Junior High Debate

Instructor: Mrs. Abigail Doyle  
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Meeting Room: 256

Course Description
This course will strive to engender critical thinking and argumentative strategy. Students will receive information on both sides of current issues, some which have sparked debate in the media, others of which may directly affect young adults. Students will engage in in-class debates and participate in brainstorming sessions on how to present a compelling argument, as well as lessons on how to conduct effective, reliable research on the pros and cons of a given topic.

Grading Breakdown:
- Participation and Work - 30%
- Weekly Research - 20%
- In-Class Debates - 40%
- Final - 10%

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Students who earn an A in the course are exceptional students who meet or exceed the objectives of the course. They complete their work on time with proficiency, quality, and creativity. They often demonstrate an excellent understanding of the content and strive to make new connections to content in their work. Students who earn an A communicate with their instructor and are organized.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Students who earn a B in the course are above average students who meet the objectives of the course. They complete their work on time with accuracy and demonstrate a solid understanding of the content presented in class.</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td>Students who earn a C in the course are average students who meet the basic objectives of the course. They complete their work on time and meet minimum expectations.</td>
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<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Students who earn a D or F in the course frequently do not turn work in on time or at all, often are disorganized and don’t ask for help, their work is below average or does not meet requirements, and work is often messy and/or incomplete.</td>
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**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**What Happens if I Turn My Work in Late?**
- Late work will receive 50% credit. Students will need to complete a late work form which is found in the late work box in Mrs. Risch and Mrs. Doyle’s classroom. Late work is any work not turned in when collected or on an agreed upon date with the teacher.
- Work collected while student is unexcused and out of the classroom will be considered late.

**When is the Last Time I Can Turn an Assignment In?**
- Electives' late work will be accepted until the end of quarter for a maximum of 50% with the completion of a late work worksheet. Projects will only be accepted one week after the due date.

**What Happens if I'm Absent?**
- Excused absences have two days per day you were absent to make up missing assignments after returning to school. (Ex. Missing Monday? Turn in work by Wednesday.)
- **It is your responsibility to see the teacher** when you return, especially if you do not have that block that day. You must come in before or after school **the day you return** to collect missing work. As all class time and passing periods are utilized to their full extent, absent and missing work will not be discussed at this time. You must come before or after school to meet with your teacher.
- Students have the responsibility to arrange make-up tests and quizzes. Make-ups will be administered during office hours.

**What if I Cheat?**
- **DON'T.**
- Any cheating or plagiarizing will result in a zero for all assignments and all students involved. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Copying (or letting someone copy) homework.
  - Looking through notes/talking during a test.
  - Copying and pasting any writing/image/research that isn't yours. This includes “googling” answers instead of writing your own.

**Where will I Get My Research?**
- You will have access to the school library as well as a classroom library. **PLEASE NOTE:** you MUST **cite** their sources-- Fact Checkers will find them, but don’t make their jobs hard!

**What do we do in Debate?**
- Lots of things!
  - We will brainstorm effective argument strategies
  - We will discuss both sides of “debatable” current events
  - We will conduct **3 debates in class**, each with 2 weeks of prep work
• We will keep a running list of Reliable Sources
• We will learn a basic definition for persuasive techniques ethos, pathos, and logos

How Am I Supposed to Behave in Your Class?
• Respect the rights and opinions of others
• One person speaks at a time; NEVER shout down an opponent
• Participate in all class activities-- Not researching during independent time will lead to a very shabby debate
• Come to class prepared, in desks, working on the Two Sides to Everything warm-up by the time the bell rings.
• Tardy students will receive disciplinary action from the administration after their third tardy. This will result in a Friday school.
• Follow directions the first time
• Be responsible for themselves and their own needs. Communicate questions and concerns with the teacher.
• Follow the rules and procedures outlined in the syllabus and in the school handbook.
• Leave teacher’s desk and storage areas off limits, unless given permission.
• Make sure all materials are out of sight during a quiz. Do not get out of your seat, if you have a question raise your hand and the teacher will come to you
• Maintain the cleanliness of the classroom (we are guests!). This means that you must pick up any writing utensils, scrap paper, or garbage around your area.

What Do I Need for Class and How Do I Turn Work In?
• You must always arrive with PRINTED Copies of resources you are working with-- we will not always have access to computers, and I will not dismiss you from class to go print them.
• Print or write all assignments clearly.
• NEVER email me an assignment, unless you and I have agreed that it is the ONLY way it will get in on time.
• Follow all instructions for turning in assignments as given by the teacher.
• If work is not being turned in on time consistently, or if the work is not up to standards, you may be assigned to Office Hours.
• You must adhere to the Junior High Syllabus and policies.
• Assignments may be redone at the teacher’s discretion, if student fills out and follows redo policy.
• All work must have a proper heading, without one - it will be considered late. It will be placed on the No-Name board (in the English Classroom) until it is rescued or thrown away at the end of the quarter.

What happens if I’m hungry in class?
• Feel free to drink water in class.
• No gum, soda, or food in the classroom, please and thank you
What happens if I get in trouble in class?
- If you are talking excessively, being disruptive or disrespectful you will be given a verbal warning.
- After this verbal warning, you will receive a morning detention. You must arrive at 7:15 and stay until class.
- If a third warning is issued, you will be referred to the Office for discipline.

What if There's a Movie in Class?
- I will never show a full-length movie in class
- HOWEVER: we will be viewing selected clips from various TV shows and movies to better understand the workings (or popular media's ideas of the workings) of a “real life” newsroom.

How Do I Contact You?
- Always check Google Classroom for assignments or instructions first
- Email me (please do not share documents). I will do my best to respond within 24 hours.
- You may call me from the office and leave a message, but will not typically receive a reply as quickly. Please do not call my extension during classroom hours as teachers are in the room at all times instructing you or your students.
Students and Parents: By signing this paper, you are stating that you agree to abide by the Junior High Debate classroom guidelines and procedures. Please return to me for a grade by Friday, January 11.

Student signature: ____________________________________________

Printed name: _________________________________________________
Date: ____________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature: ______________________________________