

Mr. Bevard's 9th Grade English Updates

Dear Students and Families,

This is just a review of our notable accomplishments in the first three weeks of the school year. To date, we've covered a number of topics and mapped out the foundation of our future success in 9th grade and beyond. A list of the major accomplishments you've made are as follows:

- Successfully established norms for distance learning in a dialogue-based content area.
 - This is remarkable! To date, I've not had one single issue related to discipline, and I find that astounding. Well done! Apart from the occasional hot microphone during instructional time or independent work, our classes have progressed quite smoothly. Let's keep that going!
- Effectively used the pre-recorded lessons for fuller engagement.
 - A number of students have reported their difficulties related to internet access and bandwidth. You're not alone! (Remember that time, 8th period, when I got kicked out of my own virtual classroom?!) We've set up a method that will make these sorts of difficulties largely redundant for our course of study, though. Remember, if you're ever having trouble with the Zoom session, please consult the pre-recorded instructional video. I've set up my workflow so that these post the morning of each class at the latest. If you can't get into the Zoom session or if you're absent, you have access to all the instruction as if you had attended the class in person. Just follow up with any questions you may have to the Google Classroom.
- Successfully submitted assignments related to all elements of the CERT writing development strategy.
 - Remember, this strategy is as old as Ancient Greece (it just went by different names in the intervening millennia since Aristotle wrote his treatise *On Rhetoric*). This tool will be both the benchmark and the structuring vocabulary for all of our subsequent discussion of your compositions and their effectiveness. If you haven't done so already, commit this acronym and its principles to memory (hint, hint, wink, whink - *it might be on a test!*)
 - Related to the CERT method are the Five Methods of Reasoning. We've just dipped our toes into the profound and venerable history of human reasoning, but we'll swim deeper still in these waters soon enough. Remember, when I ask you follow up questions in class or in your written submissions, I'm inviting you to **practice your reasoning**. The skill of reasoning in conversation is directly related to skill in writing. Participate in the discussions! It's not just your grade; it's your growth! This is the foundational skill of all your later success as critical thinkers, writers, and general communicators. Don't leave gaps in the foundation!
- Identified our main focus for bolstering grammar instruction.
 - In the first two weeks we've identified the three major sentence errors as a significant area of needed development. (What are those errors again? Hint, hint, wink, wink - *it might be on a test!*) As we forge ahead, we'll be discussing the different elements of a sentence, with some occasional digressions to strengthen our foundation in the elements of grammar before moving on to more complex expressions of

our language - the mechanics of things like simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences.

- Developed familiarity with and troubleshoot a variety of technical challenges related to the PGcps digital textbook for 9th grade English classes.
 - At this point, we're approaching fluency in the myPerspectives text, and we appreciate all your diligence, hard work, and patience. This just shows how challenges present the best learning opportunities. Well done to all the students who have completed the required assignments in this platform, and for students completing their work this weekend, stay diligent!

Students - here are some general tips for success if you've found the first three weeks to be a bit of a drag.

1. Communicate with me! Let me know how you're doing and if you have questions about anything we're learning. Remember: our learning in a language class is *dialogic*. That means its an optimal use of our time to have a *conversation* about the work and your understanding of it as we proceed.
2. Read my feedback on your work. Read all of it. If you don't understand how to put my suggestions into practice, see item one above. Revising your work is a skill that we've only just begun to practice. If you don't understand how to correct an error I've noted, don't flounder around guessing. Ask.
3. Stop by during office hours, which are Wednesdays from 10-11am. I usually leave the block open for a first-come, first-served basis, but I've also used my feedback on your work to invite some of you to visit me at this time. Don't leave me hanging!