

Course Syllabus: EWRT 1Bz (online) with Jonah Hoyle

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Websites: Canvas + Turnitin + Noredink

Office hours: Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Required Books

- *Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing* (2nd edition) by John Trimble
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon
- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien
- All other required reading will be available through the website.

Optional Books

- *Adaptation: The Shooting Script* by Charlie Kaufman and Donald Kaufman

Course Description + Objectives

In this class you'll practice reading closely and actively, and you'll refine your ability to write a persuasive and stylish analysis of literary texts. We'll cover the basics—how to structure an argument, craft a strong thesis statement, and support that thesis with quotations from the text—but the objective of this course is to deepen your appreciation of literature and to ensure that, as a reader and a writer, you're primed to succeed in all your future English classes.

Work Load

Four essays, including one that will require you to conduct research. You will also be expected to submit regularly to our discussion forums, to complete reading quizzes and pre-writing worksheets, and to use an auxiliary grammar website to brush up on the basics.

Grading

- Essays: ~ 65%
- Pre-writing/drafts/peer review/discussion forums: ~ 35%

You'll be able to check your grade on individual assignments, as well as your overall course percentage, at any time after week three. For the discussion forums, which take place through Canvas, your grades will appear under the "Grades" tab. Once each forum expires, I'll transfer those scores to Turnitin's gradebook, which will serve as the definitive gradebook for the course.

Discussion Forums

Traditionally, this is a discussion-based class. I try to maintain that dynamic in this online format, as discussion is key to the writing process: it's a way for you to ask questions and to test out your ideas. I encourage you to post freely, even if you're not quite sure what it is you're trying to say. What I want is for you to stretch your ability to articulate complicated thoughts and show me that you're grappling with the reading. That said, I must give you a grade at quarter's end, so I'll attempt to quantify your discussion forum contributions (see the page titled "How I'll Evaluate Your Forum Participation" for more on this).

Late Work

Each week's discussion forum will close at midnight on Sunday. All forum posts are time stamped, so yours won't count if you post after the deadline. Submit all your major essays to Turnitin.com on or before the assigned date/time—if you miss the deadline, you'll be unable to submit the assignment without first emailing me with an explanation.

Revision is a key part of the writing process, and you should be revising each essay continuously as we move through the process of composition. However, I don't allow revisions once I've graded your essay. Because we spend a lot of time on outlines and drafts and peer review, you shouldn't need a second chance--the writing that you submit to me should represent your best attempt to complete the assignment.

Make-Up Work

Often when we're nearing the end of the quarter and students realize their grades are lower than they'd like they'll email me asking if they can do "make-up work" to try to raise their grade. The answer, invariably, is "no." This is because those students are asking me to do the extra work of reading their "make-up work" because they didn't do their work when it was assigned.

If you fail to log in to Canvas during any of the 12 weeks of the quarter I may drop you from the course. I may also drop you if you fail to submit a major essay, though I'll email you first to make sure you're aware that I didn't receive your essay. But De Anza rules stipulate that it is ultimately the student's responsibility to drop a course, so please use the portal to officially withdraw if you're no longer participating.

Plagiarism is Cheating

If Turnitin catches you plagiarizing, you'll get a 0 on the assignment and I'll report you to De Anza's office of Academic Integrity. But Turnitin won't necessarily catch all instances of plagiarism, so if I suspect that the work you've submitted is not your own, I may give you a temporary grade, explain my reasons in my endnote, and ask you to email me with an explanation. If you're unsure about whether or not you're plagiarizing, just ask me *before* you submit your work.

If you'd like additional help with your writing, the Student Success Center offers free tutoring, workshops and support for many De Anza classes. I recommend visiting the

writing center if you're on campus—there's nothing like a one-on-one session with a tutor to get the help you need as efficiently as possible.

Finally: Before you continue with this course, you should ask yourself if an online English class is really the best way for you to improve your writing. To succeed in an online learning environment you'll need to be a motivated, self-directed student; you'll need to be comfortable using computers, as you'll likely need to troubleshoot minor issues; and you'll need to be able to use the discussion forums in place of a face-to-face classroom experience. If you do decide to stick with this course, you must commit to a full twelve weeks—you won't be able to read ahead and complete all the work in half the time, as I'll unveil reading and writing assignments week by week. Your grade at the end of the quarter will reflect my assessment of your writing ability (as measured by your scores on your essays) as well as your commitment as a student over the full twelve weeks of the course (as measured by the consistency with which you hit deadlines).

Finally 2.0: I cannot write recommendation letters for students in my online courses. As much as I like to think we'll get to know each other over the next three months, I can't say for certain that you are who you say you are.

Finally 2.1: Although I don't assign group projects here in 1Bz, the level of discourse in the forums and the give/get of peer review depend very much on the commitment each of you brings to the class. You'll be graded individually on each assignment, but when it comes to determining your final grade, I factor in the extent to which you helped or hindered the overall success of the class. This whole enterprise is essentially a group project, in that sense, so let's work together to solve logistical problems, motivate each other with kindness, and maintain the spirit of intellectual curiosity necessary to get the most out of these challenging and rewarding texts!