

Sylmar High School
“Focused On Results”

English 11 – American Literature Fall 2010 Course Syllabus

Teacher: Joseph Siminski

Students will work to improve reading, writing, listening and speaking English. Improved English language skills are an important step to growth and improvement in all other school subjects and other aspects of life. Lessons and assignments offered will prepare the students to meet or exceed the State of California Standards and prepare them for college or other future goals.

Unit 1: American Revolutions & Civil Rights – Students will read public documents (speeches, debates) by Barak Obama, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and others. They will analyze the way authors use rhetorical devices and literary features to evaluate the philosophical, religious, ethical and social influences of the historical periods. Students will evaluate the ways in which events and information are presented by filmmakers. Students will write persuasive essays and credibility evaluations.

Unit 2: American Conservatism & Superstition – Students will read *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller and watch a film of the play. They will analyze the way Miller uses rhetorical devices and literary features to evaluate the philosophical, religious, ethical and social influences of the historical period. Students will write an additional scene to add to the play, remaining true to the characters, language, tone, plot, theme and format of the play.

Unit 3: American Expansion and Immigration – Students will read excerpts from *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, view portions of the films *Fast Food Nation* and *Food Inc.* and read other literary works. They will analyze the way authors use rhetorical devices and literary features to evaluate the philosophical, religious, ethical and social influences of the historical period. Students will write an expository essay.

Essential Learning

Sylmar High School English 11 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.

1. Write a coherent essay with a clear thesis supported with evidence from the text.
2. Memorize and learn appropriate academic vocabulary.
3. Recognize and identify elements of a bibliography.
4. Publish work using word processing software.
5. Present a well organized and rehearsed oral project using practiced techniques of rhetoric.

These essential learnings will ask students to demonstrate proficiency in these standards.

W1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic

W1.1 Trace the etymology of significant terms used in political science and history.

W1.2 Apply knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to draw inferences concerning the meaning of scientific and mathematical terminology.

W1.3 Discern the meaning of analogies encountered, analyzing specific comparisons as well as relationships and inferences.

W1.6 Develop presentations by using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies (e.g., field studies, oral histories, interviews, experiments, electronic sources).

W1.7 Use systematic strategies to organize and record information (e.g., anecdotal scripting, annotated bibliographies).

W2.6 Deliver multimedia presentations: a. Combine text, images, and sound and draw information from many sources (e.g., television broadcasts, videos, films, newspapers, magazines, CD-ROMs, the Internet, electronic media-generated images). b. Select an appropriate medium for each element of the presentation. c. Use the selected media skillfully, editing appropriately and monitoring for quality.

LS 1.4 Use rhetorical questions, parallel structure, concrete images, figurative language, characterization, irony, and dialogue to achieve clarity, force, and aesthetic effect.

Classroom Procedures

1. **Homework / Pleasure Reading** – 2 days of student homework each week will consist of 20 minutes of reading a book or magazine of their choice and then completing a brief reading journal entry in their notebook. They may do this any two days they wish. 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** – 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/Folders** – 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. **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.
6. **Extra Credit** – Extra credit assignments can be offered to students to help improve their learning and grades at the discretion of the teacher and the school. Extra credit should only be offered for diligent, accountable work submitted in a timely manner.
7. **Attendance / Tardiness** – Students must adhere to school policy regarding attendance, tardiness and excuses. 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 on time and prepared.** Bring required books, paper, pens, pencils and assignments.
2. **Be respectful and polite.** Students conduct should always be courteous and professional.
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, calling parents, detention, and suspension. Rule breaking can also affect the student's grade.

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 regarding 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: _____