Honors Active Citizenship

2015 Semester 2 Syllabus

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Albert Einstein

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Course Description:

What does it take to be a successful high school student? What are the skills I will need to be successful? What opportunities are open to me at Weymouth High School? How can I participate as an active citizen of this community? This introductory course engages students in an active exploration of these essential questions. Through hands-on assignments and meaningful classroom discussions, students explore what it means to be a citizen of Weymouth High School, the town of Weymouth, the United States, and our global society. Students are introduced to the WHS academic, civic and social skills and gain experience with these skills as they explore their school, town, state and national governments.

Units	Essential Questions
First Term	
Unit 1: Strategic Reading Skills for Success	Essential Question 1: What are the skills I will need to be successful?
Unit 2: Technology Skills for Success	
Unit 3: Communication Skills for Success	
Unit 4: Problem Solving and Collaboration Skills for Success	
Unit 5: Opportunities for Success at WHS	Essential Question 2: What does it take to be a successful high school student?
Unit 6: Mental Habits for Success	
Second Term	
Unit 7: Weymouth Public Schools	Essential Question 4: How can I participate as an active citizen of this community?
Unit 8: Town of Weymouth	
Unit 9: State and Federal Government	
Unit 10: Rights and Researching Skills	

Why does this course exist?

High school is different than middle school. If they were the same, they'd be the same school. This class exists to help you successfully transition from the middle school to the high school. We have taken the best research and decades of our professional experience to write this course. Why? Because we sincerely care about your future. This class will identify and help you cultivate characteristics that will make you successful members, of not only this community, but your local and global world.

Power Standards: During our course you will gain mastery of 10 key topics that we'll call power standards. These power standards will give you the ability to become active citizens of this school and your larger community.

1. Grit
2. Growth Mindset
3. Optimistic Explanatory Style
4. Resilience
5. Digital Footprint
6. Point of View / Bias
7. Evidence
8. Three Branches of Government
9. Democracy
10. Capitalism

21st Century Skills: During our course you will become critical thinkers and gain proficiency in the 7 skills necessary for success in the 21st century.

You will learn to strategically read:

- secondary and primary sources analyzing point of view to guide your understanding of a document.
- different types of sources (text, cartoons, graphs, multimedia and charts) to better understand a topic.

You will learn to write routinely over short periods and over longer periods allowing for revisions. Writing assignments will include:

- argumentative essays with an introductory section, at least two reasons and a conclusion.
- informative/explanatory essays with an introductory section, at least two reasons and a conclusion.

You will learn to research:

- short and long projects synthesizing multiple sources to answer a question or solve a problem.
- using MLA in-text and works cited to document your sources.

You will learn to be active classroom citizens as you **collaborate** with each other and with your teacher.

You will use **technology** efficiently and creatively

You will learn to **communicate** your ideas to others both **verbally** and in **writing**.

What I will do for you (My Responsibilities):

- **I will work** - The primary goal of this class is learning. This is the reason I am here. I will offer you a positive learning experience by carefully planning each day's lesson and getting your work graded and back to you in a timely manner. I am here to help; all you have to do is ask.

- **I will respect you** - I will not waste your time in class. I cannot promise that you will enjoy everything we study. However, I can assure you that everything we read and study is valuable. If you've got a concern about something in class come and talk to me in private. I'm sure we'll be able to reach a fair agreement. Your input matters to me.
- **I will be prepared** – I will start class on time each day with a clear agenda, valuable objectives and the right materials to achieve those objectives.

You will be active classroom citizens (Your responsibilities):

- **You will come prepared -** Class time is really important to me because your education is important to me. Bring your 3-ring binder, be in your desk, and be ready to start learning.
- **You will work** - Join in on class discussion and get involved in class activities. Hey, it's better then listening to a boring lecture. Follow instructions and do your work. We are here to learn, and I am here to help you. You can't pass if you don't work, and you can't fail if you do.
- **You will respect each other -** What you have to say REALLY matters to me. No one will talk over you or put you down when you speak up in my class. You aren't kids, you're young adults and you deserve respect. To be treated that way, you must RESPECT others. As for respecting me . . . I'll earn your respect.
- **You will be curious -** That's right, I expect that you'll intellectually engage with the material on a daily basis. Ask questions!
- **You will hand in work** - At the high school level you must earn course credit, you will not automatically be given credit for this class because you are a wonderful person. You earn course credit by completing and passing in assignments.

If you chose not to cooperate then you are choosing two consequences:

- Personal Consequence - You will stay after school with me in detention so we can chat (all detentions are given with a 24 hour notice and a warning beforehand). This will happen until you follow the above expectations. I'm a patient man and won't hold anything personally against you, but this is the way class is going to run.
- Class Consequence = We will no longer do fun activities or have interesting discussions, we will have to resort to strict and boring lectures and tedious book work.
- All school policies will be upheld at all times.

Academic Policies:

- **Make-ups**: If you miss a test or a quiz, you must make it up within 5 school days. Make-ups are on your time, not class time. You are also responsible for all the worksheets you miss when you are absent. You can get missed worksheets from the 'Class Handout Archive.' If you have any questions see me *before* class to catch up. If you cut class you are not eligible to make up work given on the day of the cut class.
- **Late work:** Each term you are given a classroom citizenship grade. Your grade on this 100 pt assignment will be reduced by 5 points each day you are late passing in an assignment.
- **Cheating** – Cheating of any form (including plagiarism) will result in a reduction of your classroom citizenship grade and a zero for that assignment.

- **Grade questions** – You can view your current grades by going onto X2. If you have any questions never hesitate to ask.

Course Materials

- You have a 3 ring binder that is for this class in which you will keep our handouts and work.

Grading:

Each term your class average will be determined by the total number of points you earn. Your progress will be tracked in two categories:
- 21st Century Skill assignments
- Classroom Citizenship (collaboration, following due dates, etc.)

If you want an A in the class, think about it like filling a cup 90% to 100% full. Each term there are 700 points that you can earn. If you don't hand in certain assignments, you miss that opportunity to fill the cup, and probably won't get the term grade you want. Welcome to high school; you have to earn course credit. You have to fill the cup spoonful-by-spoonful. Course credit will not just be given to you.

'A' Range = 700-630 / 'B' Range = 629-560 / 'C' Range = 559-490 / 'D' Rang = 489-420

Essential Assignments:

First Term (700 pts)

1. Strategic Reading Benchmark Assessment	25 pts
2. Strategic Reading Assessment on Blackfish and other readings	100 pts
3. Technology creation	50 pts
4. Written Communication Benchmark Assessment	25 pts
5. Debate House	100 pts
6. Problem Solving Activity	100 pts
7. Career Inventory	50 pts
8. Stress Strategic Reading	100 pts
9. Mental Habits Journal and Exam	100 pts
10. Binder Check x2	50 pts

Second Term (700pts)

1. WPS Analysis Essay	100 pts
2. Weymouth Government Simulation	100 pts
3. Government Infographic	100 pts
4. Your Nation Simulation Packet	200 pts
5. Strategic Reading Choice 1	50 pts
6. Strategic Reading Choice 2	50 pts
7. Review Packet	50 pts
8. Binder Check x2	50 pts

Content Outline

Unit 1: Strategic Reading Skills for Success

Essential Question #1 – What are the skills I will need to be successful?
Essential Understanding: Successful high school students read for purpose by first identifying the genre, audience and source of the reading. They use this information to guide their reconstruction of the central ideas and supporting details the author is attempting to communicate. Once they have a handle on the basics, they analyze the reading to make critical insights, ask critical questions, and connect the reading to prior learning.

Key Content

1. *Strategic Reading*
2. *Genre*
3. *Audience*
4. *Source*
5. *Purpose*
6. *House Model*
    a. *Central ideas*
    b. *Supporting details*
7. *Analysis*
8. *Critical Insights*
    a. *Merits of the central ideas*
    b. *Evidentiary support*
    c. ***POV/Credibility/Bias***
    d. *Purpose*
    e. *Critical Questions*
9. *Application*

Unit 2: Technology Skills for Success

Essential Question #1 – What are the skills I will need to be successful?
Essential Understanding: Successful high school students pick the right tech tools to help them work more efficiently and collaborate more effectively. They are organized with their work and are responsible stewards of their digital footprints.

Key Content

1. *Technology*
2. ***Digital Footprint***
3. *Aspen / X2*
4. *H drive*
5. *Email*
6. *LMC*

Unit 3: Communicating Skills for Success

Essential Question #1 – What are the skills I will need to be successful?
Essential Understanding: Successful high school students write for purpose. They create a writing plan that organizes their ideas, ensures that they are supported with evidence, and allows the summary of these ideas into a concise thesis. Their writing develops these ideas in an organized manner with an appropriate voice and the consistent use of English conventions. When they communicate orally they do so with consistent eye contact, voice variation and confidence.

Key Content

1. *House Model*
2. *Rocket Model*
3. *Ideas*
4. *Development*
5. ***Evidence***
6. *Integrating Evidence*
7. *Organization*
8. *Voice*
9. *Flow*

Unit 4: Problem Solving and Collaboration Skills for Success

Essential Question #1 – What are the skills I will need to be successful?
Essential Understanding: Successful high school students fully define the problem at hand and then select a viable solution strategy to solve the problem. They monitor their progress toward their goal and can reflect upon the process as a whole. Successful high school students understand their role in a group and can use their emotional intelligence to collaborate effectively.

Key Content

1. *Problem Identification*
2. *Relationship Bank Account*
3. *Social Exchange Theory*
4. *Body Language*
5. *Emotional Intelligence*

Unit 5: Opportunities for Success

Essential Question #1 – What does it take to be a successful high school student?
Essential Understanding: Weymouth High School offers more opportunities than most high schools. By exploring possible futures with the career academies and showcasing their learning with the capstone, students can set themselves up for success in college or career.

Key Content

1. *Career Academies*
2. *Exploration vs. Becoming*
3. *Capstone*

Unit 6: Mental Habits for Success

Essential Question #2 – What does it take to be a successful high school student?
Essential Understanding: Successful high school students come to school to prepare themselves for college, career, or post-secondary education. They are gritty, believe they can learn, consciously decide to be optimistic, and are resilient when failures happen. They use these habits to function as active citizens of the school community.

Key Content

1. *Psychology* - the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes
2. *Brain*
3. *WHS Mission Statement*
4. ***Grit*** - I have goals worth working toward. Perseverance and passion for long term goals
5. ***Growth Mindset*** - my intelligence/skill-set isn't fixed, through work I can develop the skills I will need to reach my goals.
6. ***Optimistic explanatory style*** - I can decide how to view an event
7. ***Resilience*** - Life is not a straight line. When I fail at things along the way toward my goals, there are other paths I can find. I am going to be a bungee jumper not a cliff diver.
8. *Active Citizenship Rubric (Attendance, Engagement, Interactions, Service)*

Unit 7: Weymouth Public Schools

Essential Question #4 – How can I participate as an active citizen of this community?
Essential Understanding: Students will use their knowledge of the Weymouth Public School system and their ability to write to conduct a problem solving analysis of their school.

Key Content

1. *Deans*
2. *Associate Principal*
3. *Principal*
4. *Central Administration*
5. *School Committee*
6. *School Budget*
7. *Student Handbook*
8. *School Committee*

Unit 8: Town of Weymouth

Essential Question #4 – How can I participate as an active citizen of this community?
Essential Understanding: Students will use their knowledge of local government and their ability to write to inform a family member of key issues currently facing the town of Weymouth.

Key Content

1. *Departments*
2. *District Councilors*
3. *Councilors-at-large*
4. *Mayor*
5. *Town Charter*

Unit 9: State, Federal Government and Your Rights

Essential Question #4 – How can I participate as an active citizen of this community?
Essential Understanding: Students will use their knowledge of state and federal governments and their ability to use technology to create a government infographic.

Key Content

1. *State vs. Federal Government*
2. ***Three branches of government***
3. *State Representatives*
4. *State Senators*
5. *Governor*
6. *State Constitution*
7. *Constitution*
8. *Congress*
9. *Supreme Court*
10. *President*
11. *Democracy*
12. *Capitalism*

Rights

Essential Question #4 – How can I participate as an active citizen of this community?
Essential Understanding: Students will use their knowledge of the Bill of Rights and their ability to research to write a mini-research paper arguing for either increased security or privacy.

Key Content

1. *Publication information*
2. *MLA*
3. *Works Cited*
4. *Bill of Rights*
5. *Security*
6. *Privacy*