English 11/12 Honors: Tolkien Mr. Fisher

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# Welcome to English 11/12 Honors: J.R.R. Tolkien and the Modern Myth

This class will examine the works of J.R.R. Tolkien and examine how they can be viewed in the context of a modern mythology. The class will also explore Tolkien’s views on a variety of subjects, as well as explore the decisions a screenwriter and/or a director must make when adapting a novel to make a movie. Students will receive a good amount of practice and support as they refine their reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills. The class is designed to develop in each student a solid ability to read literature closely. Students will be expected to read for both literal and figurative meanings, and to analyze and interpret literature in writing. Students will strengthen their writing skills as they learn to organize, develop and articulate their ideas, using both textual support and fluid written expression. Some writing assignments will also allow students to explore their creativity.

**You are expected to:**

* Respect the rights, opinions, property, and space of others. **Treat people the way you would like to be treated.**
* Be constructive and positive in your words and actions.
* Put away cell phones, portable music players, calculators, and all other electronic devices unless we need to use them in class.
* Eat or drink in the hallways and not bring food or drinks (except water) into the classroom.
* Come to class prepared with books, materials, and assignments.
* Hand in work that reflects your best efforts.
* Come to class on time.

**Supplies you will need:**

* **Lots** of dark blue or black ink pens
* 8 ½” x 11” 3-ring binder
* Enough 8 ½” x 11” looseleaf paper for the entire year
* One composition notebook

**Grading:** I do not give grades—**you earn them**. Everything we do in this class is important and **everything** counts.

Work will be graded on a points-earned-out-of-points-possible scale. Each assignment is worth a certain number of points. At the end of the term, I add up the total points earned and divide this number by the total number of points possible to yield a grade. Point values per assignment tend to fall in these ranges:

Type of Assignment Point Range

Writing Assignments and Tests 100 points

Projects 20-100 points

Quizzes 5-25 points

Homework 6-12 points

Classwork 10-100 points

Do Nows 100 points

Class Participation 100 points

**Class Participation:** I expect your attention and participation in each and every class this year. I will be keeping track of who is participating and who is not throughout the term, and will use my notes to inform your participation grade.

**Homework:** You will receive written homework assignments in this class. **I expect all homework to be completed to the best of your ability**, as homework is an integral part of the learning process. All homework will be checked.

Do Nows: On most days, there will be a Do Now assignment on the board when you enter the classroom. All Do Nows must be completed in a composition notebook that will be kept inside the classroom at all times. You cannot take these notebooks home. At the end of the marking period, I will grade the Do Nows, looking both for *quality* (how good are they?) and *quantity* (how many did you do?). All Do Nows must be done in class and on time. You cannot “make up” a Do Now due to absence, but attendance will be taken into account when I grade your work.

**Rewrites:** As a student in my class, you have the option of rewriting one essay per term. You must complete your rewrite at least a week before the end of the term. The “rewritten” grade will replace your original grade on the assignment.

**Course Outline (Subject to change):**

**SUMMER READING:**

*On the Road* by Jack Kerouac

*Catfish and Mandala* by Andrew X. Pham

**TERM 1:**

Readings:

*The Odyssey* by Homer

*The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *Unfinished Tales* by J.R.R. Tolkien

A selection of creation myths

**TERM 2:**

Readings:

*Beowulf*

*Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *Unfinished Tales* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell

Movies (Outside of Class):

*The Fellowship of the Ring*

**TERM 3:**

Readings:

*The Two Towers* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*Return of the King* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *Unfinished Tales* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Movies (Outside of Class):

*The Two Towers*

**TERM 4:**

Finish *Return of the King* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien

Selections from *Unfinished Tales* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*Animal Farm* by George Orwell (Juniors only)

Movies (Outside of Class)

*Return of the King*

**Extra Help:** Extra help will be available every day after school or during any period I do not teach, provided that you check in with me to make sure I do not have any other plans. For instance, I often have a faculty meeting scheduled on Wednesdays right after school.

**Absences and Missed Work:** Absences may be excused, but missed work is not. You are responsible for finding out what work was assigned during your absence, and must turn in any missing work soon after your return to school. If you do not speak directly with me within 24 hours of your return about missed work, I will assume that you will turn it in the following day (meaning two days after the absence). Also, all missed exams must be made up within a week of your return to school, and no later.

**Late Work:** All assignments are due *at the start of class* on the day they are due. Any work that is turned in after I collect it will be considered late. Any large, graded assignment will lose 10 points for every day it is late. **No late study guides will be accepted**.

I have a zero-tolerance policy on issues relating to plagiarism and cheating. There is no excuse for this type of behavior. If I find out that you have copied or plagiarized work in any of your assignments, I will give the assignment a “zero” and contact your parent/guardian and the administration about your actions. Make sure that all work you do in and for this class is your own!

I have high hopes and expectations for you and your classmates—good luck!