

Metaphor. Irony. Plot. Setting. Theme. Imagery. Symbolism.

These and other elements of literature should by now be familiar to you. They exist in all types of writing – from poetry to non-fiction essays, from novels to scripts. You have spent time studying them through the words of other writers. Now you get to try to use these tools for yourself.

This class will be an opportunity for you to express yourself creatively through writing. You will get a chance to try many different genres of writing. You will get to help others improve their writing, and the favor will be returned to you with your own writing. By the end of the class, you will develop a portfolio of your best, most polished work.

Some of my goals:

- To help you thoughtfully consider and practice the craft of writing in many genres.
- To help you improve your comfort level and ability in regards to expressing yourself creatively.
- To help you learn how to constructively help others improve their writing and to allow others to help improve your writing.

Primary class guidelines:

- Don't lie to me.
- Respect everyone in the classroom.
- Be present, not just "here."
- Do your work to the best of your ability. Strive to improve.

Other class guidelines

- Items like mobile phones, portable music players, etc., will be forfeited if they are a distraction to anyone in the room.
- Any major written assignment can be revised for a better grade — unless it is late, in which case revisions will not be accepted.
- Be an advocate for yourself — if you need more time for an assignment, come talk to me *before it's due*. If you show up the day an assignment is due and ask for an extension you will be denied unless the circumstances are extraordinarily exceptional.
- Plagiarism will result in a zero for that assignment and no chance to revise it.

A Series of Tubes:

It would appear the Internets are here to stay. Beginning this year, I am developing a Web site for improving communication with students and parents. A blog of activities, assignments, and homework will be posted every day we meet. I will also post PDFs of handouts that you can download and print (starting with this document). It's no MySpace, but I think it will be pretty useful — which I suppose is the opposite of MySpace. So run home and bookmark:

www.mreverson.com

Materials needed every day:

- A notebook dedicated to this class. We will use this *every day* for journals, writing practice, etc.
- A folder or binder dedicated to this class. We will use this to keep and organize handouts, copies of stories and poems, and other “loose” materials.
- A blue or black pen.

Attendance policy:

- Any unexcused absence will result in a grade of “zero” for any assignments due that day.

Grading policy:

All assignments, activities, homework, class work — everything — will fit into one of three categories:

1. performance/participation
2. learning activities
3. summative assessments

<i>assessment type</i>	<u>Performance/ Participation:</u> What kind of student are you?	<u>Formative Assessments:</u> Are you learning the material?	<u>Summative Assessments:</u> Do you understand the material?
<i>% of grade</i>	10%	30%	60%
<i>Description</i>	Grades in this category will show how dedicated to learning a student is.	Grades in this category will reflect what a student is doing to understand the material.	Grades in this category show how well you have mastered, or learned, the material.
<i>Examples</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion participation • workshop participation • citizenship • effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing process activities (outlines, rough drafts, editing, etc.) • in-class activities • homework • quizzes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • final drafts of formal writing • final portfolio