large-group activities. The semester test will be worth 10 percent of the semester grade. Extra credit is not available in this class. Your grade is determined by assigned work.

**Late work policy**

Please make sure you understand the English 2B late work policy:

* Late work can be handed in for 1⁄2 credit
* After one week, late work will NOT be accepted
If you are in a program (such as TLC or resource room) that may allow you extended time for some assignments, it is important that you communicate with me when you need extra time to complete an assignment. Talk with me *before* the deadline to let me know that you need extended time and give me your best estimation of when the assignment will be completed.

**Rules and Expectations**

1. Arrive to class on time.

2. Plan to spend time outside of class on homework for English 2B. You routinely will need to complete reading and other assignments outside of class time.

3. Understand that academic dishonesty (cheating or plagiarism) will be dealt with seriously--it will result in a zero for the assignment.

4. Please bring a notebook to use as a class journal.

**Make-up work policy**

When you are absent, of course you are responsible for finding out about what you missed. If you missed a quiz or similar activity, it may be necessary for you to come in outside of class--within a day or two or your absence--to make it up. Advanced make-up work is due up before you miss class (this includes absences due to school activities). You are welcome to see me before or after school for help with make-up work. Most days I am available between 7:15 and 8:55 a.m. and 3:20 and 3:45 p.m. to work with students.