



**English 9 Course #13022**  
**North Dorchester High School**  
**Ms. Nicole Benner**  
**Email:** [bennern@dcpsmd.org](mailto:bennern@dcpsmd.org)

**Room: A-101**  
**Planning Period: Pd. 3**  
**Phone: (410) 943 – 4511 ext. 1579**

**Course Description:**

The English 9 Honors course provides a program of reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar usage, and mechanics skills within the context of rigorous literary and information texts. It addresses the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards for English and is designed to expose students to a broader depth and increased rigor than the regular course. Students will employ critical thinking and analysis skills, supporting an accelerated pace of content.

**Course Requirements:**

There will be reading and writing assignments for you to complete on time. This is your first high school English class, and my expectations are high. I expect you to make mature decisions and develop a positive work ethic to be successful. If you are absent from class, you are not excused from the assignment or tests (please follow the DCPS policy on make-up work and excused and unexcused absences). It is your responsibility to make up your assignments and schedule times to discuss them with Ms. Benner.

**Textbooks and Resources:**

Holt McDougal Literature Grade 9\*  
A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah\*  
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee\*

**Required Materials:**

Laptop  
Headphones (suggested if you are returning to in person)  
Pencil and pens

Notebook paper

**Objectives:**

You will be able to...

- Improve your communication skills in order to succeed inside and outside of school.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the writing process.
- Improve vocabulary and reading skills.
- Analyze themes in different literary genres.

**Technology**

At the teacher's discretion, classwork, quizzes, and writing assignments will be assigned and graded in Schoology. There will also be assignments assigned in Google Slides and in Commonlit. You are encouraged to access Schoology from home if you have internet access and have missing or incomplete work. If you are found to be abusing your internet privileges (ie. Playing games, watching videos, etc.) instead of focusing on your classwork, and are unresponsive to redirection, you may receive a zero for that assignment. Please be sure that,

\*When in-person learning occurs. Digital files provided as needed.

when checking overall grades, you check Powerschool to get the most accurate picture.

### **Units of Study**

Unit Description	Duration
<u>Unit 1: Rights and Responsibilities</u> Extended Text Selection: "A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier" by Ishmael Beah  Various non-fiction, short-story and poetry selections.	30 Days
<u>Unit 2: Justice and Equality</u> Extended Text Selection: To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee  Various non-fiction, short-story and poetry selections.	30 Days
<u>Unit 3: Allusions of Love</u> Extended Text Selection: The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet  Various non-fiction, short-story and poetry selections.	30 Days

### **Grading Policy**

All assignments will be graded using a point system. As per the county policy, all classwork and homework grades are 40% of the overall final grade. Tests, quizzes, major projects, and essays are 60% of the overall final grade. Please refer to the County Calendar and your agenda for the full explanation of the grading policy.

### **Cell Phone Policy**

At NDHS, students may use mobile devices in areas with designated signage during the instructional day when in school. Failure to abide by DCPS mobile device protocols will result in the device being confiscated and disciplinary action. During virtual instruction, the expectation is that students will be focused on the curriculum being presented during synchronous instruction. Students caught taking pictures or recording virtual classes can be subject to discipline from administration or even the board.

### **Guidelines for Success**

- You are not to stand in the hall before class. As you enter the classroom, sharpen pencils, sit in your assigned seats, and begin warm-up before the bell rings.\* If we are virtual learning, have your computer charged, and a notebook ready.
- Attend class every day, and do not be late. If we are virtual learning, please be logged in on time. I will need to see your face and hear your voice at the start of class to count you for attendance.
- Work hard on your daily assignments and meet all deadlines. Work will not be accepted if you decide not to do your work in class.
- In the event that you have an excused absence, please check the make-up work folder/binder\*, and/or Schoology. Please schedule a time outside of class if you need further assistance. If we are virtual learning, office hours are on Monday.
- Please be organized! I will provide assistance in helping you organize the items you receive in my class. The materials listed on the first page of this syllabus are critical in helping you to learn organizational skills.
- Raise your hand to be recognized and called upon by the teacher. There is to be no talking or getting out of your assigned seat unless Ms. Benner grants you permission.\* If we are virtual learning, please type

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your question into the comments box.

- Be prepared for class everyday with all required materials. Textbooks must be covered if you sign one out to take home.\*
- Be quiet and respectful during announcements.\*
- Do not touch things in the classroom that are not yours – let's be respectful of each other's belongings.\*
- No food, drinks, toys, cell phones, CD/DVD players, iPods, and/or electronic devices are to be brought to class.\*
- Cheating will not be tolerated. If you find it necessary to cheat, appropriate action will be taken.
- Plagiarism is cheating and, if you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive a 0 amidst other disciplinary action.
- Profanity is not to be used in school. If you choose to speak in this manner, you will be referred to the office.
- If a substitute leaves your name for misbehaving/causing a disturbance, appropriate action will be taken.\*

### Guidelines for Virtual Learning Success

**1. Be prepared.** Just like any class at school, it's important to have all of your materials ready to go. For virtual school, that means you'll need to know the link, what time you need to be there and what books or printouts you'll need. Get your pencils sharpened in advance so you can be totally prepared to listen when the teacher comes on.

**2. Be on time.** Let's not waste the teacher's time. Be on time for your class meetings (or even a few minutes early). It's a good idea to test out the class link in advance of your call time, so you know that it works and your system is up and running. Print out your class schedules and post them on your wall as a reminder. Set an alarm (or ask a parent to do that) if you have a hard time remembering when to log on.

**3. Learn how to use the virtual classroom program.** Whether you are using Zoom, Google Classroom, WebEx or another program, it's important to know how it works. Learn how to enter the virtual classroom, mute and unmute yourself, turn off your camera and shut down the program. Is there a chat that you need to use? A way to indicate you are raising your hand? Find this out before the class starts.

**4. Use headphones with a mic if you can.** It's easier for the class to hear from you when you need to talk if you are wearing headphones with an external microphone. Also, headphones will help you block out the distractions around you.

**5. Stay in one spot during your call.** Resist the urge to head to the kitchen for a snack or take your class meeting outside. It's distracting to your classmates to see you moving around during the class. Find a quiet spot where you will be comfortable for the whole class and make it your classroom spot. Remember, you are in class so lounging on your bed is not a good option. Sit at a desk or your kitchen table so you can have more focus.

**6. Dress the part.** While school uniforms aren't required for virtual schooling, you do want to make sure you look presentable for class. Change out of your pajamas (unless it is official pajama day), brush your hair and teeth and look presentable. Make sure any shirt you are wearing doesn't have any offensive graphics or text on it. Think about what you'd wear to school and dress accordingly.

**7. Eliminate distractions.** Keep in mind that class time is class time even when you are at home. Don't snack or chew gum during class. Turn off the music or the TV in the background. If you need to use the restroom, try to do that before class starts. Don't text or play on your cell phone during the class meeting.

**8. Wait for your turn.** It's tough enough for teachers to manage a class when you are there in the same room. Virtual classes add a whole other challenge. Follow the teacher's instructions for volunteering and don't blurt out an answer unless you are called on. It can be a good idea to raise your hand instead of interrupting so that the teacher can finish the instructions before you jump in.

**9. Remember, this is school.** While it might be exciting to see your friends (finally!), this is not the time or place to chat about Minecraft or what you had for breakfast. If your virtual classroom has a chat feature, stay

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out of it unless the teacher requests students use it. Chat is public to everyone in the class (including the teacher), and it can be distracting.

**10. Respect your teachers!** This is the most important rule of all! Respect your teachers and all the work they have done to teach you in the virtual classroom. This might be a challenge for them too; we are all learning together. Make sure they know how much you appreciate them. The best way to do this is with good behavior in the virtual classroom

### **Consequences**

If for some reason you break one of the above stated guidelines, the following actions will be taken:

- **First offense:** student conference, phone call home, or letter sent home
- **Second offense:** phone call home and 1-hour after-school detention
- **Third offense:** phone call home, 1-hour after-school detention, and office referral
- **Fourth offense:** phone call home, 2-hour after-school detention, parent conference, and office referral

Adjustments to consequences may be made based on the severity of the infraction.

### **Homework...**

Must be completed! Homework is very important; it allows me to see how you are doing and determine whether or not we need to look at something a little more closely. Per DCPS policy, homework may be assigned to prepare you for the following day's lesson. The bulk of your homework will be reading the text to prepare you for class discussion, and analysis of skills and concepts.

### **Writing Format**

For all paper assignments, unless otherwise noted, you will need to use this heading:

- Name, date, and assignment must be written or typed in the upper LEFT hand corner.
- Paragraphs must be indented.
- All writing assignments must be edited for spelling and other corrections before they are turned into Mrs. Baker.
- All writing assignments that are handwritten should be legible and written in ink.



I have read all of the information stated on Ms. Benner’s English I Syllabus. I understand that the guidelines and policies must be followed in order to achieve a positive classroom learning climate that will bring success to my classmates and me. By following **North Dorchester High School’s** philosophy of being respectful, responsible, and ready, I can expect to be successful in this class. Failure to abide by classroom rules will result in the consequences as specified in this document. If I ever need extra help or have questions, it is my responsibility to ask Ms. Benner at appropriate times.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**North Dorchester Learner Commitment**

*We are the North Dorchester Eagles. We are becoming college, career, and community ready by demonstrating integrity, honor, and ethics through our voices and our choices.*

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