

PLAYWRITING SYLLABUS

Mr. Sayre

968-2541 ext. 2646

Email: csayre@dphs.org

Overall Objectives: Students will experience how writers and actors work together to create scenes, one-acts, and short films.

Playwrights will:

- identify differences in form and style between screenplays, one-acts and full length plays
- complete playwriting exercises to be performed in class
- direct readings of their one-acts
- read at least 1 student-written one-act, 3 published one-acts, 3 ten-minute plays, and 2 full-length plays each semester
- communication in a timely way with mentors
- write a short movie script
- write a Holiday Package skit
- write, cast and collaborate with professional actors and directors for the Young Playwrights' Festival

Grading:

Playwrights and actors are expected to work independently and follow the on-line rules signed at the beginning of the year. Students are expected to be at All the important events listed below. Attendance at these events is MANDATORY and will be reflected in class grades. Mentor communication is tremendously important and must be completed by the deadlines listed below. In addition, assignments must be turned in complete and on time. (During the Fall, scenes must be typed and a hard copy turned in to the copy center BEFORE school by 1st period Thursday mornings.)

Approximate percentages:

Participation 20%

Assignments 70%

(including scenes, short film script, one-act, theme show etc)

NOTE: Meeting deadlines is essential. Actors are dependent on YOUR scripts being completed on time, Missed deadlines will result in a grade NO HIGHER than a "C"

Mentor Communication 10%

Commitment to outside of class obligations (up to 20% of your grade)

MANDATORY Outside-of-Class Time Requirements:

Each of the following events are MANDATORY for continuation in the class. Students who fail to attend ANY one of these essential events will: a) receive an "W" for the class and/or b) forfeit the opportunity to have their play presented at the Girsh/Hochman Playwrights' Festival. **Please be sure you put these on both parent and student year-long calendar NOW.**

May 4, 5 from 7 - 9:30 pm DP Young Playwrights' Festival
May 18-21 from 3-6 pm as needed YP Festival Rehearsals
May 21, 12 pm - 10 pm Girsh/Hochman YP Festival

Please sign and return the attached form stating your understanding and consent for these important date commitments and technology agreements.

Mentors: Professional Writing Mentors will be assigned only AFTER students have demonstrated outstanding commitment and ability to meet deadlines. Students MUST also write an introductory letter and sign a "mentor contract" before an official mentorship can begin.

Writing Essentials:

- All students should be prepared to write in class every day. This means that students should EITHER bring a laptop to school (if computer dependent) OR be prepared to write with pen and paper. All scripts will be saved as a google doc that can be shared with me and the class. (individual computers may become available soon after the beginning of school)

Extra Credit:

It is a vital part of a young playwrights' education to read and see as many plays as possible. Extra credit will be given if plays are read/scene above and beyond the required ones above.

NATIONAL YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS' CONTESTS

NY Young Playwrights - http://www.youngplaywrights.org/National_Comp..html)

Blank Theater Playwrights' Festival: <http://www.youngplaywrights.com/html/rules.htm>

California Young Playwrights' Festival: <http://www.playwrightsproject.org/contest.htm>

SBIFF Screenwriting 10-10-10 Competition:

Submission Deadline to Ms. Helmesly Oct. 1 (please see her for details)

Tentative Year Topics:

Peer Editing/Collaboration

Structure

Character

Setting

Comedy Sketch Writing

One Act Writing

Lyric Writing

Murder Mystery Writing

YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS CONTRACT

DUE Aug. 29

I have read and understand the course syllabus for the Playwriting class and understand that I will be writing/working ALL YEAR LONG. (I only bring this up because the class is mostly Seniors)

- I agree to attend ALL the Mandatory events as listed above.
- I understand that I must EARN the privilege of being assigned a professional writing mentor.
- I also understand that my participation affects others in the class and agree to meet writing deadlines (with an automatic drop of 2 grades if assignments are late.)
- I agree to approach Mr. Sayre AS SOON AS difficulties arise so issues can be resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. To resolve issues the appropriate steps are in this order with the next step taken ONLY if the issue isn't resolved at the previous step:
 - 1) teacher/student meeting,
 - 2) teacher/student/parent meeting,
 - 3) teacher/student/parent/counselor meeting,
 - 4) teacher/student/parent/administrator meeting.)
- I understand that my one-act will only be presented in the Young Playwrights' Festival if I've met the deadlines and requirements needed for participation.

Student's printed name

student signature

date

parent signature

date

IN ADDITION, PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN BY AUG. 29.

____ I have signed up for each class on EDU (none require passwords)

____ I have shown my parents how to use EDU and find assignments/grades for this class

____ My parents have visited the dptheatrecompany.org website and looked specifically at the "support" – "how to give" page

____ My parents will allow me to watch content-relevant "R" rated movies

____ My parents will NOT allow me to watch content-relevant "R" rated movies

I agree to the following:

- attend (and arrive promptly at call time for all outside of school performances listed under "Mandatory Events" above

- behave in a mature and responsible way when not being directly supervised (ie. filming for a movie or rehearsing a scene) This includes, but is not limited to:
 - staying within established boundaries (ie. No catwalks unless given explicit verbal permission by Mr. Sayre)
 - not eating, drinking (except water) or chewing gum in the rehearsal areas
 - obeying school rules (ie. No cell phones/electronics etc.)
 - not disturbing other classrooms
 - meeting rehearsal expectations and demands
- write thoughtful "thank you" notes for visiting guests

student's printed name

student's signature

date

parents' signature

parent's signature

date