Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**English 9**

**Course Syllabus**

**NEST+m 2018-2019**

**Teacher**: Ms. Rebecca Gordon / Ms. Carrie Bray/ Ms. Ellen Sands

**Email**: [rebeccagordon@nestmk12.net](mailto:rebeccagordon@nestmk12.net) / [carriebray@nestmk12.net](mailto:carriebray@nestmk12.net) / [ellensands@nestmk12.net](mailto:ellensands@nestmk12.net)

**Google Classroom**: invitation to come

**Class Website**: http://gordon-nest.weebly.com

Dear English 9 students,

Greetings!

Welcome to a year of **having fun while accomplishing something difficult**. Yes, that’s right: learning can be fun and challenging at the same time, and that is the daily goal of English 9. There are very few “correct” answers in this course, which can be liberating and… well … frustrating. But being able to make and justify your own decisions through argument is what makes each of us a human being with something to offer the world.

Throughout the year, you will **invest** yourself in books of your choice, **engage** in personally charged writing that will be published beyond the classroom, and **establish** what it is you really value—what you’re willing to fight for, through words and action, as you become an adult.

Equally important are skills like **personal advocacy and organization**: put simply, you will learn to use all available resources, ask for help, and organize yourself in a way that feels comfortable. These are arguably the most important skills you will ever learn.

We read and write to discover who we are. It is my hope that, by the end of June, you will have read, written, discussed, and played enough to at least start that journey of discovery.

Sincerely,

Ms. Gordon

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**Photo Credit:** http://www.fanpop.com/clubs/fantasy-and-scifi-books/images/15663508/title/cool-book-fanart

**English 9: Units and Essential Questions**

Unit 1: **Words to Change the World**

Time Frame: September - October

Essential Questions: How can a well-researched, purposefully organized piece of writing create real-world change?

Writing Focus: Editorial

Primary Texts/ Resources: The New York Times Learning Network

Unit 2: **The Narrative**

Time Frame: October- November

Essential Question: To what extent does all writing contain narrative? How are stories commentaries on the world?

Writing Focus: Creative Short Story

Primary Texts: “Lamb to the Slaughter” by Roald Dahl

“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” by Ursula K. LeGuin

“Speech Sounds” by Octavia Butler

Unit 3: **Ethics, Morality, and Destiny Pt. I**

Time Frame: November - February

Essential Questions: To what extent are we in control of our lives? To what extent can we be our own worst enemies?

Writing Focus: Argument Essay

Primary Text: *The Odyssey* by Homer

Unit 4: **The Memoir**

Time Frame: February - April

Essential Questions: How can self-exploration and personal storytelling enhance our

ability to empathize with others?

Writing Focus: Personal Essay/ Memoir

Primary Texts: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

Unit 5: **Ethics, Morality, and Destiny Pt. II**

Time Frame: April - May

Essential Questions: To what extent are we in control of our lives? To what extent can we

be our own worst enemies?

Writing Focus: Literary Analysis

Primary Text: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Unit 6: **End-of-Year Portfolio**

Time Frame: June

Essential Questions: How will reflection and revision help us internalize all we’ve

learned this year?

Writing Focus: Reflection and Revision

Primary Texts: past student work

**Independent Reading:**

Everyone in this class will read. I care enough about your reading to give you dedicated time to read in class almost every day, so you should keep your independent reading book in your backpack at all times.

**Which books will I read**?The books of your choice! Really. Any book at your level.

**Do I have to read a certain number of books by a certain time**? No. You will set your

own reading pace and be honest with yourself about your abilities.

**Will I be evaluated for my reading**? Yes, a bit. You will have frequent one-on-one

conferences with the teacher to discuss your reading so that you can continue to choose

books that interest you. You will also sign up to give a short Book Talk at some point in

the year (Reflective Practices grade).

**Where can I get my book for free**?

* + NYC Libraries: Become a member of your local library as soon as possible!
  + NEST+m Teachers: We have books to lend and recommend.
  + School Library: Our extensive library is on the first floor. Ask our librarian!

**What happens if I don’t return a book**? If you do not return a book to the classroom

library, points will be taken out of your homework grade. If you do not return a book to

the NYC Library/ School Library, you will have to pay a fee.

**Required Materials:**

If you feel unable to acquire any of the materials mentioned below, please let me know as soon as possible. \*\* I highly recommend purchasing an **an expanding file folder** to keep track of handouts and assignments for *all* of your classes.\*\*

Materials for **Daily** Use (so bring them every day!)

* Pencils and/ or Pens (blue or black)
* Writing Notebook (of any kind ex// spiral notebook, composition notebook, etc.)
* Independent Reading Book (see above)

Organizational Tools

* 3-Ring Binder OR Pocket Folder (for English alone – you will receive many handouts)
* Planner/Assignment Calendar (provided by the school)
* NEST+m Gmail account (provided by the school: FirstNameLastName@nestmk12.net

## Grading Policy and PupilPath:

Work will be handed back to students as promptly as possible. Grades will appear online at <https://www.pupilpath.com> as they are entered. Questions about grades should be directed to Ms. Gordon via email. You will receive access to PupilPath through the school.

* 15% -- Homework (reading, written responses, annotation, etc.)
* 35% -- Formative Assessments (participation, in-class reading/ writing/ discussion)
* 45% -- Summative Assessments (projects, essays, exams)
* 5% -- Reflective Practices (unit reflections, self-assessments)

# CLASSROOM CONTRACT

Learning is a choice. Empathy is a choice. We come from a variety of backgrounds, and we often have different values. Disrespect for another person’s beliefs is unacceptable. Beyond that, disregard for your classmates guarantees that you will not learn much this year. Choose to learn. Choose empathy.

**Participation:** You will receive 1 participation point every day for accomplishing the following:

- arriving on time

- having all your materials out and ready when class begins

- contributing positively to the class in group and whole-class settings

- keeping your phone away.

**Cell Phones:** Cell phones and earbuds must be away at all times unless the teacher explicitly allows students to use them. Cell phones will be confiscated for the school day if used without permission.

**Hall/ Bathroom Pass:** If you need to use the restroom, our class procedure is to raise a hand with a thumb up and wait for permission to leave the room. You must **sign the log book** each time you enter or leave the class after the bell rings and take the designated hall pass. If a student overuses the bathroom pass, the teacher will confer with the student and the student’s parents.

**Lateness/Absences:** Lateness will result in a loss of participation points; frequent, repeated, or chronic lateness will result in a phone call home, parent-teacher conference, and/or referral to the Dean.

Excused absences: You must bring a signed note from your parent or guardian *the day* that you return to school for an absence to be considered excused. If you do not bring a note, all missed classwork and assignments will be entered into the gradebook as zeroes.

## Assignments: All work is due at the beginning of class on the day it is due, unless otherwise specified.

1. Summative Assessments (essays, projects) are penalized 10% for every day they are late (max. 35% off).
   1. If a student is absent on the day a major assignment is due, it is that student’s responsibility to email it to Ms. Gordon if possible. If it is not possible, then the student must turn the assignment in *the same day* he/she returns to school unless otherwise excused.
2. Late Homework will be penalized 10% for every day that it is late.
   1. Work will be accepted up until a week past its original due date. After that time, late homework will not be accepted. Any work that is not handed in will become a zero.

### PupilPath: If you learn nothing else this year, learn how to take responsibility for your own work.

### All grades will be posted online on PupilPath. You must create an account and check in with your grade periodically to see how you are doing.

### If I notice that you are failing, then I will speak with you privately about your performance. If your work does not improve, then I will contact your parents.

### If you are unhappy with your grade and/ or the class at any time, please meet with me before/ during/ after school.

### Honor Code: Unoriginal work will receive an automatic zero. Students who enable their peers to plagiarize by providing those peers with materials will also receive zeroes. Those caught violating the Honor Code will be referred to the Dean of Students, who will make a call home. \*\*Cite outside sources regularly and properly. Please ask me if you are confused *in any way* about the nature of plagiarism.\*\*

**Contract for Learning**

After reading this curriculum letter, please share it with your parents, then complete and sign the contract for learning below. Both student and parent / guardian need to sign. **Due: Wednesday, September 12th.**

**Students:** I have read the Course Curriculum Letter for English 9 and fully understand the course expectations. I agree to fulfill the requirements of the English 9 curriculum to the best of my ability.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parents/Guardians:** I have read the Course Curriculum Letter for English 9 and fully understand the course expectations.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_