

English II - Course Explanation and Expectations

North Zulch High School Fall - 2025-2026



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Room 615

Conference: 9th period
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Course overview

Welcome to English II. This course is a required course for high school graduation that will lay the foundation for your success on the End of Course English II test and prepare you for English III. The rigorous work will challenge you to reach beyond your current abilities. Sometimes you will shine; sometimes you will struggle. It is my job to help you through the difficult concepts. If we work together, you will leave this class a stronger reader, writer, and thinker.

The reading and writing in this course focus on a variety of themes and genres. Many of the texts are difficult and require thoughtful and mature investigation. We will analyze texts closely in preparation for major projects and essays. We will have class discussions, tests, and quizzes each grading period as well.

Themes and Progression

The themes we will examine this year include *Identity, Family and Friends, Heroes, Justice, and Resilience*. We will read a variety of texts, including essays, poems, books, articles, and speeches that focus on these themes.

Classroom Expectations

I have very high expectations for my students and work hard to ensure that all students are successful. But ultimately, you are responsible for your performance in my class.

1. Be responsible and have work and materials every day.
2. Be respectful of classmates, visitors, and me at all times.
3. Be ready to learn and participate.
4. Complete all work in a timely fashion.
5. Follow all NZISD rules listed in the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.
6. Food and drink (with the exception of water in a see-through container) are not allowed.

Required Materials

- 3 colors of highlighters
- Pens/Pencils
- Colored pencils
- Your NZ issued computer and charger, *plug in* earphones– NO earbuds.
- **A small picture of yourself that you will not need back** (for our Identity Project)

Technology Use

We will go as paperless as possible this year, so **it is important that your school-provided Chromebook or laptop be charged and ready to go each day**. Technology use is restricted to class activities ONLY in order to prevent additional distractions in the classroom. State law prohibits cell phone use.

Grades, Extra Credit, & Late Work Policy Grades

Homework and daily grades account for 60% of your grade; projects, essays, and tests account for 40% of your grade. Students will have a minimum of 10 daily grades (discussion, classwork, homework) and 3 major assignments (projects, essays, tests) each grading period.

Due dates for assignments will be provided at the time they are assigned. Students should complete work in a timely manner. Students will receive the required time to make up assignments for which they are absent. Please communicate in a timely fashion if you need help with a particular assignment.

Late work will be assessed the following penalties:

- 1 day late – 90% of the value of the graded assignment
- 2 days late – 80% of the value of the graded assignment
- 3 days late – 70% of the value of the graded assignment
- No late work will be accepted after 3 days and will result in a 0.

Extra credit is not an option as it creates more work for students and the teacher. Complete assigned work, and there will be no reason to request extra grading options.

Communication

My primary mode of communication will be email and google classroom. We will practice composing and responding to emails early in the semester. This will enrich the writing skills that you will utilize throughout the year.

Parents and guardians, I will use email and Parent Square to contact you when necessary; please be in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Individual help

Seek help from me if you find you are struggling. **I want you to succeed and will help you do so.** I am available before or after school as long as you schedule time with me in advance. Please do not schedule a time and then not show up.

Semester at a Glance

Family and Friends -- Exploring relationships, dynamics, and the importance of community

- Literary Works:
 - A short novel that explores friendship and dreams against the backdrop of the Great Depression.
 - Short stories, poetry, and excerpts that highlight family bonds and friendships.
- Writing: Personal narrative about a significant friendship or family experience.
- Areas Covered
 - Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text: Fiction.
 - Analyze the elements of plot, characterization, and theme in a literary text.
 - Writing/Literary Texts: Composition.
 - Write personal narratives that convey a clear message and use appropriate transitions.

Heroism -- what makes a hero and examining heroism in various contexts.

- Literary Works: Novels, biographies, and myths featuring heroic figures.
- Writing: Analytical essay on the qualities of a hero in a chosen text.
- Areas covered
 - Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text: Literary Nonfiction.
 - Analyze how authors use literary elements to create meaning.
 - Writing/Composition: Argumentative Texts.
 - Write argumentative essays that include a clear thesis and support it with evidence.

Resilience -- overcoming challenges and the human spirit's ability to endure.

- Literary Works:
 - Memoirs recounting a Holocaust survivors experiences and resilience.
 - Novels and literary nonfiction/memoirs that showcase resilience in characters.
- Writing: Reflective essay on a personal experience of overcoming adversity.

- Areas Covered
 - Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text: Informational Text.
 - Analyze the development of characters and themes in informational texts.
 - Writing/Composition: Response to Literature.
 - Write reflective essays that convey personal insights and connections to the text.

Decisions – exploring themes of justice and moral dilemmas.

- Literary Works: Plays and articles discussing justice and societal issues.
- Writing: Persuasive essay on a contemporary issue related to justice.
- Areas Covered:
 - Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text: Drama.
 - Analyze how authors develop and convey themes in drama.
 - Writing/Composition: Persuasive Texts.
 - Write persuasive essays that employ logical reasoning and evidence to support claims.

I look forward to getting to know each of you this year.

Please review this letter with your parent/guardian, have them provide the requested information listed below, and both you and your parent/guardian sign and date where requested. Return this page to me by Friday, August 15, 2025.

This is your first homework grade for the year; it's the easiest grade you will have all year.

Student – printed name

Student Name – signature

Date

Parent/Guardian email address: _____

Parent/Guardian phone number: _____

Parent/Guardian – printed name

Parent/Guardian – signature
