

Student Expectations

Students who take classes with Home School Partners should...

- finish assignments and bring them to class,
- contribute to class discussions and group activities, and
- want to have fun while learning!

Students, call or email me if you have questions! I really enjoy working with middle schoolers and high schoolers LIKE YOU, and I want you to succeed!

Parents, if your student is having any initial difficulties (which is normal for first-year students in the beginning; trust me, it happens all the time—don't despair!), let me know as soon as possible so I can offer help.

As we all remember, high school brings new challenges for students—and it can take a little time to adjust! And by the way: Home School Partners classes are absolutely not just for “braniacs” or “geniuses” or whatever names people use to refer to “smart” students (whatever “smart” means). What's most important, in my view, is being diligent and thorough, coming to class prepared, and having a teachable spirit! Kids who work hard and participate and take notes and have a Godly attitude toward their work always do great!

Important Note For “1A” And “2A” Students:

Students, you must have at least a 75 percent average in all subjects at the end of Week 16—the last week of the first semester—our last class before Christmas and New Year's break—to return the second semester. You must also maintain a 75 percent average throughout the second semester to return the next year. This means that from day one, you should do the following (and anything else you need to do):

- Thoroughly complete all assignments on your assignment sheet.
- Pay attention to directions and follow them, especially on your composition guide.
- Review your notes if necessary before you come to class.
- Look up any unfamiliar words in our reading selections.
- Go the extra mile! There are some subjects that might be harder for you than other subjects, or harder for you than for other students. That is not unusual at all. The world is filled with people who have to read things twice, rewrite essays more often than others do, study longer, look up more words than other students, work through speech impediments, use crutches to walk, struggle with bad eyesight and hearing, get dressed with only one arm, use a wheelchair to get around, and otherwise give more effort. You can do it!

Again, students, feel free to contact me if you are struggling or have questions! To repeat what I wrote above: I really enjoy working with high schoolers LIKE YOU, I want you to succeed, and I want you back the second semester and the next year!

High school students who do not meet the above eligibility requirement by Week 16 will be able to follow along, if the parents desire, with a curriculum service, where they will be allowed to use the books I provided for the second semester, and I will email them assignments and other handouts (including quizzes and keys for parents to use).

Conduct & Cell Phone Policy

- **Interaction In Class** - Students should speak courteously to each other and to me (1 Peter 3:8). Inappropriate talk—anything sexual in nature, bad language, insulting, or anything else that violates the teachings of the Christian faith—is unacceptable and is grounds for immediate dismissal (Ephesians 5:11-12, 1 Peter 4:8). **IMPORTANT:** This includes anything I am made aware of, including email, texts, posts on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/other social media, etc., regardless of whether it happens in class or not.

- **Cheating** - Academic dishonesty such as cheating on quizzes or plagiarism on essays is unacceptable and is also grounds for immediate dismissal.
- **Cell Phones** - Cell phones are not allowed at student tables. If a student brings a cell phone to class, it must be left in the back of the room where we meet. Students will be able to check their cell phone during classroom breaks or at lunch time. Obviously, there are emergencies, and parents occasionally need to contact their children via a cell phone, but for some students the temptation to take out their cell phone and piddle around in class is too great. Parents, if you need to get in touch with your student, you can always call or text me at my cell phone. Of course, if there is some extenuating circumstance or situation I'm not aware of, parents, let me know first!
- **Music, MP3 Players, Headphones** - These are not allowed, unless students leave them in their backpack until class is over. Students, instead, talk to others around you and get to know them, and have conversations and interact with other young persons!
- **Computers** - These are fine for students who want/need to take notes during class, but students, do not use classroom time to play around on computer games or surf the Internet, unless we are on lunch break or another break.

Attendance

If your student will be absent, please email/text me by 8 PM the night before to let me know. Thanks!

Students, please be sure to arrive at least 5-10 minutes before class starts. That way you can get settled, get materials out, get a drink, use the restroom, and so on—and we can start on time!

On the subject of tardiness, we're all late for different reasons here and there. But habitual lateness is not acceptable, and students, if you are going to be habitually late--which means regularly showing up right when class officially starts or later--then this isn't the class for you!

Dress Code

Student dress should be modest and appropriate for a learning environment. The following items are not permitted:

- writing on shirts (except brand names)
- ripped/frayed jeans, cutoffs, or other sloppy clothes
- flip flops or backless shoes
- clothing or hairstyles/coloring that go over the top in an attempt to draw attention
- tattoos/body piercings/cuttings except for earrings for girls

Girls

Parents, please check your daughter to make sure she is modest (1 Timothy 2:9). If you're not sure, please err on the side of caution. "It's not as bad as some of the girls she knows" doesn't cut it!

- Skirts/shorts must come close to the knee or below.
- Blouses must be buttoned up to or cover the collarbone, must cover the midsection completely, and must have sleeves.
- Not permitted: revealing/tight blouses or pants, spaghetti straps, bra straps hanging out, tank tops, yoga pants, or anything that even comes close to immodesty.

Guys

The following are not permitted for guys:

- hats worn indoors
- hair below the collar or in the eyes
- earrings, or anything else that looks feminine (1 Corinthians 11:14).

Repeated refusals to adhere to the dress code will be considered as a reason for the student's being withdrawn from class.

Quizzes & Scores

Quizzes in high school classes are mostly in class, although some are take-home. (In the younger classes, especially, I typically have students take their first quizzes at home, using their notes, to boost their confidence.) I will score these and give them back to your student, unless you prefer to as a parent; if so, just let me know you'd like the key and I'll email it to you. Please return take-home quizzes by the next class if you want them scored.

As a convenience, I will regularly email suggested reports (in Microsoft Excel format) to parents of students in high school classes. At the end of the year, I will email parents a report with course listings and suggested grades for each subject. Of course, parents, as the primary teachers, it's up to you how you use the report. High school class scores are calculated by combining quizzes and homework.

Compositions (High School English/History Students Only)

High school students receive a composition guide handed to them during the first class of the year. Parents, please thoroughly review this guide with your student!

Students will not turn in essays on paper; instead, all compositions will be created as Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx file extension) and emailed to Scott Clifton. (Microsoft Word is free at all public library computers, and Google Docs can be used for free to create Microsoft Word documents.) Essays will be corrected and returned via email. Compositions are one third of the English score; they are to be sent via email before 8:00 PM of the day before the class day to be considered on time. You may also instead bring your essay to me on a thumb drive on the day of class.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS: LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

This includes, but is not limited to, illness, travel, or work-related issues. I strongly urge you to have your work finished **DAYS BEFORE THE DEADLINE** to avoid any possibility of last-minute difficulties in emailing it.

If you need to write several drafts over the first few days instead of over four days (which is how it's often laid out on your assignment sheet), then make sure to do it! College professors almost **NEVER** accept late papers for any reason, other than a death in the immediate family, and this is good practice for you to prepare for this!

Students, if you would like to email me a note that says something like "Can you email me a confirmation that you got this by 8 PM?" when you send your composition, that would be fine.

Psychotropic Drug/Antidepressant Policy

I enjoy working with families whose children have different learning styles and disabilities!

For many years, as an inner-city school volunteer, home school instructor, and youth sports coach, I have worked with a number of children and teenagers who were told, outrageously, that they were "stupid" or "slow," those who came from difficult backgrounds (orphans, children with a parent in jail, the fatherless), and children with organic health disabilities such as speech impediments, asthma, autism, Turner syndrome, or Asperger's. I was myself picked on constantly in school, and even physically attacked, because I was the shortest kid in the class, wore glasses, and had a crossed eye for a year. So I have a special affinity for and a strong desire to protect and support children that don't "fit in" (whatever that means!) because they're a little different.

With that in mind, in recent years in the United States, the use of psychotropic drugs for children has mushroomed. Some of these psychotropic drugs, however (like those given to children who are said to have "ADD" or "ADHD" or "clinical depression"), are classified by the United States DEA as Schedule II drugs (along with cocaine and meth), which by the DEA's definition have a "high potential for abuse, with use potentially leading to severe psychological or physical dependence."

And because of the side effects linked to psychotropic drugs, such as...

- erratic and violent behavior
- suicidal thoughts
- hallucinations
- depression
- increased stroke risk
- brain damage
- mania and “bipolar disorder”

students who are currently taking or have within the last 12 months taken antidepressants (or other SSRIs) or other psychotropic drugs such as (but not limited to) Ritalin, Adderall, Xanax, Prozac, Paxil, Ativan, Desyrel, Zoloft, Luvox, Celexa, Trazodone, Lexapro, Effexor, or Serzone, are not eligible to take classes at Home School Partners.

I have been in the presence of students on these dangerous drugs who behaved erratically and unnaturally in class, as well as a student weeping in grief in my classroom after a friend--whose doctor and parents placed her on antidepressants--hanged herself. So this policy is not intended to upset anyone whose child is taking psychotropic drugs; it is for the purpose of ensuring the safety of all students in the classroom.

Tuition/Refund/Class Availability & Weather Policy

One third of the yearly tuition is due on the first day of class in August, one third on the first day of class in November, and one third on the first day of class in February, unless arrangements have been made at least 30 days in advance. No refunds will be given for

- students who do not return to class by their own choice and/or their parents' choice (unless the family relocates at least 50 miles away from the classroom location), or
- students whom I remove for not meeting any of the “Student Expectations,” “Conduct,” or “Dress Code” sections on this page.

Any student whom I remove because of one of the reasons on the second bullet above is eligible to follow along with a “curriculum service” in which assignments and class handouts will be emailed to the family throughout the remainder of the class year.

I will do everything in my power to have all 32 classes at our classroom during a class calendar year. There might, however, be extenuating circumstances where it won't be possible to exactly follow the classroom calendar posted elsewhere on this web site. In that case, I will provide via email all classroom handouts, quizzes, PowerPoint slides, and other materials needed by students, as well as any answers via phone/text/email to the best of my ability!