



Kinder High School
for the
Performing and
Visual Arts

Welcome to world history! I love to teach (or rather, facilitate student learning in) this class. The importance of this is to understand the collective memory of all of us. This story lends texture and insights in our daily lives and thinking about the present. More than that though, is the need to learn translatable skills that apply to any context in your future. The most important thing parents and students should know about me is this: my primary commitment is to your growth as a student, a lifelong learner, and as an ethical human being. I probably want you to be successful more than you do. So here are the most important things you (adults and students) need to know.

This class has three simple rules:

1. **Show up:** No matter your state of mind, log in to the class on schedule. Life will be much more manageable if you hear the reasons for, and an explanation of, an assignment from me.
2. **Engage your Brain:** Stay with me; focus; listen with intent; write stuff down; read closely; ask questions. I don't want all your time, but I want all of your brain in that WH time.
3. **Stick to a Schedule:** Create a weekly schedule, start with class times; include study time; include down time; due dates; meals; walking the dog; whatever. Make it a living document, mark it up, adjust it as the year progresses – but no matter what, stick to it! Oh yeah, I mentioned that.

During our time, we will discuss a variety of topics related to the human story. These include:

- Current events
- Political views (without judgement, this is to attach relevance to a topic).
- Religion (again, no judgement)
- Feedback (Intended to help a student grow)
- Stuff other 15-year-olds say in a discussion-based class

The course is designed to be manageable in weekly chunks. A new topic begins at the start of the week, all assignments have a drop-dead deadline of Saturday at noon, or earlier as the assignments are presented (the smarter play). Think about class in three parts:

1. Monday/Tuesday (day 1 of the week) where I will introduce a topic, lead a discussion, and assign tasks that will help in understanding the relevance of the topic.
2. Wednesday/Thursday (day 2) where we will drill deeper into the topic.
3. Friday (day 3) will be almost exclusively allocated to answering questions. (Does not occur in four-day weeks).

[The HUB](#) is the center of the wheel, you know, like a hub? I'll provide you with lots of methods, but your one stop shop is there. It's your dashboard.

Microsoft Teams is our communication tool in this class, and all your others at PVA. You'll go here three times a week to see my pretty face. Only on rare occasions (I actually can't think of one) will I make you spend all 80 minutes staring at me. You'll only need to do that as I explain a topic or skill. Other things

you may do in that time is collaborating with a small group of other students; engage with me as a small group or in the whole class; or take a short quiz or opinion poll. I'll always try to value your time and turn you loose to work on stuff in those 80 minutes.

My website BinghamsPlace.com is a backup resource that can help bring topics, grades, and skills into sharper focus. There you will find: more information about me and my philosophy of education; a calendar and a booking tool to schedule a video meeting with me; tips for reading and writing; a place to go to answer surveys from me as I gather data to improve instruction; and a whole lot more. Students, I'll walk you through this resource on the first day of school.

[PowerSchool](#) is the new gradebook platform to be used this year. Watch for more info from the district. There you will find all complete and graded work, and in most cases, upcoming assignments.

As soon as reasonable, I'd like students with parent/guardian assistance to complete two forms on my site (all of this and communications with me are confidential):

- Enroll students and guardians in Remind, an app that lets me push out critical information. I promise not to blow up your phone!
- A "streaming assets" survey that will help me plan instruction.

There will be three grade categories:

- Class/homework: (10%) This will almost always be things we do together in a Teams meeting.

If a student is absent from class, the above grades will be marked as "exempt."

- Quizzes: (40%) these are usually a reading check, but they may include a few questions about a part of the week's topic.
- Summative, tests or essays: (50%) these are always open-ended questions or prompts relating to the entire topic.

All of these assignments must be completed by Saturday at noon regardless of attendance or accommodations (with possible exceptions).

I am very excited to start on a new adventure with you. Please read my "letter to students" either on the HUB when it's live, or my web site, or Teams.

Should we go back to in-person instruction, little will change except that the Teams meetings will be face to face. I won't change the general plan or procedures in the middle of the year. This stuff is hard enough already!