

English 9
2021–22
Room 211
Sixth period: 1:25–2:25
Class website: cheriewalsh.weebly.com

Mrs. Walsh
Office in lower hallway
Office hours: Sign up in classroom
or on office door
301 529 5582 (cell, text judiciously)
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Description

English 9 is mostly a course in Classical literature. To that end, students will read excerpts from Homer's *Iliad*, Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, almost all of Homer's *Odyssey*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone* by Sophocles, and the also Jean Anouilh's twentieth-century adaptation of the play. Students in English 9 also read Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus*. Our Shakespeare selection is *Macbeth*, which we read for its literary richness as well as for its relationship to Aristotle's *Poetics*.

In ninth grade, students practice critical reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking through in-class process-based work—free writes, discussion, systematic question-answering, seminar—as well as through the creation of their own pieces of academic and creative writing. We study grammar mostly through sentences we explore both in the writing we read and in the writing we produce. Vocabulary comes from context, and students will study context cues as well as definition and etymology to understand how language works and to be able to understand more precisely what they read.

Students in English 9 are encouraged to check in with me both informally in class and by signing up for an appointment. (There is always a sign-up sheet on in the classroom or on my office door.) I am happy to answer questions by email or text as well.

Poem memorization

Memorizing poems is important to the culture of Brookewood School K–12. Students who memorize a poem for recitation

- gain experience with public speaking
- learn to trust themselves
- internalize structures of syntax to increase their understanding of how sentences can work
- internalize patterns of sound
- increase vocabulary in a permanent way

In English 10, students will memorize one poem that corresponds to each major text in the course.

A few policy points:

1. Academic honesty. This course will follow the school policy for academic honesty, which will be discussed in class. Ask if you have questions about your relationship to outside sources. I cannot write college recommendations for students who have cheated in my class.
2. Late work. Late homework is accepted for half credit; late papers lose one letter grade per day late, bottoming out at 50%. Fill out a late work slip to receive any credit for late work. Ask for an extension at least 36 hours in advance if you see trouble coming. IEP-type accommodations apply to work completed in class only, e.g., in-class writings or tests.
3. The end of the quarter is the end of the quarter; the end of the year is the end of the course.
4. All work must be presented double spaced, whether handwritten or typed. Any work submitted electronically must be submitted as a pdf to the appropriate assignment slot in Jupiter.

Tips for success:

1. Class is much more interesting when you have done the reading. If you fall behind, do the current assignment and then reach back to pick up what you have missed. If you read ahead, be sure to go over your annotations before class so that you are clear about what material is in the current reading.

2. The revolution will not be televised.
 - a. Come to class whenever you can; when you miss, get assignments from friends, the website, and the teacher.

 - b. Participate avidly in discussions and activities to learn as much as you can and to collaborate with your classmates to improve everyone’s learning.
 - c. Take notes. Students sometimes think that book annotation is enough. It is not. Keep a daily record of class in your notebook.
 - d. Annotate your books. We’ll review how to do it, but most students develop their individual styles.
 - e. Frequent office hours. You will not be fully successful in this class unless you come to office hours with drafts, ideas, and questions.

A final word:

English at Brookewood is challenging because we believe in the importance of both the literature we’ve selected and your developing reading and writing skills. In ninth grade, you read excellent texts and learn to analyze them in a grade-appropriate version of the same techniques you’ll use in college. No matter your post-Brookewood plans, the experience of reading literature as both a mirror (we identify and sympathize with characters and test out decisions and thoughts in a safe way, through art) and a window (we learn about people other than ourselves and places and cultures related to but not identical with our own) should help develop your thinking and your understanding of the human experience as a whole. I expect that you’ll find ways to enjoy reading along, learning also about the systems of language and common patterns in art.