

Course Syllabus for English IV
Mr. Ryan Thomas
ryan.thomas@trentonssd.org
thomaseducationalservices@gmail.com
2025-2026

Course Description

Welcome to your senior year and welcome to English IV. English IV involves reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar study. In this class, you will learn the skills necessary for college (two- or four-year), technical school, the military, or the work force. Reading comprehension will be strengthened through the study of various genres of fiction and non-fiction. The writing skills that were taught in English III will be strengthened and other forms of writing will also be applied. While this course does not emphasize grammar, those skills are reviewed and strengthened through practice exercises. However, an emphasis will be placed on vocabulary, especially career-specific vocabulary and genre-specific vocabulary with weekly vocabulary lessons and daily vocabulary words (*e.g.*, Word of the Day).

The aim of this course is to develop students into critical thinkers in order to prepare them for the world beyond school. This will involve a mainly discussion-based class atmosphere and expressing original ideas through evidence-based written works. Discussions will range from whole-class discussions to partner discussions on a range of literature and informational texts. Students will be expected to participate in discussions and by the end of the course they will be expected to have the ability to develop and express original ideas/concepts using support from texts.

Students will read and respond to pieces of literature during the semester; English IV primarily focuses on, but is not limited to, British literature and every-day texts that one might encounter in their everyday lives. The major works to be studied include *Beowulf* and *Frankenstein* (and possibly a work by William Shakespeare). While these works are not the only ones to be studied this semester, they do represent a large portion of the literature that we will cover. Other texts may include, but are not limited to, work-related documents like contracts and legal documents. We will also focus on writing exercises such as career research, job applications, writing resumes, and personal essays. (It is important to note that all readings are subject to change.)

Evaluation / Grade assessment

Each student is evaluated at the end of a nine-week grading period. Most of the assessments for understanding will come in the form of written and/or artistic projects to show comprehension. The students' grade will come from the following areas:

- Typed essays and papers
- Projects
- In-class writings
- Homework
- Discussion / Participation / "Bellringers"

Grades are not dropped. However, daily and quiz grades may be raised by completing extra credit. Extra credit is earned by completing extra assignments/papers/projects that coincide with the theme/unit and it is given after school (or you may come by my room during Break). Extra credit is given in order to boost a low or failing daily or quiz grade. Students can earn a maximum of 10 extra credit points for individual additional writings and art projects but are allowed to attempt as many individual pieces of EC as they want (2 well-done ECs = 20 points). These additional point can be used each quarter, but do not roll over from semester to semester. Extra credit cannot be used for papers and/or projects; however, students are allowed to correct/rewrite papers and/or projects using comments from myself in order to earn a better grade.

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

100-90: A
89-80: B
79-70: C
69-60: D
59 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.

Classroom Supplies and Materials

Each student is responsible for the following materials:

- Three-ring binder (1" - 1 ½")
- A package of **college-ruled** paper.
- Red pen for correction and/or peer editing

Most assignments and texts will be presented in a Virtual Format: everything will be provided through one of the platforms. The only thing you will need is access to the internet.

Technology

With technology being an ever-present part of our lives, both personally and academically, technology will be a part of the curriculum for our class. We will be using Google Classroom, Google Drive, and Common Lit extensively. All major writing assignments should be typed and turned in electronically in order to prepare students for the next levels of high school and beyond. You are expected to charge your computer in preparation for class and be ready to use them for instruction and practice. Cell phones are to be put away during class; only students who ask permission (for use in place of computer or for emergency purposes) at the beginning of class will be allowed to have cell phones out during class.

Attendance & Late Policy

All make-up work is the responsibility of the student. English II 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 for assignments that were missed and Mr. Thomas for clarification.

Expectations:

In this class, all students are expected to please:

- Turn in assignments electronically on time
- turn in applicable paper assignments in black or blue ink or pencil only.
- turn in all assignments with your name (you are almost adults)
- print all typed papers and essays in black ink.
- have all relevant materials with you in class (again...adults)
- keep all cell phones turned off and out away; cell phones are allowed for educational purposes and only with teacher permission.
- keep earbuds / headphones put away and out of sight;
- have drinks in a container with a twist-off cap or closed container with a straw. No open containers with drinks, please.
- be in your seat when the tardy bell rings. Please ask permission to get out of your seat.
- write down the “bellringer” as roll is being taken.
- stay in the classroom during the class period. Students may use the restroom in cases of urgent need. Students will be asked to leave their phone with Mr. Thomas during their trip out of the classroom (since they will not need it to do their intended business) in exchange for the restroom pass. When they return with the pass they will exchange it back for their phone. Students will not be allowed to leave Mr. Thomas’s classroom during class to “see” another teacher unless that teacher has contacted Mr. Thomas by phone, email, or explanatory note and requested the student’s presence.
- act like the young adult that you are.
- be responsible.
- be respectful of Peabody faculty, staff, facilities.
- be respectful of your peers.
- be respectful of YOURSELF!

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.

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. 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.

ryan.thomas@trentonssd.org

You can text Mr. Thomas through the Remind.com app. Instructions for this are included.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN

WE HAVE RECEIVED AND READ A COPY OF THE
COURSE SYLLABUS AND CLASSROOM RULES FOR MR.
THOMAS's CLASS IN **ENGLISH IV.**

I UNDERSTAND ALL EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES:
INCLUDING ATTENDENCE AND PLAGIARISM.

PARENT NAME (Please print): _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

STUDENT NAME (Please Print): _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

PERIOD _____

DATE: _____

PARENT CONTACT INFO

Daytime/Work Number: _____

Home/Cell Number: _____

Email: _____



ENGLISH IV



Week	Unit Texts	Work Due
Week 1 1/5 – 1/9	PHS Start Policies and Procedures	
Week 2 1/12 – 1/16	The Hero's Journey Campbell's Monomyth	Monomyth Project
Week 3 1/19 – 1/21	Beowulf Intro <i>Beowulf</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 4 1/26 – 1/30	<i>Beowulf</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 5 2/2 – 2/6	<i>Beowulf</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 6 2/9 – 2/13	<i>Beowulf</i> <i>13th Warrior</i>	Comparison Paper
Week 7 2/16 – 2/20	<i>Macbeth</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 8 2/21 – 2/25	<i>Macbeth</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 9 3/3 – 3/6	<i>Macbeth</i> Movie Version	Paper/Project
Week 10 3/9 – 3/13	Metaphysical Poets	Carpe Diem Poem



ENGLISH IV



Week 11 3/16– 3/20	Satire “A Modest Proposal”	Satire
Week 12 3/23 – 3/27	Romantic Period Romantic Poetry	Poem Paper
Week 13 3/30 – 4/3	Spring Break	
Week 14 4/6 – 4/10	<i>Frankenstein</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 15 4/13 – 4/17	<i>Frankenstein</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 16 4/20 – 4/24	<i>Frankenstein</i>	Discussion Questions
Week 17 4/27 – 5/2	<i>Frankenstein</i>	Final Paper/Project
Week 18 5/4 – 5/8	Last Week of Seniors	Wrap Up
Week 19 5/11 – 5/15	Graduation on Friday	
Week 20 5/18 – 5/22		