

2019-20 Ninth Grade Creative Writing

Periods 5 & 6

Instructor –Moss Kaplan

Moss_Kaplan@dpsk12.org (parents) mrmosskaplan@gmail.com (students)
(720) 424-1787

We are fortunate to have a separate class/block for all 9th grade Creative Writing majors, held during periods 5 & 6. Students in this class will represent a variety of levels, starting with first year high school students and continuing to students in Level 4 (Writer's Bible).

The class will primarily consist of shared activities, from explications and critiques to student-led writing exercises and teacher-led literary craft workshops. Because of the diversity of levels, however, students will also engage in separate, smaller workshops that cater to their particular level. Students will also have independent work time for completing deadlines and working on select assignments and contracts.

Please see below for the class framework, department and class policies, as well as expectations for class participation.

Cornerstones/Objectives for all levels:

Heightened awareness/ways of seeing—Learn to cultivate effective writing by becoming adept at seeing diverse perspectives and exploring how observation and introspection are both vital to artistic pursuit

Develop, honor and celebrate students' voices—Both verbally and in writing, students will share and critique work, and will engage with one another's writing in a variety of capacities.

Meeting deadlines/working independently—Through learning contracts, a variety of assignments and projects, students will work independently to meet deadlines.

Development of diverse writing styles/forms—Students will engage in a variety of diverse writing activities which will allow them to learn new elements of craft, in order to sculpt, experiment with, and develop their art of writing.

Inspiration/Reverence—Students will develop a repertoire of reading alongside writing, as well as explicate a variety of examples from classic authors to contemporary writers in order to discuss talent in craft and model examples of excellent writing.

Artistic risks—Students will engage in writing that's associated with other art forms. Students will participate in multidisciplinary artistic projects to both hone their collaboration skills and to learn to appreciate a broad background of artistic endeavor.

9th Grade Curriculum by Level/Year in the CW Program:

A. First Year Curriculum (New students)—All new ninth grade students will complete a first year curriculum that surveys myriad components of creative writing, including an overview of most major forms/genres. Students of this level will not complete contracts. In addition to the first year curriculum, first year students will engage in many all-class activities and assignments.

B. Contracts (2nd year students)—After students have completed a first year curriculum, they will spend one year focusing solely on personal contracts, which allow for completely individualized assignments and personal artistic/literary development. Students of this level will complete four 9 Week Contracts (no umbrella) in each of the four main literary forms.

C. Writer's Bible Umbrella Project (3rd/4th Year students)—Students in this level will complete four 9 Week Contracts of their choice in addition to the first Umbrella Project (Writing responses to/development of The Writer's Bible).

All-Class Elements of Curriculum for all 9th Grade

Workshop-based Assignments—Based on a workshop led by a major teacher or guest artist, students will be responsible for at least one specific writing assignment approximately once per month.

Student-led FE's (short writing workshops)—Each student is responsible for leading one writing exercise for the class each semester.

Teacher-led Writing Workshops—Students will be introduced to an element of craft that will help to expand writing ideas and repertoire of work. This will also include guest artist-led workshops and units of study.

Author Appreciation Symposiums—Once per semester, students will present on an author they've read recently whom they admire.

Explications—Approximately once or twice per month, the class instructor will select a short piece of writing to be explicated (thoroughly analyzed) by the class.

Critique Groups—In small groups, students will carefully examine one another's work and provide feedback for peers regarding the strengths and weaknesses in their writing. Critiques will run throughout the school year.

Story Hour—From time to time, students will have a class period to listen to a story or podcast. Students will discuss the story as well as examine the particular genre and techniques used.

9th Grade Performance Projects—First semester, CW will join the 9th grade VA majors to design a performance project. Second semester, CW will join the Dance Departments for a collaboration.

Food Fridays— We celebrate the week by sharing food. You will be assigned one to two Fridays a semester when you are responsible for bringing food to sharw with the class.

Grading Policies

(grading scale & method, deadlines, method of delivery)

Grading is based on a traditional grading scale and will primarily reflect a student's ability to consistently meet deadlines, carry out specific assignment requirements, and hand in polished copies of work. Students' writing will not be graded based on artistic merit or traditional writing rules, such as a rigid focus on punctuation, paragraph development, etc. (Of course, however, polished final copies will be required and habitual sloppiness, etc., will require intervention in the way of conferencing and/or a lowered grade).

Deadlines

Dates for contracts and other deadlines will be posted in the Google calendar for your class/level. Students should check the class calendar frequently.

Late Work

For full credit, you must have your work in by the end of the major class period on the day it is due. For the following 24 hours, you may still turn in the work for 50% credit. After 24 hours of the date/time it is due, the assignment becomes a zero and can no longer be submitted.

Make-up Work

Making up work missed from excused absences needs to be completed within two school days. It is your responsibility to find out what work you missed if you were absent.

Submitting Work

- Depending on the assignment, I will ask you to submit either hardcopy or electronically to mrmosskaplan@gmail.com.
- Any final work (contracts, story assignments, etc.) should be typed and relatively free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, including typos. An occasional mistake is perfectly fine, but work laden with such errors is not deserving of an above-average grade. Please make sure to proofread and edit all work so that final submissions are polished and professional.

Participation

You are part of a community of writers where each individual voice adds richness to the collective experience; therefore, it is imperative you are consistent about attending class and being **on time**. You will be given an academic participation grade at the end of each week; we will review the criteria evaluated for this grade at the beginning of the year.

Materials

Each student, regardless of his/her year in the program, is required to have an in-class journal. Additional materials for independent projects, such as art/tech needs, may be needed as such assignments come up; there are also materials available in the classroom for student use.