

Welcome to English 8!

Claremont Middle School 2018-2019 Syllabus

Contact Info

Instructor: Ms. Cait Fallahay

Office Hours: The following times show when I am available to help you *subject to change*

During School: Wednesdays during lunch

After School: Tuesdays and Fridays 3:20 - 4:20

If you need to meet with me and are not available during these times, please speak with me after class to arrange another time. I will do my best to make accommodations.

The best ways to reach me are by:

Cell Phone: (708) 967-6390 (Before 8pm please). You can text me at this number! If you text me, please include your name and your student's name in the text. If you call and I do not answer, please leave a voicemail with your name and number and I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

Email: caitlin.fallahay@ousd.org (if your email bounces back, please call or text)

Welcome to Eighth Grade English!

I am thrilled to meet and work with you during this key year of learning. My goals are to guide students to mastery of the Common Core State Standards and prepare students for the rigor of life in high school and beyond. In order to do this, I have set high expectations and challenging academic requirements.

To succeed in these endeavors, it is imperative that teachers and families work together to support students. It is my goal to be available and to work with families for the success of all students. You will hear from me throughout the school year with positive shout-outs, goals for learning and participation, and updates about grades.

It is my pleasure and privilege to work with you!

Course Objectives

The learning objectives (daily learning goals) for this class will come from the California Common Core State Standards for 8th grade English Language Arts. Class novels will be given out when we are reading them, and they must be brought to class every day. We will be reading the novels *Inside Out and Back Again* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*, exploring the themes of home and taking a stand; we will also read at least one non-fiction book. Additionally, we will work to build individual and community identity through our learning. In this class, students will work to improve their skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, and communication.

Required Daily Materials (If purchasing these materials is difficult for you, please let me know so I can assist you.)

Homework planner (school provided)

Pencils/pens/erasers

Post-it notes

Spiral notebook (provided)

Independent reading book

Glue stick

Grading

Total Grade Breakdown

Homework	10%
Tests, projects, essays	30%
Classwork (notebooks)	35%
Participation (“Daily 5”)	25%

Grades will be updated at least every other week. If you are concerned about your student’s progress, feel free to email me.

→ **“The Daily 5”**

Students will receive feedback and grades related to preparedness and classroom participation. This will help us maximize our brief time together. To this end, I expect students to earn five points every day – “the daily 5.” All five points are given to students when they are:

- 1 point for being on time to class and getting started on the “do now”
- 1 point for being prepared with all necessary materials (*planner, notebook, folders, class books, pens and pencils*)
- 1 point for being prepared with any homework due that day
- 1 point for participating and completing the necessary classwork
- 1 point for behaving respectfully (*this point will be subtracted if a student continues to make poor choices after being given one warning*)

If a student does not meet a certain expectation on a certain day, they will lose their point in that area. Incentives will be given to students who consistently earn 25 points a week, or who show marked improvement over time.

→ **Homework**

Expect homework *at least* two to three nights a week. The majority of classwork and homework in 8th grade English will be graded according to a “check” system. Work that is **turned in** will never receive lower than a 59%. Work that is **missing** will receive a **zero**. Late homework will result in a loss of the corresponding “Daily 5” point. Late work should be turned in as soon as possible for partial credit. Homework is expected at the beginning of class, which means that if something needs to be printed, it needs to be printed before class, otherwise it is considered late. Online homework is due by **8am** on the due date. I stop accepting late work after one week. I expect homework to be turned in on time unless a student:

- had an excused absence
- confirmed with me at least 24 hours before the due date and was granted an extension.
- has a note from a parent/guardian with an acceptable reason why the work is late (traumatic event, family emergency, etc.)
 - Sports, performances, etc. are prior known choices, and are not acceptable/excused reasons for late schoolwork.

Symbol	Range	Letter Grade	What it means	Report card category
0	0	F	Not turned in	Below Proficiency
-	59% – 64%	D	Not completed satisfactorily; redo and resubmit within one week	Below Proficiency
✓ -	65% - 73%	C-	Fair. May be sloppy or incomplete.	Approaching Proficiency
✓ / ✓ -	74% – 79%	C, C+	Fair. You can do better.	Approaching Proficiency

✓	80% - 89%	B-, B, B+	Good! Student did what was asked of them. There may be a few errors, the effort level may be mediocre, or it may be “great but late” – less than one week.	Achieves Proficiency
✓ +	90% - 93%	A-	Great! Student did what was asked of them well.	Achieves Proficiency
✓ +/+	94% - 100%	A, A+	Outstanding! Student showed outstanding effort or thoughtfulness.	Exceeds Proficiency

Cheating Policy

Students are expected to do their own work. If a student is caught cheating on any assignment, quiz, or test, they will receive a **zero** for that assignment, quiz, or test and I will contact home. If they allow a peer to copy his work, the same consequences apply. Cheating includes copying work from another classmate as well as copying work from any other source without proper citation, which is plagiarism. The only exception is when a student is absent, they are allowed to copy class notes from a peer.

Classroom Expectations:

In order to create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment, students are expected to follow all of the classroom procedures we learn. Additionally, students are required to follow the 8th grade English “non-negotiable” classroom rules, which are as follows:

1. Follow instructions the first time given.
2. Listen attentively to the speaker.
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
4. Use positive and constructive language (no bullying, no put-downs).
5. Follow all CMS rules (this includes: no eating, drinks or gum chewing in class except water bottles, no hats or hoods on in class, etc.)

If students choose to break these rules, the following consequence steps will apply:

1st step: Yellow - Warning: Just a verbal warning. This is a chance for the student to correct their behavior on their terms. If they need a break or anything for them to be successful, they can just ask.

2nd step: Blue - Cool Down: The student will relocate in the room and record their actions and feelings on a reflection sheet. This is their chance to tell me what’s going on, and practice their own strategy to get in the right mindset to come back to work. They will lose your behavior/participation point for the day.

3rd step: Red - Call Home: The student will be asked to make a phone call on the spot. I will begin the conversation and answer any questions, but they will be expected to explain your actions and behaviors.

4th step: Purple - Referral: If the behavior has continued, they will be asked to go to the main office to talk with administration. A referral will be completed as well. This may result in further administrative consequences.

Please note: Fighting, defiance, and other serious offences will lead directly to an office referral and loss of all points for the day. If the behavior continues after an administrative check-in and referral, I will require a conference with admin and guardians/parents with the student present.

If students choose to follow these rules, many incentives may apply, including...

1. Bonus points for outstanding effort, helping others, and doing classroom jobs.
2. Positive notes and calls home.

Absence Policy

If a student misses class, it is their responsibility to find out what was missed during the absence. Students may have the same

number of days they were absent to make up their work. Unless Ms. Fallahay says otherwise, students will still be required to take a previously scheduled quiz upon their return to school. The steps to take after an absence are included below:

1. Contact a “study buddy” peer from the class and ask them what you missed. Some questions to ask are:
 - What did you do in class? What did you learn?
 - Did we take any notes? If so, can I copy them?
 - Did we get any handouts?
 - Did we have any new homework or changes to our homework?
2. Email Ms. Fallahay with specific questions you still have *after* completing step 1 above.
3. Check in with Ms. Fallahay after school to ensure you get all of the participation points you missed.
4. Upon your return to the classroom, go to the [absentee files](#) and look for any handouts you missed while absent.
5. Check the class notebook for any handwritten notes you missed. You will need to copy these notes from a friend.

Tardy Policy

Every time a student arrives to class late without a note or **is not in their assigned seat when the bell rings**, they will be considered tardy. Tardies will result in a loss of 1 of “the daily 5”. If a student is tardy more than three times a week parents/guardians and administration will be notified. If tardy, enter the room quietly, grab all needed materials and walk to your assigned seat.

Ms. Fallahay’s Work Expectations

We represent ourselves in the work we do. Therefore, students should take pride in **EVERY ASSIGNMENT** they submit to me. Before turning in an assignment, students should ask themselves “Does this represent my best effort?” If the answer is “No,” students should go back and make corrections so that everything they turn in:

- Follows basic capitalization rules:
 - Did I capitalize the first word of the sentence?
 - Did I capitalize proper nouns (names of places and people) within the sentence?
- Follows basic punctuation rules:
 - Did I put a period at the end of the statement?
 - Did I remember a question mark for a question?
- Spelling and usage:
 - Did I write out the word instead of using an abbreviated version?
 - Did I make sure I didn’t misspell or misuse any words?
- Is neat:
 - Is my paper free of wrinkles and rips?
 - Is the table of contents in my notebook completely filled out?
 - Are the materials in my notebook glued or attached to appropriate pages?
 - Is my handwriting legible?
- Is complete:
 - Did I follow all of the instructions?
 - Did I do everything that was asked of me?
 - Did I answer questions in complete sentences?
- Has a proper MLA (Modern Language Association) heading in the top left corner, including:
 - Name (First and Last)
 - Ms. Carriere
 - Class (7th grade English)
 - Date

Work that does not adhere to “Quality of Work Expectations” will be downgraded.

Phew! Thank you for reading all of this! Please sign below to indicate that you have reviewed this and you understand the class expectations and policies outlined above. If you have any questions, please contact me and we can set up a time to talk. I look forward to our work together this year.

This will count as a homework grade.

Student:

I have read the English 8 Course Syllabus and I understand what is expected of me:

Student Print _____

Student Sign: _____

Parent/Guardian

I have read the English 8 Course Syllabus and I understand what is expected of my child:

Parent/Guardian Print: _____

Parent/Guardian Sign: _____

Parent/Guardian:

I can best be reached at:

Phone: _____

- I prefer (circle one): phone calls texts

Email: _____

Other: _____

My preferred method of contact is (circle one): phone email both