

Reading is Thinking 10S Course Outline

GVS: February - June 2016

Instructor: Mrs. Whitney Reimer

←<< “Not all who wander are lost.” – J.R.R. Tolkien >>→

Welcome! *Reading is Thinking* is a grade 9 course like no other. World renowned dance choreographer Twyla Tharp says that, “*the two things that will have the greatest impact on you over the next five years are the people that you will meet and **what you will read.***” A powerful realization if you think about it. Interestingly enough people really don’t pay that much attention to how they read or what they are doing to make meaning out of a text. I mean seriously, have you ever spent any time considering how you made sense out of a book, article or video that you have looked at in the past? You’ve certainly developed a strategy or two over the years to help you with this, but you may be hard-pressed to explain just how you did it. This class aims to take what you know and then expand on it.

Themes & Units of Study

Over the course of the semester you will spend time learning about different reading strategies that will help you to ‘ramp up’ your reading in three specific content areas: ELA, Social Studies and Science. Your understanding of what reading is all about is sure to be challenged as you engage in the various class reading activities.

To kick off the semester, we’ll look at the following:

1. Who am I as a reader? Different perspectives/lenses.
2. Text: What counts as a text? A book? A movie? A game? A painting? An environment? An outfit? Aesthetic vs. pragmatic texts.
3. The reading process and reading strategies: questioning, predicting, role-playing/visualizing, connecting, experimenting, researching, etc.

Note: Units/topics are subject to change due to availability of resources and time.

Grading & Assignments

This is a pass/fail course; worth 0.5 credit.

Your progress in this course will be charted via observation, conversation and product. There will be a variety of activities and assignments that will make up your time in this class, however I’d like to mention now that:

- 1) You will work regularly with a **journal**. It will contain responses, gleanings and questions that have come up for you during your time spent in the course, along with a smattering of other things.
- 2) Before all is said and done, you will be required to showcase your learning in a final **portfolio**. In a nutshell, this will be a collection of work that will demonstrate what you’ve learned. (We’ll talk more about this later.)

ANY and ALL work that you do in this course **NEEDS TO BE KEPT UNTIL THE END OF THE COURSE**. Remember that portfolio thing I spoke of? It will make things a whole lot easier for you if you’ve got your work. This means that you will need to be responsible for gathering and keeping your work together.

Regular attendance is required to demonstrate a consistent and sustained achievement of the outcomes necessary to earn the credit for this course. *Regular attendance is defined by our school attendance policy; see Student Handbook.*

Due dates: It becomes very challenging to track your progress throughout the semester and to understand your true abilities if work is not completed. In order for me to give you thorough feedback in a timely manner and to assess you fairly, due dates must be respected. Parents and/or principals will be contacted if you are struggling to meet deadlines, and you will also be required to spend time in the homework room during your lunch hour. Incomplete work could result in course failure. *See the late assignment policy in your Student Handbook for further details.*

The Basics

1. Come to class prepared with a notebook or loose-leaf, pens/pencils, a binder to keep your work safe and organized, and your journal.
2. If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining any missed class work, notes or assignments. You're in high school now; meaning, I should not have to hunt you down.
3. Cell phones, iPods, iPads (and other electronic devices) must be turned off and kept out of sight during class UNLESS I have given you permission or direction to use them (which I will do from time to time). For example, during longer work periods, I am okay with you listening to music via headphones (as long as you aren't playing constant DJ or sending messages on the same device).
4. Be on time! Tardiness is disrespectful to both you teacher and peers, please do not waste our time.

The Classroom Environment

Many students assume that if they do well on all their assignments, they should get a pass in the course. This is not always so. Participation includes (1) attendance, (2) quality of preparation, (3) oral contributions, and (4) other activity or lesson-based requests. I understand that some people are shy, some intimidated and some simply cut off by others' comments. I will do my best to maintain an atmosphere in which each student's contribution is welcomed and respected (*see anti-bullying section in Student Handbook*), and otherwise look mainly to the quality, not quantity, of all contributions.

Please reflect before speaking, build on previous comments, help discover the meaning that others are struggling to express, be open to persuasion, and bend to the weight of evidence and reasoning. You must be prepared to back up your claims, to defend your judgments, to show the connection between your arguments and conclusions, and to use the variety of insights and perspectives in the class to advance your understanding of our texts and the themes. The ultimate goal of class discussion is that each of us can learn from each other; otherwise we would read the books and home and never meet!

Contact Info

Please do not hesitate to bring your questions, comments and concerns to my attention. I am here to help! If you're looking for me, I will either be in **room 103 or 107**. You can also reach me at: **wreimer@hsd.ca** or **204-434-6415**.

Your First Assignment (Due by Monday, February 15th, 2015):

Please take this syllabus home to your parents/guardians, read over the entire thing together (translate, if necessary), and then **have your parents/guardians sign below, indicating that they have read the syllabus.** Should they have any initial comments or questions for me, they may add these to the lower portion of the page. Return this signed paper to class to Mrs. Reimer.

Student's Name _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature _____

Comments/Questions: