

PARENT NOTES FOR MARGARET SHUMAN'S

2024-25 CLASSES

What are you doing with AI? I'm part of a group of teachers who have met several times over this topic the last few years. This summer I found an article (out of many) that sums up best where I am right now with my relationship to AI in my classes—it's long, but it has my heart. I have linked it, below, if you'd please read it. You will see some ideas of how I will handle writing and research, allowing some use of AI but also continuing deliberate in-class discussion and writing coming ideally from the student's own processing of the works and big ideas we will study. How about reading this and emailing me your perspective, too? https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/18/opinion/ai-chatgpt-school.html?unlocked_article_code=1.XU8.28vn.xGC3R8HNTSQL&smid=url-share

Will there be field trips this year? Yes! Please save some dates for summer/fall, with second semester options coming later:

High Museum Tour: August 14/\$14—see announcement on home page of Eastside website. I found the *data-verse* exhibit especially intriguing.

Hamlet + Workshop: 10:00 am, Nov 11/\$16 Shakespeare Tavern, This is the same show and workshop as last year, so if your student already went, he or she might not want to do it again. Brit Lit will be studying this, and it is a good option for other classes.

The Glass Menagerie: Evening show, October 30/\$15, Theatrical Outlet (where we saw *A Raisin in the Sun* last year). AP Lit will be studying this, and it is a good option for credit in other classes.

Can we meet you before classes start? Yes! Please email me and I would be happy to meet anyone in your family for a walk at a park, a drink at a coffee shop, a chat at a library, or whatever works for us. I live in Clarkston and can get to Paramount Coffee in Tucker or Refuge Coffee in Clarkston easily, but can meet you in your direction if we can schedule that.

What about extra credit reading, and where is the list? The list and directions are at MargaretShuman.com. Students can continue reading from the list over the year, but summer is a great time to start and even complete all possible extra credit reading. Brit Lit and Multicultural Lit have an honors option; you can find details for honors credit linked to the course descriptions at my website. AP students who read from the list receive extra grades added into their averages each semester.

What textbooks do we need and when do classes meet?

--Multicultural Lit on Thursdays, 1:15 to 3:15.

I have many textbooks to share for free—drop me an email to reserve one.

Primary Text: Laurence Perrine's Literature: *Structure, Sound, and Sense, Fifth Edition* (ISBN 0155511084). Please double-check the ISBN--the book is bright purple.

--AP Lit on Tuesdays, 12:45 to 3:45.

Textbooks are supplied by parents. I have some used textbooks to share for free—drop me an email to reserve one if you'd like! This is the same book used for Multicultural Lit:

Primary Text: Laurence Perrine's Literature: *Structure, Sound, and Sense, Fifth Edition* (ISBN 0155511084). Please double-check the ISBN--the book is bright purple.

Students will also need these books:

Cry, the Beloved Country (Paton), *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Solzhenitsyn), *The Plague* (Camus). Other books may be added later; several plays are already in the primary text.

--British Lit on Tuesdays, NOTE: 9:30 to 12:15, to give people more time to get to class!

Textbooks: PDFs of text are free from me, as are hardback textbooks for loan.

Primary Text: *England in Literature* (Medallion Edition-**Hamlet**), ISBN 0673129225. Paperback: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (one of the original versions, not a modern condensed one).

Plan A: These books are out of print but may still be available to purchase (but very expensive probably). If your student marks up their books, they should buy one or use the digital copy I provide (read Plan B).

Plan B: After purchasing about all of the remaining copies left through online companies and actual book warehouses over the past 15 years, and because I still own 30+ worn copies, I have made a clear PDF copy of the text for my class's use. Students can download these copies, and have a digital or paper copy for use in class and elsewhere. After the school year is over, the files should be deleted. Files should never be posted or shared outside our class. **Plan C:** I have some copies of the textbook that I can loan out to those who will cover them and keep them clean of markings.

What supplies are needed, besides textbooks? notebook paper, a binder for handouts, hole punch for managing handouts, small stapler for turning in assignments, favorite pens or pencils, access to computers at home. Laptops and tablets are welcome in class and can sometimes be used for in-class writing. Also, if you have access to standard-letter-size scrap paper I can still use on one side for class handouts, please bring any to me and I will recycle it for class use!

How do we track grades? We will use Gradebook, which is included in the program you used to enroll your student at Eastside this year. You can find out how to use Gradebook under the Resources tab at the Eastside website: <https://eastsideacademicstudies.com/Home/Details/20059>

How do you give out homework? Via Gradebook postings within 24 hours of class. Be sure that both parent and student can log into Gradebook for homework assignments. Parents and students have separate log ins; the only difference in the accounts is that students can upload work from their account but not from the parent account. You also have access to a calendar that tracks assignments by due dates—please take time to find this Gradebook feature when the course starts.

Do I get to see graded papers? Yes! I normally return work within a week of it being submitted to me, sometimes sooner if I receive it through Gradebook, where I will post graded work. To keep your student accountable, you should ask to see their submitted and graded papers in hard copy or find them uploaded back into Gradebook. You can know what graded papers to expect by looking at assignments posted each week.

Can I help my child with homework? Let me know if you are helping and why, so that we can work together. Otherwise, I would like to see only the student's work so I can evaluate their progress. We can conference at any time about questions or concerns you have about grading and feedback. Let's stay in touch as needed!

What if my student has a question about homework or anything else? Please have your student contact me by email, rather than having you write me on their behalf. This is good practice for students who need to learn proper communication skills with teachers and other leaders, and this

helps me build rapport with your student. Of course you can be copied on such emails if you'd like, back and forth.

What if I have a question myself? Please contact me! I check email often at shumanhw@gmail.com, which you can access via Gradebook or otherwise. My phone number is 678-772-1644. I am always happy to talk to parents, whether by email, phone, or personal conference. I don't prefer texts since they can get mixed up and maybe neglected in my family messages.

Do you accept late work? I give "grace" once per semester per student. This grace means that a student can turn in an assignment up to one week after the missed deadline and that assignment will be graded as if it had been on time. After grace is used, I usually give zeroes on additional late assignments that semester. To potentially redeem a zero, a student must schedule an appointment between the student, one of their parents, and me. Exceptions would be anticipated absences, illness, and emergencies.

What if we need to miss a class? Please discuss planned absences with me before the absence and assignment deadline, if possible. I will work with you.

You don't mark every error on student writing? No. I can be a thorough mistake-marker because I am also a copy editor, but my experience shows that most students get discouraged when every possible punctuation or other error is marked. Each class works on several writing objectives at a time, and I mark each student's work based on their progress. Expectations are cumulatively increased through the year, and I see writing proficiency and confidence grow this way.

You are especially critical of errors on AP assignments? Yes. These students need to be less fragile and more ready for the challenge to see where their writing is missing the mark of college level work. At the same time, I give individualized feedback/encouragement so that every student has a chance to improve and succeed from whatever point they enter the class.

How do I get a grade report? You are able to print/save reports from Gradebook at any time. I can work with you on other methods of grade reporting as well, such as a report with the Eastside logo.

What is your grading scale?

A/Excellent/90-100, B/Good/80-89, C/Average/74-79, D/Passing/70-73. F/Failure/0-69.

What evaluation percentages are represented by your grades?

ML--30% classwork, 60% homework, 10% tests

BL--30% classwork, 50% homework, 20% tests

AP--20% classwork, 40% homework, 40% tests/projects

Improv—40% classwork, 30% homework, 30% production work

Where can we find a general syllabus and other info about your classes and perspectives on teaching? MargaretShuman.com

How do we pay for classes? You will receive an email with details for paying tuition.

Can you tailor the name of a class to fit my transcript needs? Usually. If so, I can arrange the alternate course name through Gradebook and perhaps provide a customized course description. This

year's AP class, however, must be called "Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition" as per my approval by the College Board.

Do you write references for your students? All the time! Have your student send me the requirements and to whom to send the letter or form, and I will happily meet your deadline as possible. I include anecdotes to keep the referral from sounding canned, and work hard to represent your student positively. If I cannot be positive, I will inform you and defer to someone else.

Is your AP course approved by the College Board for this school year? Yes. If you need a letter of approval from the College Board for your files, drop me a note and I will provide one to fit your particular need. If you are in an accredited group, your AP coordinator should contact the College Board and link up with my approval status so that your accreditor can legally put the AP course title on your transcript. I also have approval as a "Georgia Homeschool" AP teacher.

Can parents visit your classes? Yes, drop in! I do not need notice. You can bring others as well.