

# English 9 Course Syllabus

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Welcome to your first year at Great Oak High School! I have a fun and exciting year planned for us. I assure you that not only will you learn a lot this year, but you will enjoy yourself as well. I look forward to getting to know all of you well while I help you to become more active learners who think critically about literature and the world around you, as well as read, write, listen and speak more effectively.

## *Instructional Targets*

This year you will be introduced to and will gain mastery over California's Common Core State Standards for ninth grade English Language Arts and our English Department will use the Pre-AP English 1 framework to enhance the English 9 experience. The enhancement focuses on training readers to observe the small details in a text to arrive at a deeper understanding of the whole. It also trains the writer to focus on crafting complex sentences, building this foundational skill en route to more sophisticated, longer-form analyses. The development of these skills will allow students to pursue higher level English courses in Grades 10-12. It will also allow those students who did not think they could pursue higher level English to unlock their AP Potential. By the end of the year you will *know* and show you are able to *do* the following:

- use your understanding of roots and prefixes to understand new words and interpret their denotative and connotative meanings
- research, read, analyze and understand informational texts
- read, analyze and respond to literary texts
- demonstrate your ability to follow the conventions of grammar through writing
- use all steps of the writing process to develop clear essays
- effectively communicate both orally as well as through writing
- become actively involved while reading
- demonstrate critical thinking skills
- question the texts you encounter on a higher level

## Areas of Study

### *Vocabulary*

This year students will continue to develop their understanding of word origins, trace the etymology of significant terms used in a variety of fields, analyze of the denotative and connotative meanings of words, and apply knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to draw inferences concerning the meaning of new terminology. It is the goal of all teachers on campus that students learn, understand, and use difficult, or unfamiliar words regularly. Students will be assessed on their understanding of such words as well as other vocabulary that directly correlates with the texts being read as a class.

### ***Literature***

Through the course of this semester students will be introduced to a variety of genres including novels, short narratives, poetry, dramas, essays, newspaper and magazine articles. While reading such texts, students will develop an understanding of literary terminology as they think critically about the texts they read. I strongly encourage all students to purchase their own copies of the larger pieces of literature being read as a class. This will allow students to hold their thinking about a subject as they highlight and jot down notes in regards to the texts being read.

### ***Writing and Grammar***

The writing process will be thoroughly addressed and explored throughout the semester to ensure all students continue to develop their writing skills using proper English and grammar. Writing is an integral part of this course and will be done on a daily basis. Students can expect to complete journals, timed writing, literary responses, persuasive and expository writing. Major writing assignments will include a brainstorm, outline, rough draft, revision, and final draft. Likewise, students will participate in Writers' Workshops where they will give and receive valuable feedback from their peers.

### ***Listening and Speaking***

In order to become the most effective communicators possible, students must practice both their listening and speaking skills. Whether it be communicating with a partner, small groups, or in front of larger audiences, all students will be expected to deliver and orally present an array of information to others and the entire class. At the same time students will learn how to become active listeners during oral presentations.

### ***Assessments***

Students enrolled in this course will be assessed in a variety of ways. Common assessments for reading will include written responses (short answer and/or developed essays), student/teacher conferences, class and group discussion, and journal responses. Assessments for writing will include the use of rubrics made available to students and discussed before, during and after writing. Vocabulary and grammar will be assessed through the use of several activities, exercises, tests and application through writing. Students are assessed through state content standards, as well as work habits. The categories for student assessment determined by the Great Oak English Department are as follows:

State Content Standards	Percentage of Total Grade
• Reading (Literature & Informational Text)	35%
• Writing Strategies & Applications	35%
• Speaking & Listening	15%
• Language	15%

### ***Recommended Materials***

1. Loose leaf paper (college-ruled)
2. Highlighters (3-4 of varying colors)
3. Blue/Black pens
4. Pencils (#2)
5. Sticky notes (post-it, or any like brand)

### ***Class Texts***

TVUSD uses Board approved standards-based texts that are designed to challenge sophisticated readers and offer diverse stories for diverse students and may sometimes deal with mature topics. If

you would like more information about a text being read in class please reach out to the classroom teacher.

The following texts will be provided by the school if used in class. Because you don't need every text on a daily basis, I will tell you the day before if one is needed for the following day. It is critical to bring the text on that day in order to participate with the class.

<i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>	Rudolfo Anaya
<i>In the Time of the Butterflies</i>	Julia Alvarez
<i>The House on Mango Street</i>	Sandra Cisneros
<i>The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	Harper Lee

### ***Classroom Expectations***

1. **Electronic devices may be used, or visible** in the classroom when directed by the teacher.
2. **No food or drink** may be consumed within the classroom. Bottled water is the only exception.
3. Students must be in their seats before the bell rings each day. The school-wide tardy policy will be strongly enforced.
4. Only ask to use the restroom during appropriate times, not during *instructional* time. Restroom passes will only be permitted for emergencies. Remember to use the restroom before class, during break, lunch and passing periods.
5. Always clean your desk and the area around it before leaving class each day.
6. **DO NOT PLAGERIZE.** Plagiarism of any kind will earn you a zero on the assignment, a referral, and a conference with your parents/legal guardians.
7. **Late work will only be accepted upon return to school following excused absences.**
8. **All formal writing assignments must be completed in order to pass English 9.** Failure to submit all such assignments will result in a semester grade listed as incomplete.
9. Be respectful to the teacher, classmates, and all visitors.
10. Work hard and have fun!

Let's all do our part to make this a GREAT OAK year. Again, I look forward to working with you. Please feel free to contact me any time at the school, or through e-mail.

Sincerely,

Ms. Woelke

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Please sign below to confirm you have read this syllabus with your child. I would also appreciate the additional information to be filled in so that I may contact you more easily if necessary.

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**Student's Name (please print)**

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**Student's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Name (please print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Phone Number**

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**Parent/Guardian E-mail**