

English Department Guidelines

Notre Dame High School

(I) Required Materials

1. All students need a three ring binder that entails separators and pocket folders for their English class only. Individual teachers may require additional materials for their class.
2. Each student should prepare for class by bringing the materials that his or her teacher requests (i.e. notebook, binder, loose leaf, textbook,).
3. All textbooks should be covered and students should come prepared each day to class.
4. Each student should have a writing folder that includes all writing efforts made throughout the course of the year. The writing folder will remain in the classroom.

(II) Essay Requirements

1. Teachers will assign a minimum of **two** essays per quarter.
 2. Essay length will be dependent on course level.
 3. Students will follow **MLA** guidelines for formatting the essay, which must be typed and handed in with prewriting and drafting. All teachers will follow and review the steps of the writing process.
 4. Essays about literature are to be written in active voice, present tense, and third person. Introductory paragraph should include the following: title and author, thesis statement, and essay map.
 5. All teachers will follow a rubric for grading essays. Copies will be provided for students.
 6. **Points will be deducted for late work.** Students will be notified at least one week in advance of due date.
- ❖ If a student needs help with writing, he or she must schedule an appointment after school for a writing conference with his or her teacher. Students should prepare a list of questions for the teacher to answer and highlight sentences that lack clarity and precision so that the conference is as productive as possible. Rough drafts may be reworked **before** the final copy is due.
 - ❖ If a parent has a question about an essay, the English department requests the parent follow this sequence of steps: the student should schedule an appointment for a writing conference after school, the parent should acquire a copy of the essay, and then, if still necessary, the parent should contact the teacher to schedule a conference. Both student and parent should be prepared with a list of questions for the teacher to explain or answer.

(III) Plagiarism/Cheating Policies

1. **Cheating Policy:** The goal of every teacher of English is to improve writing. Since the main focus of writing in a literature-based course is to develop the writing and critical thinking skills needed to analyze and interpret literature, students should **not** access Internet sources, unless directed to do so by the teacher. If a student has difficulty understanding a literary work, then that student should schedule an appointment after school to meet with his or her teacher. The English department encourages students to think for themselves, and pirating from the Internet is both unethical and counterproductive.
2. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism derived from the Latin word, *plagiarius* or kidnapper. This means to commit literary theft and present as new and original an idea or product derived from an

existing source. Often plagiarism in student writing is unintentional. Students can avoid plagiarism, however, by citing sources for all words and ideas that are not their own.

3. The English Department encourages student's ethical and personal responsibility during all assessments. This entails unauthorized access of notes, hand held or worn devices and viewing the work of another student during testing.

(IV) Assessment Procedures

1. A minimum of **three** major unit tests will be given each quarter which will include open ended response questions.
2. A variety of methods will also be used by instructors as a means of measuring student performance.

(V) Research Methods

1. Freshman and sophomore teachers will work on teaching research tools such as preparing a list of works cited, narrowing a topic, and note taking skills.
2. All students in college preparatory or honors courses will write a fully documented, multiple source paper both junior and senior years.

- All English teachers will use the MLA system of documentation for research papers. Useful sources include *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, seventh edition.

(VI) Homework Guidelines

1. All teachers will assign written homework on a regular basis, and students will be held accountable for completing assigned homework.
2. Each teacher will devise a system to hold students accountable and will post assignments online. Any student who has missed class should access the school website to keep up with assignments.
3. Inaccessibility to assigned e-chalk accounts will not suffice for missed homework; all teacher e-chalk pages are open to the public.

(VII) Summer Reading List / Novel Reading

1. All students will be assigned a novel to read over the summer and a study guide packet for that novel will be given prior to the year ending.
 - The packets will be utilized as part of the summer reading novel assessment.
2. Objective format tests and or an essay assessment will also be given as a department in September.
3. All teachers will assign at least one novel a semester in addition to the readings assigned from the anthology.