

Course Syllabus for
2020-21 English IV
with Ms. Neville

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Office Hours: **Wednesdays 12-2 PM** or any day by appointment

Google Classroom Code: (none needed – you’re already in!)

Turnitin Course ID: **26064996** Turnitin Enrollment Key: **JOINE424**

Flipgrid Join Code for 2nd period: **neville2819**

Flipgrid Join Code for 4th period: **neville1231**

WHAT DO I NEED FOR THIS CLASS?

- 1.) A sturdy **binder** (2” or more works best) with plenty of **loose-leaf paper**
- 2.) **Pens and pencils** (I’m not picky about colors as long as your writing is legible)
- 3.) A **composition book** (one of those 7.5”x9.75” notebooks with a smooth binding)
- 4.) Optional but very helpful: small **sticky notes and/or a highlighter** to help with text annotations

If for any reason you have a legitimate issue with acquiring these supplies, let me know and I will assist you. No judgment, no questions asked – honors system.

HOW WILL I BE GRADED?

Your grade will be compiled from points earned on various assignments: formal essays (both process and product), informal writing assignments (i.e. composition book entries), quizzes, tests, presentations, seminars, etc. Not all work you do for class will be graded, but all work you do for class is important to your learning process. I will assess your work fairly, honestly, and in a timely manner. Rubrics will be provided PRIOR to the due date for most major assignments so you fully understand how you will be evaluated. The feedback I provide you with is always constructive – the purpose of evaluating your work is to show you how you can grow and improve, not to make judgments about your work or try to frustrate you.

GRADING SCALE:

A → 95-100
A- → 92-94
B+ → 89-91

B → 85-88
B- → 82-84
C+ → 79-81

C → 75-78
C- → 72-74
D+ → 69-71

D → 65-68
D- → 62-65
F → 0-61

General Expectations

- **BE PRESENT.** This goes for your body AND mind. Be in your seat/on your screen when class begins, only leave class momentarily if it is absolutely necessary, and participate actively. This year will be over before you know what hit you – so make the most of it by being here, asking questions, contributing to discussions, etc!
- **BE CIVIL.** In this class we actively support each other regardless of any outside situations. Robust dialogue and candid peer feedback will be important aspects of this course; therefore, it is imperative that we conduct ourselves in a manner that shows respect for others and ourselves. We DISCUSS more than we DEBATE, and when we disagree we disagree with opinions rather than the people who have them. Each individual must be treated with civility and respect this class. For more details, please see the BRAVE SPACE AGREEMENT at the end of this syllabus (Appendix C).
- **BE HONEST.** Don't lie. Don't cheat. Don't present someone else's work as your own. Period. Nothing is more damaging to your academic integrity; in fact, many colleges and universities have gone as far as revoking degrees when such behavior is discovered, even if it happened decades in the past. On a more immediate level, you should know I am a stickler for enforcing the academic honesty rules outlined in your Student Handbook. I understand that our society often values achievement over character, but I firmly believe that false achievement at the expense of character is nothing to be proud of – and my stringent policy enforcement reflects this.
- **COMMUNICATE.** If you have questions, concerns, exciting news, etc. please speak up. I do my best to make myself available to you, but can only help you, support you, and celebrate with you when you let me know what's going on!
- **TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF.** Although it may seem like it at times, your body is NOT merely a transportation system for your head. Likewise, your brain won't function properly unless it has been adequately hydrated, nourished, and rested. Drink water. Eat healthfully. Stick to as regular of a sleep schedule as possible. Get physical activity every day. If you don't already have these habits, you'll be amazed at what a difference they make in your level of mental functioning. Strive to keep a healthy balance in your life – mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.

WHAT WILL WE STUDY/LEARN/DO IN THIS CLASS?

Literature Study – In addition to reading a significant amount of shorter fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, we will read various major works of literature with an emphasis on understanding their connections to the historical, social, economic, political, etc. aspects of the culture that produced them. These works will most likely include (but are not limited to) the following:

- *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare (British; 1603; drama)
- *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah (South African/American; 2016; memoir)
- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho (Brazilian; 1988; novel)
- *Counting Descent* by Clint Smith (American; 2016; poetry)

Vocabulary – Vocabulary is important, and this year we will be studying it in context rather than from a workbook. The more words you know and the more word-deciphering skills you develop, the more you will be able to understand what you read and express yourself clearly in writing. You will have regular vocabulary lists and quizzes for the majority of the year. Each list is composed of approximately 15 words generated from literature we study together.

Academic Writing – You will compose various kinds of writing in this course:

- College application essay and/or job application cover letter
- Writing that synthesizes research from several sources
- Literary analysis essays
- Occasional creative writing assignments (often to demonstrate vocabulary acquisition or understanding of a grammar concept)
- Exercises designed to help you learn to use specific grammatical/stylistic techniques

Survival English – This is the term I use for sporadic lessons that demonstrate how literacy skills are crucial to life after high school. Students typically find these fun and eye-opening. Some examples:

- Mock job/college interviews
- Resume composition/revision
- Reading public transportation schedules
- Interpreting consumer documents (the “fine print”)
- Comparing/contrasting persuasive writing (ex: choosing a cell phone plan, determining the validity and helpfulness of product reviews, etc.)
- Cultivating proper tone when communicating with employers, professors, customers, etc.

Public Speaking – This is yet another skill that can set you apart from the during the job application process. As the year progresses we will work on both verbal and nonverbal skills important to public speaking. You will engage in at least one Socratic Seminar and/or individual presentation during each semester, and while we are doing holding class remotely you will regularly use Flipgrid to record short videos.

Research – To survive out there in the world, you MUST be able to find, evaluate, and use information relevant to various situations you will surely find yourself in. I am committed to giving you as many opportunities as possible to develop these crucial skills. You will complete one 6-8 page research paper on a topic of your choice, and you will also complete several smaller assignments throughout the year to help you hone these skills.

Independent Reading – The intention of this course component is to help you develop a personal reading habit that will continue into your adult life. It will be a little tricky this year due to (1) the necessity for us to hold class online for an indeterminate amount of time without access to my class library, and (2) the fact that our access to public libraries is also somewhat limited right now. However, I am determined to still have you do independent reading and am working on exploring strategies to start using in the second grading period. More to come on this!

Composition Book for Daily Reflective/Generative Writing – Most days you will have 10-15 minutes of class time to write in your composition book (see required class materials list). Some days I will give you a specific prompt to respond to, and other days will be for freewriting. Twice per grading period I will collect your composition book and read/respond to any three entries you designate for me to read. While we are holding school online, you will scan your chosen entries (I recommend putting a scanning app on your phone for this purpose) and upload them to Google Classroom.

Zoom-Specific Class Norms & Expectations: **Because 2020's going to do what 2020's going to do.**

(According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a NORM is “a principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behavior.”)

- 1.) As much as is possible, join class from a location that is both comfortable and conducive to learning. That might mean something slightly different for each of us, but I recommend sitting somewhere where you can see your screen AND take notes in your binder at the same time (i.e. at a desk or table).
- 2.) While I understand you ultimately can't control what other people do, please let people who live with you know how important it is for them to not distract or interrupt you during class meetings.
- 3.) Be on time -- for online classes, this actually means being a minute or so early! We will start class right at the designated time.
- 4.) Be prepared! It's very important that you complete assigned readings and any other assignments BEFORE class. I can't help you much if you haven't done your part.
- 5.) If you have a question during class, please feel free to either type it into Zoom's chat feature or click on the hand-raising feature (I will show you how to do this). If you aren't comfortable asking your question in front of the whole class, you're welcome to send it in the chat box to me privately.

- 6.) Please ONLY use the chat box for class-related comments and/or questions. I will continuously monitor the chat box. BE ADVISED THAT NOTHING YOU TYPE IN THE CHAT BOX IS PRIVATE, EVEN IF IT IS LABELED AS SUCH. As the meeting host, I have access to everything. You've been warned.
- 7.) I don't mind if you eat or drink during our Zoom classes, as long as it isn't distracting to you or to your classmates. Please don't abuse this -- keep it within reason.
- 8.) This should go without saying, but please be fully clothed for each class meeting.
- 9.) My expectations regarding language use, respect for others and self, and following Board policies (i.e. you aren't allowed to record any audio, video, or still images during class) are the same online as they are in person. Additionally, the same BRAVE SPACE AGREEMENT we have in my classroom is in effect during our Zoom meetings.
- 10.) Please keep your audio muted unless you have been called on to contribute.
- 11.) For this class and this class only, whether or not you keep your camera on at all times is your choice. I much prefer being able to see all of you and believe that having your camera on keeps you more engaged in class, BUT I also understand that occasionally there are legitimate reasons for wanting to turn off your camera for a moment. If you do choose to turn off your camera for a brief period of time, please continue to participate actively in class. I can and will still call on you to answer questions if you turn off your screen, and if you aren't actually there I will mark you absent from class.
- 12.) I will report attendance for every class meeting to the main office; this will be done multiple times during each class and you will most likely not even realize I am doing so. In other words, be present the whole time every time unless your parent/guardian has followed proper procedures to call you off.



Policies and Procedures for When School is Held in Person

Covid-19 Protocols – Guidelines regarding mask wearing, physical distancing, etc. will be established by administration prior to us returning to school, and **I will enforce them 110%**. I have lost loved ones to this virus over the past few months, so it is no joke to me.

Procedure for arriving late, leaving, or returning to class:

- 1.) If you're leaving, SIGN OUT on the clipboard and take the pass that's hanging on the doorknob.
- 2.) If you're arriving or returning, SIGN IN on the clipboard and return the pass to the doorknob.

- 3.) If you arrive late with a written pass from another staff member, show it to me **SILENTLY**.
- 4.) When arriving late, please go directly to your seat, take out your class materials, and get to work immediately. I will come see you if I need to give you instructions.

Please understand that the privilege of leaving class can be revoked at any time if it is abused.

Classroom library – I'm happy to offer you **your own** bookcases of reading materials – current popular fiction, high-interest nonfiction, young adult lit, and helpful reference books. I use a library management app to keep track of book sign-outs, so when you find a book you'd like to borrow please bring it to me so I can scan it with my phone. When you are done with the book please return it directly to me so I can scan it again. Please note that while some have been donated or granted, I've purchased most of them with my own money and therefore hope you will pay extra special attention to taking good care of them and returning them when you're done.

Help Yourself Shelf – The wooden bookshelf by the door (where you turn in assignments) is generally stocked with items you are welcome to use for their intended purposes while you are in this room (tissues, hand sanitizer, writing utensils, tape, stapler, three-hole punch, etc.). You **don't need to ask** to use them – simply help yourself.

Classroom Community and Student Code of Conduct – First and foremost: **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENERGY YOU BRING INTO THIS ROOM** – let's create a positive, supportive environment conducive to learning. Also, please read and internalize the Student Code of Conduct in your student handbook, paying special attention to the sections on cheating/plagiarism and harassment in its many ugly forms. **THIS IS YOUR ONLY WARNING: I TAKE THESE POLICIES VERY SERIOUSLY.** If you are aware of instances of cheating, plagiarism, or harassment tainting the sanctity of our learning community, please notify me as soon as possible.

Make-up Work and Late Work – Please refer to the CHHS Student Handbook for the complete policy, including the parts about vacations, college visits, etc. One addition: if you are absent for three consecutive quizzes or tests (or a combination of the two), I will have a chat with you about the situation. If you are then absent for the next quiz or test, I will call home. If you do not have a major assignment (essays, presentations, etc.) ready on the day it is due, you may receive up to ½ credit for it on the next school day. After that, no credit will be awarded. Please keep in mind that several assignments you do in this class (especially Socratic Seminars and presentations) involve the whole class depending on you to help them learn something they need to understand for their own success in class – so do your part by being prepared! We are on a very tight schedule, so it is imperative that you stay on track. Always refer to the monthly assignments schedules I provide you with!

Charging Station/Phone Policy – I have set up a charging station for you in the front right corner of the room; you are welcome to use this at any time. Additionally, during tests and quizzes you are **REQUIRED** to put your phone in one of the wall pockets (write your assigned pocket number here so you'll remember it: _____). If at any point I notice that your phone has become a distraction during class, I may ask you to wall pocket your phone for the remainder of class that day. Fear not: there is a clock on the wall, and if you need the internet for class activities you can use a chromebook.

Water – Because your brain won't work properly if it isn't adequately hydrated, I don't mind if you have a bottle of water with you in my classroom as long as you keep it away from the chromebooks, desktop computers, and any other technology it could damage if spilled. However, please stick to water – don't bring in anything that could stain the carpet or would be a sticky mess if spilled.

Appendix A: I am Not a Robot! **(Or, Some Fun Facts About Ms. Neville in Case You're Interested)**

- | This is my **seventeenth** year teaching high school English. I love what I do! Without the ability to communicate effectively, life is much harder – so I work hard to help students develop the best skills possible. I am passionate about reading, writing, and advocating for young people.
- | I am an avid reader and writer, and a published poet. I strongly believe that as a language arts teacher it is my responsibility to be engaged both personally and professionally in the subject matter I teach!
- | I love to **travel**. I studied abroad in London, England for a whole summer, and in 2007 I did a teacher-to-teacher project in Istanbul, Turkey. I've also visited other countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. I'm currently making an effort to see more of the United States, because to be completely honest there is a vast amount of this country that I have yet to experience.
- | I've been a **vegetarian** since I was about your age.
- | I live in Cleveland in the Tremont neighborhood with my **spouse, Chris**, and our **three cats Violet, Oscar, and Hermanito**.
- | I have **three nieces and three nephews**, each of whom I absolutely adore. The oldest is a freshman at Kent State this year, and the youngest is in Pre-K!
- | I love physical activity of all sorts – I was a **gymnast** for many years and played **softball** and **volleyball** for many years. I am also a certified **yoga** teacher! I've been practicing yoga since I was 19 and love sharing it with others.
- | I have a **Bachelor of Science in Education (Integrated Language Arts 7-12)** with a minor in English; also, I have a **Master of Education (Curriculum & Instruction)** degree and am also halfway done with a **Master of Arts in English** degree.
- | I'm **National Board Certified** (that's a significant credential beyond a master's degree).
- | A quick (but important) note about my name: **I am MS. Neville, not MRS. Neville or MISS Neville**. Yes, it matters! "Ms." Is pronounced MIZ and "Neville" rhymes with "devil." Thank you for using my correct name, just like I make an effort to use yours.

Appendix B: TOP 21st CENTURY JOB SKILLS

- 1.) Critical thinking and problem solving
- 2.) Collaboration across networks and leading by influence
- 3.) Agility and adaptability
- 4.) Initiative and entrepreneurship
- 5.) Accessing and analyzing information
- 6.) Effective oral and written communication
- 7.) Curiosity and imagination
- 8.) Willingness to experiment, take calculated risks, and tolerate failure
- 9.) Capacity for “design thinking”: empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentalism, and collaboration.

***Everything* we do in this class helps to develop one or more of these skills!**

Appendix C: Syllabus Acknowledgment & Brave Space Agreement

Please read, sign, scan, and submit this page to Google Classroom as assigned.

PART ONE: SYLLABUS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing your name below, you acknowledge that (1) you have received this syllabus, (2) you have read it in its entirety, and (3) Ms. Neville has elaborated on it verbally and provided you with an opportunity to have any questions about its content addressed.

Signature

Date

Printed Full Name

PART TWO: BRAVE SPACE AGREEMENT

By signing your name below, you acknowledge that (1) all members of this class are expected to abide by the five main elements of a Brave Space environment, and (2) Ms. Neville has verbally elaborated on these elements and has offered you the opportunity to have any questions about them addressed.

- (1) **Controversy with civility** – varying opinions are respected.
- (2) **Owning intentions and impacts** – students will acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the emotional well-being of another person.
- (3) **Challenge by choice** – students have an option to step in and out of challenging conversations.
- (4) **Respect** – students show respect for each others' basic personhood.
- (5) **No attacks** – students agree to never inflict intentional harm upon another.

Signature

Date

Printed Full Name