**MS. GWYNEDD RZEGOCKI**

 *SYLLABUS*

*8th Grade Literature*

*St. John School 2016-2017*

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**WELCOME!**

This year in Literature, students will focus on the use of characters and conflict to develop meaningful narratives. I look forward to a year of insight and growth!

**MATERIALS:**

In order to be successful in class, students must arrive prepared and ready to work. I recommend bringing daily:

* A binder stocked with loose-leaf
* Pen or pencil
* Literature composition book
* Assigned novel
* Flash drive
* St. John Planner
* Assigned work

**WRITTEN WORK**

Written work must be either typed or handwritten legibly, on appropriate paper. Please no rips, tears, spills, raggedy edges, or crumples. It is also essential that all work is returned on time. This is non-negotiable. Students will be penalized for late work, and work not turned in within a week of the due date will not be accepted and will receive an F.

**ABSENCES:**

Students are responsible for proactively checking in and completing missed assignments following an absence. Before or after school are optimal times; during class instruction is a poor time to inquire about missed work. If families are planning an absence (vacations, trips, etc.) feel free to let me know. Per St. John policy, I do not prepare work ahead of time for planned absences, and students will be expected to make up missing work within two weeks of their return.

**RE-TAKES:**

Prior to re-taking a test, students will be required to submit a re-take plan. Re-takes are scheduled after school on a case-by-case basis, and students are responsible for initiating and undertaking the re-take process. Quizzes and small assessments are ineligible for re-takes, and students may re-take a larger test **once only.**

 **GRADES**:

Grades consist of writing and speaking projects, quizzes, class work and assessments. Grades adhere to the St. John grading scale and will be standards-based, according to the Common Core standards. There is **NO** extra credit.

 **EXPECTATIONS:**

Respect for everyone and everything is a nonnegotiable expectation in my classroom and all other expectations stem from this. I expect everyone in my classroom to behave in a manner that aligns with the mission and school-wide learning expectations of St. John School. In addition, I expect all students to take ownership of their learning by actively engaging in the curriculum.

**CHEATING & PLAGIARISM:**

Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade and a detention. This includes copying homework, classwork, test answers, talking during a test or quiz, allowing someone to copy your work, and trying to pass off someone else’s work as your own. If you feel the need to cheat, speak with me about getting help with the material.

**CONTACT:**

If students need to talk with me, I am generally available before school after 7:50 AM, during break, or after school until 4 PM. Feel free to stop by during any of these times, but for a larger matter or guaranteed time, it’s best to make an appointment. I do my best to respond to emails as quickly as possible. Please remember that I teach reading and writing; student emails should use appropriate conventions such as a salutation, punctuation, proper spellings (“you” rather than “U”) and appropriate tone. Students, remember to include your name!

 **ELECTRONIC DEVICES:**

Students may use personal eReaders instead of school-provided copies of our novels as long as an eReader contract is signed and on file. This is a privilege, and students found to be abusing their eReaders will face consequences. Personal laptops are acceptable following an agreement or conference with the homeroom teacher and/or school administration.

**NON-TRADITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS and TOOLS:**

Sometimes students will be required to create or turn in assignments in non-traditional, technology-based ways. This might include watching videos or reading articles online, responding via comment sections, or collaborating on Google Docs. Know that these are just as important as paper assignments, and will be graded according to the same expectations.

**POWERSCHOOL:**

PowerSchool is the most helpful tool available for monitoring student work and grades. Students will be checking PowerSchool weekly during class but are also encouraged to check at home as well. I will try to enter grades in a timely fashion, but larger projects such as essays and big tests might take a little longer to grade. If you see that an assignment is miss-marked, save the original copy to ensure that the proper credit is given.

**BOOK TALKS:**

As a part of the Literature curriculum, students will conduct Book Talks once a trimester. Students will be responsible for reading a book independently, creating a project to embody the themes or story, and to present that book to the class. Book Talks are important not only for students to read and be exposed to a variety of books, but also to practice public speaking.

**HELPFUL TIPS:**

* Be your own advocate! If you need help, please ask. I am always happy to help students.
* Write ALL your assignments in your planner. If you’re worried about forgetting an assignment, take a picture of the Homework Board every day.

**A positive attitude and willingness to work go a long way towards success!**