

## Senior English - Buchanan High School

### Contact Information:

Mrs. Neal

Room 201

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### Important notes about this class:

I look forward to learning from you, and with you, as we aim to improve our skills as writers. It is hard work, but your writing will improve through regular feedback and revision. **I can *always* find time to provide extra help when you need it this semester; it is your responsibility, however, to seek out my help.** We can read and discuss your writing together or think of ways to approach an essay. We can plan a time that works in your schedule, either before or after school or over email/Google docs.

We will be sharing drafts of writing we care about, which requires trust and respect. I expect all students I teach to respect each other. I will work diligently to create a community of learners and teach you how to support and encourage each other as developing writers. **I do not tolerate harassment of any kind in my classroom.** Don't push me on this.

I expect all students to arrive on time to class with the materials needed and to have completed homework. **During class, I expect all of my students to work.** If you are frequently disruptive or missing work, I will keep you before or after school. We're here to learn; it's an opportunity for all of us to improve as writers by working together and working **hard**. My job is to show you how to write well; your job is to seize each opportunity.

Gary Paulson says, "Read like a wolf eats." Writing and reading are intimately connected. **Readers are better writers.** Sustained reading of fifteen minutes or more is expected each night at home. Choose your books well. Read books you love but also challenge yourself to read widely in all genres and grow as a reader. Reading absolutely impacts vocabulary development and writing, so it is an essential element of this course. I will provide you with dozens of works to read in class. You'll learn to mark them up as you study the craft of others.

Nancie Atwell says, "There's nothing better for you—not broccoli, not an apple a day, not aerobic exercise. In terms of the whole rest of your life, in terms of making you smart in all ways, there's nothing better. Top-ranking scientists and mathematicians are people who read a lot. Top-ranking historians and researchers are people who read a lot. **It's like money in the bank in terms of the rest of your life,** but it also helps you escape from the rest of your life and live experiences you can only dream of. Most importantly, along with writing, it's the best way I know to find out who you are, what you care about, and what kind of person you want to become." Think about that. Stop your

whining about not having time to read; I've heard it before and I know it isn't true. Make different choices. Give up something for half an hour a night. Just do it. It will pay off!

**Upcoming Assignments:** Students will complete several types of assignment over the course of this year, including but not limited to the following:

- a personal narrative, including a story board and scene
- resumes, cover letters, applications (job and college), scholarships, thank you letter writing
- debates, trial, persuasive speech, Socratic seminar, and other speaking opportunities
- multi-genre research project
- a personal, self-analytical memoir incorporating rhetorical devices
- summary and critical analysis of non-fiction prose, including news articles, political speeches, memoirs, and more
- argumentative research essay in problem-solution format with works cited, rough drafts, and final professional copies to be collected
- journals discussing, analyzing, and reacting to choice reading, quick write prompts, and mentor texts
- critiquing peer work, giving both written and oral feedback
- book club participation and the reading of whole class novels

**Please purchase the following supplies by Friday, September 8:**

1. A 1 ½ inch minimum, 3-ring binder
2. A college-ruled spiral OR composition notebook for journal writing
3. Blue or black pens
4. Pencils

\*Students must also bring their iPads to class.

**Expectations:**

*Note: I will enforce all Buchanan school policies in my classroom.*

1. *I need to show respect for Mrs. Neal, my fellow classmates, and myself.*
  - ❖ This means that while Mrs. Neal or my classmates are talking, I will remain quiet and will wait my turn.
  - ❖ It also means that I will respect their belongings and space. I will ask permission before I “borrow” something.
  - ❖ This also means that I will conduct myself appropriately. I will do what is asked of me with a positive attitude, and I will not disrupt my classmates’ learning process and/or environment.
  - ❖ I will remember that negative, sarcastic, inappropriate, or degrading comments will not be permitted.

2. *I understand that I am to be prepared for class.*

- ❖ This means that I am to bring my books, notebook, pencil, pen, iPad, and/or anything that I might need to class every day. This way I don't need to go back to my locker. I will be responsible. I understand that to leave the classroom I must sign in/out of the room each time.
- ❖ This also means that I am to bring any assignments or homework to class when they are due. All homework is due on or before the assigned due date and at the start of class (not the end). I understand that deadlines are a part of the real world and that Mrs. Neal is trying to prepare me for it.
- ❖ I understand that if I am absent, I am expected to access my school email and/or class website in order to get the assignment. I am expected to return to class with the make-up assignment. I acknowledge all major assignments submitted within 24 hours after the due date will incur a late "fee" of 10%. After 24 hours, the grade consideration is at the instructor's discretion.
- ❖ I understand, however, that the extension policy does not apply to participation and presentation scores. I must be present to earn those scores.
- ❖ I understand that cell phones, hats, headphones, and food are to be left in my locker. If I bring an inappropriate object to class such as a cell phone, hat, headphones, food, etc., Mrs. Neal will confiscate it. She will deliver cell phones to the assistant principal to be picked up by a parent or guardian. I am, however, allowed to have a bottle of water.
- ❖ I understand that chewing gum is a privilege. My class will lose the privilege if Mrs. Neal finds gum anywhere in her classroom including on the carpet and under desks.

3. *I need to take an active part in my education.*

- ❖ This means that I am going to participate in class discussions and in class activities with a positive attitude. I am going to try my best every day, because I know that Mrs. Neal expects my best, and I expect that for myself too. If I don't understand or if I'm unsure, I will ask questions and seek help.
- ❖ I am aware I can keep track of my grade via Power School. I understand that Mrs. Neal updates grades on a daily and weekly basis.

4. *I understand that cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated.*

- ❖ Not only will I receive a zero and will not be allowed to make up or re-take the assignment, test, and/or quiz, but I will also receive a detention and an office referral. If cheating continues, I will have to face the consequences in the office, which are clearly outlined in the student handbook.

5. *I need to be in Mrs. Neal's classroom and in my seat ready to learn when it is time for class.*

- ❖ I understand that Mrs. Neal will follow the school's tardy policy which is described in the student handbook. I also understand that I am to remain in my seat until Mrs. Neal dismisses me from class. I will not line up by the door. I KNOW that we will work from bell to bell in Mrs. Neal's class.

6. *If I don't live up to Mrs. Neal's expectations or if I break school rules, I know that I will have to face the consequences.*

- ❖ Those consequences may include a phone call home or email to my parent/guardian, detention, referral, office visit, and/or OSS. By accepting responsibility for my actions, I am becoming a good and productive citizen.

7. *If I have difficulties in class, I understand that I can ask Mrs. Neal for help.*

- ❖ She is available during class, before or after school, or through e-mail at [eneal@buchananschools.com](mailto:eneal@buchananschools.com).

8. *I understand that Mrs. Neal uses points for grading.*

- ❖ In order to figure my grade, Mrs. Neal adds up my points and divides them by the points possible. Mrs. Neal even rounds the percentages up. Then she uses the percentages below:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	0-59%

**Grading:**

- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Writing
- ❖ Listening/Speaking
- ❖ Language
- ❖ Assessments

**Percentage**

20%  
20%  
20%  
20%  
20%

\*Units and activities may be subject to change based on what the teacher finds works best to meet the needs of students and curriculum standards.

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\*\*Please detach and return to teacher.

**It is my goal to have a successful year and to do my best. I have read and understand the expectations for Mrs. Neal's classroom.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_