

QUICK NOTES FOR BUSY PARENTS!

2014-15 SHUMAN CLASSES

Can I help my child with his homework? Let me know if you are helping, and why. Otherwise, I would like ONLY the student's work, so I can assess what kind of help he needs the most.

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.

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.

But 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, and then give zeroes on late assignments. To potentially redeem a grade, a student must schedule an appointment with one of her parents, me, and herself. Exceptions would be anticipated absences, illness, and emergencies that we discuss outside of the normal classroom scenario.

How do we track grades? I use Engrade, an online system that will send you an invitation 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 the work by email. You should ask to see your student's papers, and track averages at Engrade.

You don't mark every error on student writing in CL and BL? No. I could be a compulsive mistake-marker, but my experience shows that most students do not want a bludgeoned assignment back. Each class works on several writing objectives at a time, and I mark each student's work based on individual progress (or lack of). Challenges are upped through the year.

You are especially critical of errors on AP assignments? Yes. 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 meet the challenge of guiding students where each should be working next so that every student has a chance to improve and succeed.

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. Parents get 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?

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

VPE: A/Excellent/90-100, B/Good/80-89, C/Average/70-79, D/Passing/60-69. F/Failure/0-59, I/Incomplete.

What about textbooks?

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

❖ AP families purchase any copy of *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*, edited by Samuel Cohen, Bedford/St. Martin's. In addition to early reading of Gladwell's *Outliers*, we will study Orwell's *1984* and Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* later in the year. Two other paperbacks are under consideration, but there would be plenty of time to get copies before we use them. I can order paperbacks cheaply as needed, or you can secure your own.

❖ 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 BL books: *England in Literature* (Medallion Edition-Hamlet), ISBN 0673129225.

What supplies are needed, besides textbooks? notebook paper, a binder to collect handouts, something to write with (sometimes including pencils for CL), hole punch at home for handouts.

If we are going to miss a class, can we make it up at the other locations you 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? www.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 send 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 class must be called "Advance Placement English Language 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 Lang course approved by the College Board for 2014-15? Yes, and I can provide a copy of the letter as needed. If you are in an accredited group, your leader should contact the College Board and link up with my approval status so that you can legally put the AP course title on your transcript. If you are not in an accredited group, we will clarify what must be done after school starts since sometimes those directions are fluid.

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 warning. You can bring friends as well. You can find my schedule for three locations at my website.

Can we finish a course after the class dates are completed in May? If you pay my hourly tutoring fee of \$50/hour and I have time in summer to work with you, or there has been an emergency we both recognize.

Mrs. Becker's payment memo:

To: Parents of Students in Margaret Shuman's Classes
 From: Caryn Becker, Bookkeeper
 Date: August 19, 2014
 Re: Making Tuition Payments

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

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 9/1/14 through 5/1/15.
- 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. Mrs. Shuman is investigating Square and PayPal.
- 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