*“Listen to the mustn'ts, child. Listen to the don'ts. Listen to the shouldn'ts, the impossibles, the won'ts. Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me... anything can happen, child. Anything can be.”* – Shel Silverstein

# **OCS Essentials of English Syllabus**

Fall 2010 - Ms. Fetbroth

http://nvhsenglishfetbroth.wikispaces.com/

**Course Description:** This class is designed to prepare you to take the 10th grade-writing test in March and the English I EOC in June. We are going to work extremely hard both this semester and next to make sure that each of you receives a 3 or better on the writing test and a 3 or better on the EOC (80%), which you MUST get in order to pass. To make sure that every one of you reaches or goal scores, this semester is going to be all about improving our reading and writing, and every single thing we do in class every single day for the next five months is going to be about just that.

**Our Big Goal:** I can’t even begin to explain to you how important it is to have a goal in mind at the beginning of the semester so that you can work towards that goal in everything you do.

Now that I’ve said that, the big goal for our class semester is (drum roll please)…

**To be thoughtful readers, strong writers, and critical thinkers.**

As discussed above, in March you all will be taking the 10th grade-writing test and in June you will all be taking the English I EOC. That may seem like a long time from now, but it’s not. We don’t have anywhere near the amount of time I wish we did together, so we need to make sure we are working our very hardest every single day. Many of you have never seen or taken tests like these before, but I don’t want that to make you worry. We are going to work so hard all year that by the time you sit down to take these tests, they will be a breeze.

BURYING EXCUSES: We have way too much to do and simply not enough time to do it, and one thing we definitely don’t have time for is excuses. Whether it’s an excuse as to why you can’t do your work, why you don’t have your materials, or why you didn’t do your very best on an assessment, there’s just no place for excuses in this class. We are going to officially bury any and all excuses we hear throughout the semester because we are better than that!

# **Class Policies and Class Rules:**

I have 4 classroom policies (which are also laid out in the Northern Vance student handbook):

**Classroom Policies:**

**CELL PHONES OR OTHER ELECTRONICS:** You are not allowed to have electronic devices in my classroom. This includes cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, and anything else that requires battery power. The first time I see you with one of these items, you will receive a warning. If I see you with it for a second time, the issue will be referred to the front office.

**USING THE SCHOOL PHONE:** You are only allowed to use the phone in my classroom before or after school. Do not ask to use it during the school day!

**FOOD OR DRINK:** You are not allowed to bring any food or drink (other than water) into my classroom. Finish it before you get in the door!

**DRESS CODE:** All students must dress according to Northern Vance’s official dress code policy. If you aren’t sure what is or is not allowed, you can ask an administrator or look in the Northern Vance student handbook. There will be NO hats, do-rags, sunglasses, revealing or offensive clothing worn in my classroom.

I also have five very simple, very clear classroom rules.

**Classroom Rules:**

**1. Stay in your seat.**

**2. Watch your language** (NO cursing and keep your comments to yourself!)**.**

**3. Raise your hand and wait to be called on.**

**4. Stay awake for learning’s sake** (NO sleeping!)**.**

**5. Always do your best work.**

**Consequences** (what happens when you break a rule)

If you do not follow a classroom policy or break a classroom rule, you are seriously hurting yourself and your classmates by wasting time that could be spent learning. When this happens, consequences will be given out in the following order:

**1. Verbal Warning**

**2. Detention**

**3. OLC 🡪 Office Referral 🡪 Phone Call Home**

While for the most part consequences will be given out in this order, I have the right to go in any order I want on the consequence list.

**Procedures**

Laptops: You must bring your laptop to class EVERY DAY and it must be fully charged. If you don’t have your laptop, you will be unable to participate in the class lesson and lose points for the day. In addition to our class rules, we have a set of rules just for using our computers in class:

Laptop RULES: You should…

* Bring your laptop to class every day FULLY CHARGED
* Keep your laptop on mute
* Only use your laptop when assigned
* Only visit websites you’ve been assigned
* Check your email and the wiki daily

CLASS WIKI: You must check the class wiki daily at http://nvhsenglishfetbroth.wikispaces.com/. This is where you will find everything you need to for the class including class information, in-class assignments, homework, and anything else relative to our class. If you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to check the wiki to see what you have missed. This will be extremely important for everything we do this year.

EMAIL: One great way to send me questions about assignments or homework is by email, especially now that each of you has a laptop. My email address is jfetbroth@vcs.k12.nc.us. I will respond to all emails within a few hours.

MAILBOXES: The first thing you are to do every day when you walk into the classroom is check your mailbox. Each of you has a mailbox that will have your reading folder and writing journal in it. Any work that we are going to be doing that day will already be in your mailbox when you get to close, and your folder is where you will keep any handouts, worksheets or readings I give you. Your journal is where you will write your reading response each day. You will also keep your vocabulary cards in your mailbox.

VOCABULARY WORDS: This semester you will learn 3 new vocabulary words each day. Each day when you come to class you will be responsible for grabbing 3 note cards, punching holes in the note cards, and copying down the flashcards I will have posted on the board. You will also be responsible for creating a sentence of your own and for studying these words, as they will be tested every Friday.

WORD WALL: When 80% of the class has mastered one of our vocabulary words, it will be added to the word wall. This is a great way for us to keep track of all the words we’ve used.

DEAD WORD WALL: Alongside our word wall, is our Dead Word Wall. This wall is going to help us become stronger, more specific writers. The dead word wall is going to include all the words that I simply don’t want to see in your writing anymore! We will add words throughout the semester as our writing becomes stronger and stronger.

LIBRARY: Our class library is located at the back of the classroom and is full of all different kinds of books on every reading level. The books are organized by reading level (so all books on level 5 are together, all books on level 7 are together, etc.) and are color-coded by genre. There is a key above the library that explains which color stands for which genre. You are going to be reading books of your choice this semester, and the way the library is set up allows for to always be reading books that are on your level but are books you’re interested in.

BOOK CHECKOUT LOG: It is so important that you be reading books every chance you get. That is why I am allowing you to check out books from our class library to take home to read with you. If you decide you want to keep reading a book you’re really into at home, you simply need to fill out the Book Checkout Log and make sure you bring that book back. If you lose the book, you will be responsible for getting another one, so make sure you’re careful! These are our class books!

RESPECT: Since the day you began kindergarten, you’ve all heard about respect and what it means to be respectful. I don’t need to explain to any of you what that means. I can’t explain to you how important it is that we all be respectful of each other in this classroom. No one is EVER to make someone else feel uncomfortable about their reading or writing abilities, because we all have a lot to learn. We are to help each other, not hurt each other. If you prove to me that you are incapable of being respectful, you will not be allowed to participate in classroom activities and you will make up the work with me after school.

READING/WRITING PORTFOLIO: I think it’s really important to keep track of the work you’re going, so you can see how much you’re improving! This will also help you see how close you’re getting to your big goal! You’ll be keeping track of your progress in reading and writing with various sheets.

PARTICIPATION GRADE: A big chunk of your grade is participation. Everyday I will have a clipboard with a participation chart on it. I will be giving you grades for getting to class ON TIME, completing your vocabulary cards, having your materials (which includes your computer), participating in the class lesson, and on your attitude.

HOMEWORK: If you are given a paper homework assignment, you are to bring it to class and place it in the homework bin on the table to the right when you walk in. If you do not turn it in, you will automatically get a zero for it! Many homework assignments, however, will not be given in hard copy, but will instead be posted on our class wiki. IT IS YOUR RESPONSBILITY TO DOWNLOAD THE HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT BEFORE LEAVING CLASS SO YOU CAN DO IT AT HOME. I will give you a few minutes at the end of every class to do this.

BATHROOM: I do not allow students to go to the bathroom during class. The bathroom is too close for you to not have time to use it and make it to class on time.

ABSENCES: It is so important that you come to class every single day. You will get a zero for participation each day you are absent, which will really hurt your participation grade for the semester. If you are absent, you are required to schedule a meeting with me for before or after school to make up the work missed. If I learn that you skipped my class, you will not be allowed to make up any work, will automatically receive a zero for that day, and you will be written up. You cannot miss more than 8 classes, or you will automatically fail for the semester. If you are absent, you need to make the absence up with me before or after class.

TARDIES: There is absolutely no excuse for you being late to class. I will close the door as soon as the tardy bell rings and if you are not in class by then you must go to the media center and get a tardy slip. NO EXCEPTIONS. Each tardy will result in points off your participation grade, which will really hurt your participation grade for the semester.

MISSING WORK: If you miss class, your make-up work will be waiting for you in your mailbox. You should also plan to set up a meeting with me before or after school to go over what you missed and work on it together. You will have ONE WEEK to make up any missing work.

PROGRESS REPORTS: You will receive progress reports every 3 weeks. These progress reports will give you your current class average, will let you know if you have any missed assignments, and will tell you how many absences you have.

LEAVING THE CLASSROOM: I dismiss you from class, not the bell. If you attempt to leave before I have officially dismissed you, we will stay in class later. I will not dismiss you until everyone is quietly in their seats with their desks cleared. I promise I will never keep you later than the bell, as long as you wait for me to let you go.

QUIZZES/TESTS/PROJECTS: Our class will have a quiz almost every Friday and a test and/or project at the end of every unit. If you miss the quiz on Friday, you have ONE WEEK to make it up. CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. If you are caught cheating, you will automatically receive a zero on the assignment and you will be referred to the office. NO EXCEPTIONS.

SWEAR/CUSS JAR: I simply will not tolerate swearing in our classroom. While I know it has become a habit for many of you, it is a habit we must work on breaking. Every time you swear, I will but a marble into the jar. Once the jar is full, everyone in class owes me a detention.

20/20 RULE: No student will be allowed to leave the classroom at any point during the first 20 minutes or the last 20 minutes of class. NO EXCEPTIONS.

TUTORING/READING CLUB: Every Monday and Wednesday I will be hosting a reading club. It’s really important that you be reading as much as possible to increase your reading levels and on these days we will read and discuss the books you are reading. You can get extra credit for participating in the reading club. If you need extra help on anything at all, you can come on these days or any day during the week as long as you let me know in advance. This is a great time to catch up on work or material you have missed.

**Grading Policies**

**50% Tests**

**40% Class work (participation, in-class assignments, quizzes)**

**10% Homework**

**Rewards**

“THIS IS WHY I’M HOT” BOARD: Every week any student who receives an 80% or higher on a unit test, quiz, or important assignment will have their name put on the “This is Why I’m Hot” board. Remember, our goal for the English I EOC is for every student to score a 3 or higher (80% or more), so we must be working toward that goal every day in class as well.

READER AND WRITER OF THE WEEK: Every week I will pick a reader and writer of the week for each class. You can be named reader and writer of the week if you’ve worked really hard all week, if you’ve really improved in one area, or if you’ve just had a great attitude. Your picture will go up on the reader and writer of the week bulletin board.

PHONE CALL HOME: Just because Ms. Fetbroth calls your house DOES NOT mean you are in trouble! There is nothing I love more than being able to call your home to share how great you are in class.

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS: Every time you finish a book on your own at home or during reading club, you are to get a book post-it from me, put your name on it, and put it on the wall. Whoever has read the most books by the end of every 6 week period will get a prize and extra credit.

**Contact Information**

I am available to meet with you every day before school (6:45-7:30 AM), after school (3:30-5:00 PM), and any other time by appointment.

I can be contacted by phone before or after school at (252) 492-6041 anytime between 6:45am and 10pm. I can also be reached by email at jfetbroth@vcs.k12.nc.us anytime during the day. I am here FOR YOU, so please use me whenever you have any questions or concerns.