

Sylmar High School
“Focused On Results”

English 10 A

Fall 2010 - Course Syllabus

Teacher: Joseph Siminski

Students will work to improve the literacy skills of listening, reading, understanding, writing, and speaking English. Improved English language literacy skills are an important step to growth and improvement in all other school subjects and other aspects of life. Lessons and assignments offered will work to prepare all students to meet or exceed the State of California Standards for Grades 9 and 10 and improve students’ test scores on important grade 10 high-stakes tests including the CAHSEE (California High School Exit Examination) and the CST (California Standards Tests). English–Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools claims, “Mastery of these standards will ensure that children in California [can] enter the worlds of higher education and the workplace armed with the tools they need to be literate, confident communicators.”

Unit 1: Persuasion (September – October) – Students will read and analyze newspaper articles, speeches by community leaders or important historical figures and/or other persuasive literature to understand and evaluate the credibility of authors’ claims. Students will learn to identify the persuasive thesis (claim, position, argument, author’s opinion) and evidence offered by authors in support of their thesis including logical appeals (facts, examples, statistics, expert opinions), emotional appeals, ethical appeals and anecdotes. Students will be able to identify a variety of misleading fallacious reasoning techniques. Students will be able to accurately evaluate the credibility of an argument and draw a correct conclusion based on an analysis of the evidence. Students will be able to take notes using graphic organizers and write a clear, detailed, audience appropriate and accurate response that includes properly quoted evidence from the provided text and a clear and accurate analysis of the credibility of the evidence. Students will revise work to show improvement in word choice, grammar and mechanics.

Unit 2: Exposition (November – January) – Students will read and analyze a variety of texts to learn how to recognize and understand complex ideas and techniques used by authors. Students will be able to recognize and determine the topic of a particular essay, identify an author’s thesis or main idea, and select significant ideas explained by the author in explanation of their thesis. Students will write a detailed essay that conveys their significant understanding of a single topic synthesized from information provided in several texts. Student writing must include quotes synthesized from several sources on the single topic to demonstrate their ability to recognize and understand the ideas presented in the reading and explain them in writing. Students will revise work to show improvement in word choice, grammar and mechanics.

Essential Learning

Sylmar High School English 10 teachers have agreed that, in addition to earning a passing grade on class assignments, all students must be able to successfully accomplish these five Essential Learning standards to at least 70% proficiency.

R 1.2 - Distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words and interpret the connotative power of words.

R 2.8 - Evaluate the credibility of an author’s argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author’s intent affects the structure and tone of the text.

W 1.4 - Develop the main ideas within the body of the composition through supporting evidence .

W 1.9 - Revise writing to improve the logic and coherence of the organization and controlling perspective, the precision of word choice, and the tone by taking into consideration the audience, purpose, and formality of the context.

W 1.1 - Extend ideas presented in primary and secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration.

Classroom Procedures

1. **Homework / Pleasure Reading** – 2 days of student homework every week will consist of 20 minutes of reading a book or magazine of their choice and then completing a brief reading journal entry in the back of their notebook. They may do this any two days per week they wish. 20 homework reading journals will be due week 11 and a written report due week 12. It is important that students choose a book that they relate to and can enjoy. Students will also receive other homework related directly to class lessons, including reading, writing, library research, and typing assignments on a computer. Computers are available in the library.
2. **Major Assignments and Exams** – Exams, unit essays and presentations are a major part of a student's grade and must be turned in on time. Ten points (one letter grade) will be deducted for each day an assignment is late for a maximum of 4 days.
3. **Notebooks** – Students must keep all class materials in their notebooks, including graded and ungraded homework, class work, quizzes, tests, handouts, etc. Students are required to take clear study quality notes during class. Notebooks are graded every 4 – 5 weeks prior to report cards.
4. **Grades** – Grades are earned based on a fair assessment of the student's work and progress towards meeting the California State Standards. Assessments will include quizzes, tests, essays, oral presentations, class participation, classwork, notebooks and homework. The student is empowered to earn good grades with consistent effort and progress. Additionally, students must earn a successful grade of 70% or better on assessments for the school wide Essential Learnings to be eligible to pass the class. Students may take these assessments more than once if needed. Even if a student earns an A on all other graded work in class, if he or she earns less than 70% on any single essential learning assessment (given the opportunity to retake the test if needed), then the student cannot earn a 70% or better on their final semester report card.
90-100% = A 80-89% = B 70-79% = C 60-69% = D 0-59% = F
5. **Extra Credit** – Students may complete additional reading journals for extra credit. Students can also exceed assignment expectations and produce extra work on many class assignments. However, extra credit cannot be used to alter an Essential Learning outcome, and success on Essential Learning exams is required for a C or better in the course.
6. **Restroom** – Please use the restroom before class. If a student must use the restroom during class, please wait for a proper moment to request permission. Do not interrupt the lesson.
7. **Attendance / Tardiness** Students must adhere to school policy regarding attendance, tardiness and parent notes to clear absences. Excessive tardiness or absence can result in consequences and harm a student's grade. However, because of the Swine H1N1 Flu Virus predicted this year, students who show symptoms of FLU (fever, body ache, headache, etc.) should **STAY HOME FROM CLASS TO PREVENT INFECTING OTHERS**. These students should check with a friend and check online for homework updates.
8. **After School Tutoring** – **Students who do not complete homework or classwork, who have difficulty understanding lessons, or who do not pass EL or Unit Exams are required to stay after school for tutoring.**

Basic Rules

1. **Be respectful and polite.**
2. **Be on time and prepared.**
3. **Obey all school rules and the rule of law.**

Consequences

Consequences for breaking rules or procedures will follow school guidelines and can include calls to parents, verbal warnings, assignments, tasks, deans' office referrals, detention, and suspension. Rule breaking can also interfere with learning and affect student grades.

Rewards

When students do well and obey the rules and procedures rewards will be offered throughout the year. The most important reward is the personal growth, empowerment and feelings of satisfaction that arise from your successful work.

Teacher Commitment

I am committed to doing my best to help each student succeed. I will be available to students or parents to answer questions whenever possible. I will assess all assignments and tests in a fair and balanced manner in accordance with State Standards. I will be fair with regards to student behavior, discipline and participation. I will be prepared for class each day with a lesson plan that will help students learn to think, understand and succeed.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Joseph Siminski. I am pleased to be your child's English teacher this year. I believe strongly that education is very important and that all children can be successful. I am committed to doing my best to help your child succeed this year.

I welcome your full participation in your child's education. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by calling and leaving a message for me at the school office. I will return your call as soon as possible.

Sylmar Senior High – Main Office – (818) 833-3700

I look forward to meeting you at **Back To School Night on Wednesday, September 1, 5:30 – 7:30 PM in Room 14 and at Parent Conference Night, Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 – 7:30 PM for report card day.**

You can view your student's classwork and homework assignments by finding our class webpage at www.sylmarhs.org click on CLASSES/HOMEWORK, then ENGLISH, then SIMINSKI ENGLISH 10A or SIMINSKI ENGLISH 11A, then HOMEWORK. You will need the free software ADOBE READER to read the downloaded documents.

I am committed to creating a professional learning environment that will help every child in class succeed. Please go over the syllabus with the rules and expectations with your child and help convince him/her of how important it is they participate and behave in a professional, positive manner.

Please fill out your daytime phone numbers (cell, home or work) and email address (if you have one) and sign the bottom portion of this letter for your child to return to me in class. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Joseph Siminski
English Teacher, Grades 10 & 11
Sylmar Senior High – Room 14
jxs0680@lausd.net

I read and understood the course syllabus, including the rules and procedures.

I give permission for my child to be held after school to make up missing assignments and receive extra tutoring if needed.

STUDENT'S PRINTED NAME: _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S PRINTED NAME: _____

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S DAYTIME PHONE #: _____

PARENT'S EMAIL ADDRESS: _____