

Dear Parents and Guardians:

My name is Sue Lewis. I would like to welcome you to 9th grade English, a class I will be sharing with your son or daughter. I am thrilled to be starting my third year teaching here at Smith Jr. High. Prior to becoming a teacher, I worked with teens through wilderness therapy programs, rehab, and Juvenile Detention. I have chosen this career because I love interacting with my students and helping them to gain important skills. I am a native of Arizona and a graduate of Arizona State University.

I have attached a copy of my own rules which I would like you to read and discuss with your son or daughter. **Please sign the acknowledgement form and return it to me by August 15th.**

As to my grading procedure, it's very simple and traditional. I use a standard percentage of 90%-100%=A; 80%-89%=B, etc. with 59% and below failing. Percentages from the following categories are used to determine quarter grades:

- Essays/ Unit Tests/ Projects 35%
- Class Work/ Homework/ Quizzes 35%
- Reading Zone 10%
- Bell Work and Notebook 15%
- Participation 5%

Semester grades will be comprised as follows:

- Quarter grade (1st or 3rd) 40%
- Quarter grade (2nd or 4th) 40%
- Semester final exam 20%

Homework is expected to be turned in on time; however, students will receive two late passes per quarter. Students can turn in any assignment one day late with a pass for full credit. After an excused absence, students can check the assignment calendar to see what they missed. They will be allowed the same amount of time given to the rest of the class to complete assignments. **It is the student's responsibility to check for missed assignments and make them up as soon as he or she returns to school.**

Your son or daughter will be required to write the daily objectives and homework assignments in the Smith planner, so you will know what is happening in class. Grades will be written in the planner every Friday. You can reinforce the importance of your son or daughter's education and avoid surprises by asking to see weekly grades.

There are a few items I would like to request so that your son or daughter can be organized and ready for class. Each student should have:

- a three ring loose-leaf notebook with dividers—this may be a shared binder with other classes, but three sections need to be reserved for English
- at least one blue or black pen
- one red pen
- a good supply of loose-leaf paper
- a folder with three brads and pockets (as shown in class)

Our curriculum for the year includes a healthy amount of writing practice, focusing on taking an average essay and making it phenomenal. Students will also read two novels per quarter on their own. In class we will read *The Odyssey*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Animal Farm*, and a variety of poetry and short stories.

Thank you for your support. I am looking forward to another super Smith year! If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me. The best times to reach me are from 7:30-8:45 A.M. and from 3:35-4:30 P.M. Of course you can leave a voicemail any time and I will return your call. You can also reach me via email at vslewis@mpsaz.org.

Sincerely,

V. Sue Lewis