

# Central Visual Performing Arts High School

## Honors English II

Instructor: Elizabeth Foster

Email: [Elizabeth.Foster@slps.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Foster@slps.org)

Classroom:208

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**Course Description:** The purpose of English II is to provide a balanced language arts course that explores literary concepts, themes, and genres. This class will promote and encourage an understanding and appreciation of literature through the study of short story, poetry, drama, the novel, and historical speeches/essays. Students will respond to the literature in written and oral presentation to include informative, argument, expository, and narrative formats. The writing will emphasize quality of content as well as the deepening understanding of the students' skills in grammar, mechanics, and usage. Through listening, speaking, thinking and writing, students will effectively make connections between literature and other academic disciplines, as well as their own experiences.

**Course Objectives:** The intense concentration on language use in this course should enhance the student's ability to use grammatical conventions both appropriately and with sophistication as well as to develop stylistic maturity in their prose. Stylistic development is nurtured by emphasizing the following:

1. a wide range of vocabulary.
2. a variety of sentence structures.
3. a logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence such as repetition, transition, and emphasis.
4. a balance of generalization and specific illustrative detail.
5. an effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure.

### **Controversial Content**

This course guides students in becoming curious, critical, and responsive readers of diverse audiences for diverse purposes. The reading and writing students do in the course should deepen and expand their understanding of how written language functions rhetorically: to communicate writers' intentions and elicit readers' responses in particular situations. That being said, it should be noted that the novels we will be studying have some controversial content such as religion, immigration, un-aliving of persons, and racism.

**Classroom Expectations:** You are expected to conduct yourself in a respectful and productive manner. In addition to all the rules and expectations listed in the Student and Parent Handbook, I expect you to have a positive attitude, treat others with respect, practice self-discipline, and demonstrate responsibility and accountability. If these conditions are not met, you can expect one-on-one meetings with me, parent/instructor conferencing, and administrative action, if necessary.

### **Concerning the use of cell phones and other electronic devices:**

Devices should be on silent and kept in your purse, backpack, or pocket during class unless otherwise instructed. You may NOT place it on your desk. Parents, guardians, and other family members should call the front office in case of emergency. If you violate this rule you can expect consequences per the CVPA policy.

**Grading Policy:** Major assessments will account for 70 percent of your grade. Homework and classwork will account for 30 percent of your grade. Grades will be updated every 2 weeks in SIS. You will receive 4 progress reports and 2 report cards each school year.

**Academic Integrity:** Ms. Foster has extremely high regard for academic integrity and, as such, has zero tolerance for any and all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, all forms of cheating on any assessments, essays, or assignments (copying, taking pictures, group chats with answers, etc.), plagiarism, and any other unethical academic behavior. Any student in violation will

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receive no credit (zero/F letter grade), a family meeting will be scheduled, and a notation of the violation will be in the student's school record.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as Chat GPT, has the potential for misuse and often borders on plagiarism. At Metro, we utilize Turnitin to disrupt plagiarism and ensure the integrity of ALL student work. If it is deemed that a student has used any AI tool to complete an assignment, the student will receive no credit (zero/F letter grade), a family meeting will be scheduled, as well as a notation of the violation in the student's school record.

Any academic dishonesty violation will affect recommendations written by the school for any student applying for post-secondary institutions, scholarships, and other educational programs.

### ***Make-up Work Policy***

Make-up tests will **ONLY** be given to a student who has an **excused absence**. **The student must make arrangements with the teacher to take a make-up test.** A student only has two chances (the next two class periods after an absence) to make up a test.

Homework/Classwork: Students who are absent for **excused reasons** will be permitted to make up missed work. **It is the student's responsibility to get their assignments the day upon their return to school and complete the assignments according to a timeframe determined by the teacher within two weeks of the date of the last absence. Grades of zero will be assigned for assignments missed because of unexcused absences.** No missing work will be accepted after a period of 3 weeks.

### ***Text and Other Required Reading:***

We will read the following novels in class this year:

- *Educated*- Tara Westover
- *Night*- Elie Wiesel
- *A Raisin In The Sun*- Lorraine Hansberry
- *Devil In The White City*-Erik Larson
- *Solito*- Javier Zamora

Additional literature may be announced at a later date. Students will complete outside reading assignments to reinforce skills and prepare for state testing. During the year, students will follow current events each week to complete reflection assignments and discussions.

### ***Materials and Supplies Needed:***

One three-ring binder with dividers (7), college-ruled, loose-leaf paper, pens (blue or black, and red), pencils, and highlighters (blue, green, yellow, pink, and orange). If students would like to have their own copy of texts to make notes in or to read at home, students will want to consider purchasing the novels on their own- they are all available on Amazon- but class sets of the novels are available and students may use sticky notes to annotate. All handouts are provided through Teams on our class page.

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### ***Units of Study***

<b>Unit 1 Identity and Culture</b>	<p><b>Essential Question:</b> What is the relationship between identity and culture? Who gets to tell the story of who you are?</p> <p><b>Unit Overview:</b> In this unit, students will learn about the complex history and political climate of Nigeria in a bildungsroman that wrestles with themes such as identity, freedom, oppression, love, and tradition.</p> <p><b>Unit Goals:</b> Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Write a personal narrative that includes specific details and descriptions</li><li>● Correctly use exposition and dialogue to convey meaning and add variety and interest to writing.</li><li>● Define, identify, and analyze an author's use of literary terms, including metaphor, simile, and imagery. Discuss and analyze an author's use of structure as it applies to meaning</li><li>● Analyze a character's development overtime</li><li>● Track characters as they change in complexity</li><li>● Dialogue with texts- students consider the author's point of view while the students posit their own</li></ul>
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	<p><b>Anchor Text:</b> Educated- Tara Westover  <b>Ancillary Text:</b> “The Danger Single Story” Ted Talk, Short Narratives including by not limited to “Montreal 1962” by Shauna Singh Baldwin and “Safety of Numbers” by Lucy Tan  <b>Major Assignment:</b> Personal narrative</p>
<p><b>Unit 2 Overcoming Obstacles</b></p>	<p><b>EQ:</b> Do the obstacles we face in life change us for the better?  <b>Unit Overview:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze a dynamic, complex character who is acutely affected by past trauma.</li> <li>Identify literary symbols and analyze their deeper meaning.</li> <li>Participate in meaningful small and large group discussions</li> <li>Expand knowledge and use of academic and concept vocabulary.</li> <li>Write an essay that effectively incorporates the key elements of rhetorical analysis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Anchor Text:</b> Solito- Javier Zamora  <b>Major Assignment:</b> Students will write a rhetorical analysis essay that identifies the author’s purpose, establishes a line of reasoning, and develops an argument with textual evidence and commentary. We will also create a playlist of music and track the author’s journey throughout the novel.</p>
<p><b>Unit 3 Silence and Violence</b></p>	<p><b>EQ:</b> How can silence and indifference perpetuate violence?  <b>Unit Overview:</b> In this unit, students will grapple with the horrendous acts of the Holocaust and the struggles to overcome the trauma caused by the actions of others.  <b>Unit Goals:</b> Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate a rich literary text through analysis of complex ideas, concepts, and information</li> <li>Expand knowledge and use of academic and concept vocabulary</li> <li>Participate in meaningful small and large group discussions</li> <li>Write an analysis paper that introduces and develops a strong thesis and support with evidence</li> <li>Quote directly from the text with exact quotations; paraphrase ideas by restating in new words</li> <li>Correctly integrate quotations and other evidence into written analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Anchor Text:</b> Night- Elie Wiesel  <b>Ancillary Text:</b> Excerpts from The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank, documentary interviews with Holocaust Survivors, “A Raisin In The Sun” Lorraine Hansburry.  <b>Major Assignment:</b> Students will write a two to three page paper over the dehumanization of the European Jews by the Nazi’s and how the silence and indifference of others allowed the Holocaust to occur.</p>
<p><b>Unit 4 True Crime and the Impact on Communities</b></p>	<p><b>EQ:</b> How do the crimes in our community impact the innocent people that surround the crime?  <b>Unit Overview:</b> In this unit, students will be drawn into the city of Chicago during the Chicago World’s Fair and the nefarious plans of one infamous serial killer who used the excitement to lure his victims.  <b>Unit Goals:</b> Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate a rich literary text through analysis of complex ideas, concepts, and information.</li> <li>Participate in meaningful small and large group discussions</li> <li>Analyze how authors convey complex ideas, concepts, and information.</li> <li>Write an argument essay that effectively introduces and develops a thesis with well-chosen evidence.</li> <li>Expand knowledge and use of academic and concept vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Anchor Text:</b> Devil in the White City by Erik Larson  <b>Major Assignment:</b> Students will work in small groups to create a podcast that establishes a line of reasoning and is well developed with evidence and commentary on a true crime or serial killer of their interest.</p>

\*This is a tentative plan and may change at the discretion of the teacher

Grading Scale	
%	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C

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60-69%	D
59% or lower	F

Proficiency Scale		
4	Extending	In addition to meeting the standard, student work exhibits in-depth inferences and applications that exceed standard expectations
3	Meeting Expectations	Student work exhibits no major errors or omissions
2	Progressing	Student work exhibits no major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes however, the student exhibits major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes
1	Emergent	With support, the student demonstrates a partial understanding of some of the simpler details and processes and some of the more complex ideas and processes
0	No Evidence	No evidence to indicate the student's understanding of the skill

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Greetings CVPA parents and students and welcome back to a new school year! Firstly I want to congratulate you on accepting the challenge of Honors English II. Our focus in this course is primarily going to be nonfiction and the rhetorical structures. We will have a great number of discussions, we will at times have to discuss hard topics of poverty, immigration, racism, and classicism. We will do so in an academic and collegial manner- and with respect to ourselves and peers.

I want to take a moment to inform you all of my impending maternity leave during the second semester. I will be out from January 7th to April 7th, I will ensure that students have all work ready for them to do while I am away. If you have any questions regarding text selections or the course, email me at [elizabeth.foster@slps.org](mailto:elizabeth.foster@slps.org).

The single greatest trick to succeeding on any test, building your vocabulary, and improving critical thinking is to READ. Read every chance you get. The more you read, the better you will become at reading. Remember, “ferrum ferro acuitur”

Please sign and date below to affirm that you have read and understand this syllabus and the course requirements and return to Ms. Foster by August 27th.

Sincerely,

Ms. Elizabeth Foster

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Printed name and date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Printed name and date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature