

**Creative Writing**  
**Mr. Thomas**  
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**Peabody High School**  
**2021-2022 Course Syllabus**

### **Course Description**

Welcome to Peabody High School and the continuation of your high school career. The **Creative Writing** course is designed for students who enjoy writing as a form of art and personal expression. In this course, students will explore the elements of numerous literary genres (short fiction, poetry, drama, film) and the power of both print and multimedia formats. To develop original writing pieces, students will engage in writing workshops, literary element development lessons, writing/author studies, and peer reviews/conferences. To show evidence of writing development throughout the course, students will be required to engage in writing community activities that require sharing one's work and in publishing one's writing beyond the classroom setting.

### **Course Standards:**

Students will:

- Complete prewriting activities to encourage creative thinking and to inspire writing projects.
- Analyze and critique writers' use of literary elements, word choice, style, and content.
- Use class writing exercises to develop their ability to create characters, conflicts, settings, plots, themes, and points of view; to craft language to convey their ideas; to refine their own writing style.
- Write original writing pieces inspired by literary models and examples.
- Make connections among literature, students' lives, and real world issues.
- Complete writing projects, such as short fiction, children's book, poetry collection, digital prosepoem, one-act play, film screenplay, and literary magazine.

### **Text Books / Required Reading**

Amberg, Jay, and Mark K. Larson. *The Creative Writing Handbook*. Good Year Books, 1992.

Gillan, Maria M. *Writing Poetry to Save Your Life: How to Find the Courage to Tell Your Stories*. Guernica Editions, 2013.

King, Stephen. *On Writing*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Levine, Gail Carson. *Writing Magic: Creating Stories That Fly*. Harper Collins, 2006.

### **Classroom Supplies and Materials**

Each student is responsible for the following materials:

- Laptop with access to Creative Writing Materials
- Google account (school-provided)
- Flash Drive

## **Evaluation / Grade assessment**

Students will be evaluated on the writing process and the process of completing writing projects and class activities including, but not limited to:

- Writing projects
- Prewriting activities
- Revising activities
- Writing exercises
- Class participation

**Grades are not dropped.** However, most assignments will have the opportunity to be edited for better grades.

TSSD uses the grading scale below. This scale is standard across all public schools in Tennessee.

100-93:	A
92-85:	B
84-75:	C
74-70:	D
69 or below:	F

**Assignments are expected to be turned in on the assigned due date.** If an assignment is late, students have 3 days from the due date to turn in the assignment for full credit. After that, Mr. Thomas has discretion as to how many points to take off for being late. **Assignments that are not done/turned in will be marked as missing (which counts like a zero) and will remain until the assignment is turned in.** No assignment that is turned in (and shows some sort of effort) will ever receive less than a 50.

## **Attendance & Late Policy**

All make-up work is the responsibility of the student. English I is a class that demands a lot of reading, discussion, and writing; therefore, it is important to be in attendance each day. Student attendance is essential for success in this class. However, if a student is absent (excused or unexcused) then they will either be exempt from the assignment (if done in class) or be expected to turn the assignment in later. **A "Missing" (zero) will be placed for the grade** in the gradebook and it will be the responsibility of the student to get the assignment turned in to change the grade. Work will be accepted before the end of the quarter in which it was assigned, after that the grade is locked and cannot be changed without paperwork from the office.

If a student returns from an absence and **an announced test or assignment is due upon the return,** then **the student is expected** to take the test or turn in the assignment when he / she returns.

See Synergy and/or Google Classroom/Schoology for assignments that were missed and Mr. Thomas for clarification.

## **Participation:**

Since students will be a part of a nurturing class writing community, they must be prepared AT ALL TIMES to share their ideas and writing through peer conferences/edits and class activities. Without enthusiastic participation, the class writing community suffers. To further the authenticity of a writing community, a student must be prepared to share their works with a real audience by publishing some of their works throughout the year through acceptable and trusted websites, publishers, contests, etc.

Although there will be publishing opportunities that require payment for participation, students are NOT required to engage in such publishing opportunities that require fees from the student. Yet students should not be discouraged from publishing opportunities that require fees since some school funds are available to mitigate or eliminate such costs.

## **“Alert” Writing:**

While one of the fundamental goals of this class is for students to use their unique experiences, aspirations, and inspirations for writing creatively, students should understand that their writing will be read by others and possibly shared beyond the classroom writing community. Since all students’ well-being is an utmost priority, any “alert” writing will be investigated (i.e., shared with proper authorities, counselors, parents, etc.) to ensure that the student writer is physically, mentally, and emotionally safe. “Alert” writing is writing that contains depictions of any of the following:

- gratuitous violence, sex, language or drug use
- harm to self or others
- physical, mental, emotional, or sexual abuse
- bullying

Tentative Course Content/Calendar:

Q1: poetry: poetry collection of various forms, digital poetry

Q2: prose: short fiction, personal narratives,

## **\*Plagiarism Policy\*:**

Much of my classroom management and instruction is based on **a foundation of mutual trust** between student, parents, and teacher. Most difficulties can be resolved quickly in the classroom. However, **there are some student behaviors which quickly erode mutual trust** in the classroom, and which should therefore be avoided. Some of these behaviors include truancy, subversive classroom disruptions, dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an extremely important problem and is found at alarmingly high numbers among high school students. Plagiarism is actually **stealing** someone else’s words and/or ideas. Plagiarism is “an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author’s work as one’s own, as by not crediting the original author” (Dictionary.com Unabridged). In higher education, if a student is caught plagiarizing then it often results in a failing grade for the class and in some instances (depending on the severity) expulsion from the university/school. Getting ideas from other sources is fine (and even recommended) but proper credit must be given to these sources through the use of citations.

*Plagiarism* involves a student’s submission of ideas, thoughts, phraseology, or organizational

patterns that are not his or her own. It is the misrepresentation of one's own work and/or that of another, and/or the falsification of information, data, or records. Plagiarism also includes the stealing of tests, answers, or other academic materials, or the having of these on one's person.

Remember: ***Plagiarism*** is a form of theft and will not be tolerated (even in its most seemingly innocent form). **Students found cheating, copying without teacher permission, or plagiarizing in any other way will be subject to immediate disciplinary action by administration.**

The common punishment: If a student is found to be plagiarizing material, the student will receive a grade of a 0 for that assignment. They have the opportunity to complete the assignment within one week of receiving the 0 plagiarism grade; however, the highest grade that can be earned at that point will be a 60 (much better than a 0).

Parental support in upholding this standard is greatly appreciated.

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I hope you find this class enjoyable, challenging, and ultimately rewarding. I hope you gain new insights about literature and yourself as a result of this class, and that you begin your journey toward becoming a successful person in both school and life. I look forward to a productive and meaningful semester.

Details of this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the teacher.

**Contact:**

The best way to contact Mr. Thomas is through email, which he looks at every morning and afternoon.

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