*Mrs. Rutan* ENGLISH IV *Room #125*

*Assignment #1: As I read through the syllabus, underline/highlight parts of my writing that show* ***great voice****—voice being style, interest, and different ways of saying, or in this case, writing something. There is no real wrong answer here—but you are looking for things I said in a funny, new, or innovative way.*



Let’s be honest. I have been in your shoes. I have been at your desks. Sure, it has been a*…few…*years. I have listen to the **droning** that is the first day of school, **yawned** my way through the class syllabus, and **fidgeted** in the hard-plastic of what my school deemed to be a suitable classroom chair. I vowed I would try my best to avoid this when I was teaching my own future classroom, so here goes:

I am trying something new; I am trying to take what we all know as a traditional English Composition classroom and turning it on its head. We will write.  ***I mean really write***…write in new ways; ways that we make each and every one of us—even myself—more sophisticated and interesting writers. I will write with you. You will write with me. We are trying writer’s workshop this year and to get there you will need to be open-minded. Think. Share. Revise. Explore. Experiment. I want to see you all grow so you will be able to write successfully in life after high school. Whether it be a university or community college, a trade school, or a full time job…you will need to write, and write well. So here is what you need to *get-to-writing* in my classroom.

VITAL Class Materials:

* Composite Journal/WRITER’S NOTEBOOK\*
* Binder
* 5 Divider Tabs for Your Binder
* Highlighter
* A Reading Book for SSR Days\*
* Flash-drive

Classroom Procedures:

I hate to state the obvious but this is a friendly reminder since it is a new semester; EVERYDAY while you are here in my humble little classroom you are expected to…

1. Come to class prepared—paper, pens, writer’s notebook, and reading books. Please ask if you need to borrow something. Nothing burns me more than when I teach 40 minutes of class and I get the classic blank face student who sheepishly tells me they don’t have a pencil or our textbook. Grrr! I am a big sharer, but you have to ask, and give me some collateral too—wallets, car keys, and candy are some of my favorites to trade.
2. Be ready at the bell: Opening Activity!!!—I am religious about this and you can expect to do something at the very start of class, even without my direct instructions. I work bell-to-bell, and I don’t like to waste time.
3. Complete your assignments—the key to passing my friend.
4. Be Respectful—don’t be ***that kid***, you know, the snarky little nincompoop-type. I am nice to you, so you better be nice to me, and your classmates (being “sassy” is not going to help you!)
5. Be productive—laziness is one of my biggest pet peeves. You can NOT sit in my room and do nothing. You can NOT stare off into space and refuse to write or read. You can NOT be unproductive and refuse to participate. If so, I will ask you to leave.

Grading Procedures:

Our class will work on a point scale *meaning—*every point counts in this class. Everything will have its own value and while a homework activity may be worth 20 points, a paper could be worth 100 points (I’m an English major; therefore, I am Math challenged and use this scale). Every point counts and the more you turn in and participate, the better your points will be at the end of the semester. Every point counts!

Homework and Late Work:

Homework will be assigned throughout the semester. Homework has a stigma all its own—and guess what, teachers hate assigning it just as much as students hate receiving it, BUT, the purpose of homework is to prepare and practice. Com’on now…would you expect to go play the big Saturday night football game and do well without EVER attending practice? Unless your superbly-talented, I am guessing you probably wouldn’t do so hot on the field.

Most of our homework will include reading because, let’s face it, there is not enough time in class for us to read every book, page, by page, aloud. **I will accept late homework (assignments worth 40 points or less) during the appropriate units, but there will be a late work deduction of 50%.** Half credit is better than no credit! Harsh, I know, but college professors aren’t as generous as *moi*. Any other arrangements need to be made with Mrs. Rutan.

**Late papers and major projects (assignment worth 41pts or more) are also subject to a 20% deduction of the final grade.** See the student handbook for the policy on late work and absences.

**WHEN A UNIT IS FINISHED AND HAS PASSED, ANY AND ALL MISSING WORK (like HOMEWORK) WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED. I will let you know about this special cut-off times and dates.**

Homework Bus, Make-up Day Parties, Afterschool Help:

Harper Creek High School provides a late bus home for students who choose to stay after school to get help with a teacher. Ask Mrs. Rutan for details.

I can make myself available afterschool to any student, you just need to ask and sign up on my white-board! Let me know what days and times so I can be here to help.

Detentions:

If a student is asked to serve a detention it is because of one of the following reasons…

1. *The student has shown disrespect towards the teacher, another student, or school property.*
2. *The student is repeatedly violating the technology policy of the school (see technology policy).*

Parents may receive a phone call if a student needs to serve a detention so we can organize a time and date, and also so I can explain the situation. Students will use their detention time to make up work or work on other classroom assignments and reading.

SSR Book:

Students will also need a SSR (silent sustain reading) book. This is a book students can read for personal enjoyment, and it must NOT be class related. SSR is silent reading we will be doing at least three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) and is a grade. This is a chance for you to develop your reading skills and find inspiration for our writer’s workshop. You may bring in book from home, or borrow from the school or my personal library. Remember that all SSR books should be approved for reading by a parent/guardian.

Emergency Hall Passes

You should use the passing time in-between your classes to take care of your bathroom needs. I understand that needs arise and will try to be flexible; however, students who abuse their bathroom privileges are subject to lose these privileges during the semester. And ya, I know your tricks—the walking to the bathroom near Varsity Hall, or walking as sloooooowwwww as possible to waste time. So listen up, the bathroom is **RIGHT DOWN THE HALL** so you should return to class in a timely manner, or bye-bye hall passes.

Technology Policy

See Harper Creek’s student handbook for the specifics, but in my classroom cell phones and IPODS/Mp3 players are not allowed unless I say otherwise. Therefore, if I see it being used inappropriately, I will confiscate it and it with either goes into the class storage bin, or to the office. No exceptions. No tears. No excuses. You get to pick up that bad boy at the end of the day.

Teacher rant: I HATE CELLPHONES. Seeing your little shifty eyeballs looking intently in your laps is a pretty good indication you are being sneaking little texters. Or even better yet—when I see the unnatural glow of the cell phone screen on your faces when the lights are off for a film study. I’ve gotten really good at catching you, so don’t tempt me.

Please feel free to bring your own technology devices to class on workshop days. I will usually let you know about these days in advance, and you are welcome to use your own computer, tablet, etc. for typing up papers and working on projects on these workshop days.

Film Study

An additional resource that we will utilize in English IV to understand themes and develop our analysis skills is films. In this class we will watch clips and full films to further develop our understanding of texts. Below is a list of films that may be utilized throughout the semester. If you or your parent/guardian has an issue with watching any of these films, they may indicate so on the syllabus signature page. If you have concerns, or want me to explain the films more fully, please feel free to e-mail or call me for more information.

******Films that may be viewed:

* The Great Gatsby (2013) – PG13
* The Great Gatsby (1974) - PG
* Pleasantville – PG13 (used with 1984)
* 1984 – R (Clips Only)
* V for Vendetta – R (used with 1984)
* Schindler’s List – R (used with Night)
* Inglorious Bastards – R (Clips Only) (used with Night)
* Psycho (1960)-R (used 2nd semester only for the film analysis unit).

Curriculum: *(schedule and assignments are tentative and subject to change)*

***Unit #1:*** *Literacy, Personal Essay, Narrative, and Story*

***The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald***

***Unit #2:*** *Media Bias and Propaganda, Analysis Writing, Quote Integration*

***1984 by George Orwell***

***Unit #3:*** *Social Issue Project, Research, and Proposal*

***Night by Elie Wiesel***

*Other Possible Units/Studies: Scholarship Paper, Film Analysis, Poetry, Short Stories, and Editorials, and Final Portfolio*

Voice:

Mrs. Rutan’s Contact Information:

Mrs. Amber Rutan

12677 Beadle Lake Road

Battle Creek, MI 49014

**Phone: 269-441-8450 Ext. 8483**

**E-mail:** rutana@harpercreek.net

**Contact me any time, e-mail is the best!**

\*\*\*PLEASE VIEW MY WEBSITE: mrsrutanhchs.weebly.com

 FOR MISSING ASSIGNMENTS AND MATERIALS!\*\*\*

Homework Assignment!

**Students:** Fill in your name on the line below and sign your name stating that you have read through the syllabus. You will also need to have your parents/guardian sign and write their contact information below. This is due Friday Sept. 11th, 2015.

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have read through the class syllabus and understand the rules and expectations for English IV.

Student’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parents:** Fill in your name on the line below and initial next to the film permission agreement to indicate that you approve of your student watching these films. If you leave this area blank, I will assume that you do not approve and I will find alternatives for your student. Please also sign below to indicate that you have read the syllabus and provide your contact information so that I may contact you in the future.

**\_\_\_\_\_(parent’s initials)** **Film Studies:** I agree to allow my student to view the films that are being studied during class. If I do not want them watching certain films, I will indicate that below in the additional information section.

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Best Time to Contact:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:** Please indicate if there is anything else I should know about your student to help me teach them this semester as well as if you have concerns for the film studies: