

QUICK NOTES FOR BUSY PARENTS!

2015-16 SHUMAN CLASSES

When is optional summer reading over and where is the list? If a student has started a book by the first day of class, I will let him complete it during the semester. The latest list is at MargaretShuman.com.

What textbooks do we need?

❖ CL textbooks are supplied by parents: Laurence Perrine's *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense* (ISBN 0155511084). Please double check the ISBN--the book is bright purple. Any edition of *Outcasts United* except the youth edition is fine for December reading.

❖ AP students need Laurence Perrine's *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense* (ISBN 0155511084). Please double check the ISBN--the book is bright purple. In addition, they need a copy of *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Alan Paton) to read and mark up before our second class per my emailed assignment. There will be some paperbacks I will list in September for you to find yourself and/or order with me in a bulk order.

❖ BL textbooks can be borrowed from me. However, they must be covered and treated carefully, with no markings being made. Some families order their own copies so that students can make notes in them: *England in Literature* (Medallion Edition-Hamlet), ISBN 0673129225. Please watch for the *Hamlet* edition!

What supplies are needed, besides textbooks? notebook paper, a binder to collect handouts, something to write with, hole punch at home for handouts

Are you teaching the new SAT/ACT essays? I've been prepping for that and yes, I will be assigning practice in each of my classes this year. The new SAT essay prompts and expectations will be implemented in spring of 2016, and are much like the second essay on the AP Language exam where one analyzes a document. I am very familiar with that type of prompt! Khan Academy is the free, authorized tutorial site for the College Board/SAT, so you might pursue study there on your own. More about ACT changes should be out this school year.

How do we track grades? I use Engrade, an online system that will send you an invitation before classes start so that you can follow progress along with your student.

Do I get to see graded papers? Yes! I normally return work within a week of it being submitted to me, sometimes sooner if I receive it by email. You should ask to see your student's papers, and track averages at Engrade.

How do you give out homework? Via email, within 24 hours of class. If you and your child don't receive the assignment that quickly, contact me ASAP.

Can I help my child with her homework? Let me know if you are helping and why, so that we can work together. Otherwise, I would like to see only the student's work, so I can evaluate the progress she is making.

What if my student has a question about homework or anything else? Please have your student contact me directly, rather than going through you. This is good practice for approaching teachers in college, and helps me build rapport with my students.

What if I have a question myself? Please contact me! I check email often: shumanhw@gmail.com. My phone number is 404-508-8318. In-person conferences and class observations are always good options, too.

Do you accept late work? I give grace once per semester via a coupon that can be attached to one late assignment, and then give zeroes on additional late assignments. To potentially redeem a zero, a student must schedule an appointment with one of her parents, me, and herself. Exceptions would be anticipated absences, illness, and emergencies discussed with me before the deadline, as possible.

You don't mark every error on student writing in CL and BL? No. I can be a thorough mistake-marker because I have been a copy editor, but my experience shows that most students get discouraged when every possible error is marked. Each class works on several writing objectives at a time, and I mark each student's work based on individual progress. Expectations are cumulatively increased through the year, and I see writing proficiency grow this way.

You are especially critical of errors on AP assignments? Yes. These students need to be less fragile and more up for the challenge to see where their writing is missing the mark of college level work. At the same time, I give individualized feedback/encouragement so that every student has a chance to improve and succeed from whatever point he enters the class.

What are folders for in CL class? Students will bring home graded work to you, correct areas I have noted, and then chart and file graded work in folders I provide in class. Parents always have access to graded work: initially when it comes home, and later when it is filed and available for conferences anytime during the semester. Parents receive an organized packet of work at the end of each semester, after the student gets a grade on his folder's correction and charting.

How do I get a grade report? You can simply click "Print" on Engrade. If you need a signed copy for an accreditor, pass along an envelope addressed as needed and I will send that out by the date you request at the end of each semester.

What is your grading scale?

A/Excellent/90-100, B/Good/80-89, C/Average/74-79, D/Passing/70-73. F/Failure/0-69, I/Incomplete.

If we are going to miss a class, can we make it up at the other locations where you teach? Yes, except for BL, which is only at LAC this year. Classes within the same week at both locations will have the same lesson plan and are therefore interchangeable.

Where can we find a class calendar, syllabus, formal course description, and other info? MargaretShuman.com

How do we pay for classes? Through Mrs. Caryn Becker—see her memo included below. Please don't send or give checks to me for tuition—Mrs. Becker will handle that work while I focus on teaching. Mr. Derek Owens and I both use Mrs. Becker's bookkeeping services, and you can arrange your payments to each of us in one envelope if you wish.

Can you tailor the name of a class to fit my transcript needs?

Yes. You can see examples on the course descriptions at my website, and I can consider suggestions. The AP Lit class, however, must be called "Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition" as per my class approval by the College Board.

Do you write references for your students? All the time! Have your student send me the requirements and to whom to send the letter or form, and I will happily meet your deadline. I include anecdotes to keep the referral from sounding canned, and work hard to represent your student positively. If I cannot be positive, I will inform you and defer to someone else.

Is your AP Lit course approved by the College Board for 2015-16? Yes. If you are not in an accredited group, I have a letter of approval from the College Board to share with you so the course can be legally listed on your transcript. If you are in an accredited group, your AP coordinator should contact the College Board and link up with my approval status so that she can legally put the AP course title on your transcript.

Can parents visit your classes? Yes! If you would like to review nonverbal communication, anastrophe, or *Hamlet*, Act IV, drop in! I do not need notice. You can bring friends as well. You can find my schedule for LAC and MAS locations at my website.

Can we finish a course after the class dates are completed in May? Yes, if there has been an emergency, or unusual situation we have planned ahead for, we can work something out. Otherwise, my hourly tutoring fee is \$50/hour and if time is available, we can finish the course in June.

Mrs. Becker's payment memo:

To: Parents of Students in Margaret Shuman's Classes
 From: Caryn Becker, Bookkeeper
 Date: August 4, 2015
 Re: Making Tuition Payments

Thank you for participating in the quality academic courses through LAC and MAS. Hopefully this information will help answer any questions you may have regarding how to make tuition payments for Mrs. Shuman's classes.

Details:

- Payments can be made by paying for the entire school year (September - May) in one payment, by semester, or for your convenience, in NINE (9) monthly payments.
- On the monthly payment plan, a reminder invoice will be emailed from Quickbooks online on the first of every month (including December) beginning 9/1/15 through 5/1/16.
- Be sure I have the correct email address for billing reminders--if you do not get a reminder in September, drop me an email at beckerb@bellsouth.net and give me the correct email address. Please check your SPAM account, where these emails often end up.
- Mrs. Shuman does not accept payments directly, so it is strongly recommended that you mail all payments to me at: 4094 Flintridge Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30083.
- Please make your payment out to **Image Production & Staging** -- NOT to me!

- Please add your child's name(s) in the memo section of the payment.
- Payments should be sent within 30 days of receiving the email reminder.
- Automated checks sent through the use of an online "bill pay" banking checks are also helpful to stay on schedule.
- Payments can be made by check and money order.
- Expect periodic balance statements to remind you of any outstanding balance due to Mrs. Shuman.

If you need any additional information relating to tuition payments, please do not hesitate to email me at beckerb@bellsouth.net.

Thank you,

Caryn Becker