

 SYLLABUS/ Course Handbook	Mascenic Regional High School
	Course: Foundations of Literacy
	2016-2017
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Core Values Statement

Mascenic Regional High School’s mission is to create a respectful, secure and engaging learning environment. Our goal is to motivate all students to become knowledgeable, independent, lifelong learners who will be ethical, effective 21st century citizens.

Course Description

This is a college-preparatory course focusing on key literacy concepts. Students will read and analyze literary and informational texts, and utilize other forms of media, with goal of will attaining 21st century literacy skills to be used across the curriculum. Other course goals include development of effective oral communication and listening skills and development of writing skills to communicate effectively, including using evidence to support arguments.

In addition to “college preparation,” it is also a course goal to provide students, through our literary studies, tools that they can use in both private and public life and to develop good workplace and academic habits.

Those who excel in this course will be encourages to enroll in the Honors-level course next year; these students should also take advantage of more challenging assessment options as available this year.

Prerequisites: Completion of required Grade 8 Reading/English courses

Required Resources

Echoes from Mt. Olympus, I Am Malala, The Miracle Worker, A Night to Remember, Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots Book III, and composition texts; various handouts (all provided by MRHS)

MRHS Network account and G-mail/Google Docs account (provided by MRHS)

3-Ring Binder

Access to www.culliton.org and a printer outside of school (please see the instructor if this is a problem)

USB Flash drive

Course Competencies

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.

Compete all assignments at the times specified on the Assignment Schedule, whether absent or not.

Use web site (www.culliton.org) I have set up to access study guides and other materials, especially in the case of absences or lost materials

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence— from both fiction and non-fiction— to support an analysis or position.

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums determining which details are emphasized in each account.

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Essential Questions

What are the timeless lessons embodied in literature across times and locales?

Why is close reading necessary to derive meaning from a text?

How may societal and personal values both differ and maintain some constancy across times and cultures?

How can we achieve clarity in writing in order to best communicate our thoughts and findings?

What is meant by “textual evidence” and why is its use important?

21st Century Learning Skills (Developed by MRHS)

In this course, students will develop the following skills:

Academic

1. Connect with others through written and oral communication.
2. Acquire a broad base of knowledge related to the literature and non-fiction studied.
3. Demonstrate responsibility for their academic endeavors through adherence to school policies and requirements by being committed, engaged, participating students in the classroom community.

Civic and Social

1. Honor commitments to groups, organizations, teams, and classes.
 2. Demonstrate respect for the individual.
 3. Act with integrity.
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Course Content

Course units will include most of the following, depending on class composition, student preferences and time:

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe

I Am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

Selections from *Echoes from Mt. Olympus* with related cultural studies and contemporary non-fiction

Romeo and Juliet or selections from Shakespeare’s sonnets

The Miracle Worker with related biography, literature and historical studies

A Night to Remember with related historical/scientific/technical studies

In addition, the following skills will be reinforced throughout:

Functional Vocabulary Development

Use of Standard Written English

Close Reading

Use of Textual Evidence

Organization of Materials, Ideas, Sentences, Paragraphs, etc.

Instructional Methods

Close-reading Study Guides
Supplemental handouts, including related non-fiction
Graphic Organizers
Independent and group readings

Modeling/demonstrations
Film/audio depictions
Presentations/slide shows
Collaborative Process Writing

Assessment Methods

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 100 – 97

A = 96-93

A- = 92 – 90

B+ = 89 – 87

B = 86 – 83

B- = 82 – 80

C+ = 79 – 77

C = 76 – 73

C- = 72– 70

D+ = 69 – 67

D = 66 – 63

D- = 62—60

F = 59 or Below

Students will be assessed on the course competencies, content, and skills via the following:

The MRHS School-Wide Rubrics will be used as appropriate, especially in the areas of Written, Oral and Visual Communications.

There will be reading/note-taking and/or vocabulary work on a regular basis, some of which will have to be done outside of class. During class, we will have discussions of readings and individual and cooperative tasks. Voluntary participation by all students in oral discussions is crucial. There will be quizzes (some announced and some not) on readings due for the day, reading homework assessed by oral questioning, writing assignments, and tests. Proper sentence, paragraph and essay structure; and correct usage and mechanics will also be included.

All assignments (including tests, quizzes, etc.) are given various “weights”—that is, grades for some will count one-quarter, one-half, one or two times (unannounced quizzes, in-class exercises), and still others will count three, four, or five times (announced quizzes, major tests, papers, projects, etc.). If you see “3X” beside something on your Assignment Schedule, that means the grade for the assignment counts three times, for example.

Overall class participation in discussions and activities will be assessed periodically during the year and will constitute approximately 20% of each quarter grade. I may also give grades for preparation and cooperation, which will count once.

The final examination for this class will, as per School Board policy, count as 20 percent of the course grade.

There may be a mid-term at the end of semester one in January. If so, the grade on this will count as 10% of the course grade and the Final in June will count as 10%.

Remember to check your grades and regularly using Power School.

The portal is here: <https://mascenic.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

Course Policies

If something is affecting your performance in my class, or you do not understand something you have to do at home, TALK TO ME. I have no way of knowing what is going on with you unless you tell me. You MUST take responsibility in this area! **See page 1 for contact information.**

Set aside enough time to do homework assignments carefully. LOOK AHEAD ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE and plan your time. Work for this class is made clear well in advance. Take all relevant books and handouts home every night, plan your time to allow for glitches, emergencies, etc., and have everything you need with you for each class at the beginning of the period. **Use of technology is expected.** (See Common Core State Standards, Initiative, <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>, pp. 7, 46, 63) Students will need to use web site I have set up to access study materials. Students will need a network password for use here at school, means to word-process or type papers at home

(through use of Google Docs) and access to the World Wide Web on a regular basis outside of class (our library, your town library, home, etc.).

Be prepared and willing to **participate spontaneously in class discussions**; it is only through these that we can go beyond superficial analysis of literature! Be thoughtful enough to make the leap and apply lessons, themes, ideals, values, etc., from literature readings to your own life, present and future.

Do not do anything that makes it difficult for yourself or others in the class to learn or for me to teach. (Always remember to LISTEN when someone else is speaking, SPEAK UP when it's your turn, and do NOT start side conversations or create distractions.) Be respectful; a classroom should be a safe space for all regardless of personal characteristics; rude comments are not allowed!

Keep up-to-date notes both from your own reading and from class discussions / lectures. You will need a **THREE-RING BINDER**. Bring the binder to class with you every day along with a writing utensil and the book(s) we are using. You will also need a **USB flash drive** (1 gigabyte is more than sufficient) and are **encouraged to bring your own laptop or tablet** to class if possible.

Be in class every day. If you are absent, contact your study partner (see below) or me before you return to school; **you will be expected to know, by the time you come back, what went on** regardless of how much class you miss. You can also call me with any questions. The website often has links to the things we may have viewed or done in class.

You must have a study partner who will **bring things home** to you when you are absent and **discuss what went on in class**, and for whom you will do the same. This person **should not be involved in the same activities, teams, etc., as you are if these cause the activity members to miss class.**

Attendance/Assignments/Late Work

See the *Student Handbook* for information on the MRHS attendance policy.

Be where you should be in the curriculum at all times. I expect you to do the work regardless of absences, during which **you are also responsible for getting the notes and/or any alterations in the schedule from your study partner and for doing all classwork/homework assignments before you come back to class.**

I keep a **Make-up Work folder**; any **tests or quizzes** you miss will be in there, with your last name on them. Check this folder as soon as you come into the room after you miss ANY part of any class. You will usually have to compete missed tests or quizzes during class and/or advisory time (unless you have a free period during the day, in which case you may make arrangements with me to use that).

You may not hand in late an assignment whose answers we go over in class while you are present or which has been turned back to other students with answer corrections on it. In some cases, you may be able to have an alternative assignment.

Tests and quizzes must be taken and previously-assigned work turned in with the rest of the class regardless of previous absences as well. **Absences on your part do not change your due dates!**

You will need to contact me to ask for an exception if you were too ill to prepare for a test or quiz or complete an assignment. Do not wait until you are sitting in class to try to discuss this sort of thing; that's much too late. You have my phone number—use it! **(Parent calls to the office do not come through to me; you need to contact me directly.)**

If you come in late and have missed the entire class, come see me at some point during the day so I can give you anything that I may be passing out.

If are going to be absent from class for a reason other than illness or an emergency, you **MUST** follow the procedure outlined in the Student Handbook for vacations during school time. This will entail that you tell me several days beforehand; I will see to it that you have all you need to keep up. You **MUST** complete the work I assigned you while you are out, passing it in upon your return. This will avoid your having to come in after school or miss class to make-up work during the period. In the case of dismissals for sports or other school-sponsored activities, the same policy applies.

Special Rules for MAJOR Take-Home Assignments, Projects, etc.:

I am very suspicious of people who do not show up for class the day a major projects, paper or take-home test is due. It has been my experience that most of these people are using the time to do the work they should have been doing since the work was assigned days ago. Therefore, the following rule applies to **ALL ASSIGNMENTS**—except strictly in-class tests— **COUNTING 3 OR MORE TIMES: If you are absent from my class but were here another part of the day** (for example, you were late to school but did attend other classes later in the day) and you have a **MAJOR** (counting 3 times or more) piece of work due for me that day, please **FIND ME and give me the paper/project after you arrive.** (Never just come into my room and leave work on my desk.) **OR**, you could give it to a *trusted* classmate or to Mrs. Heywood in the office. Otherwise, it will be considered late and not be given full credit.

Cancellations

In case of snow days or other cancellations of school, **do the all reading and Study Guide work assigned for that day anyway**, to the best of your ability.