

High School English and Literature
Kearny Christian Academy
Mrs. Teresa Fontana, B.S.Ed., M.A.Ed.

Welcome to My (Our) Classroom!

This year may be a new experience for you. I hope to do the best in my ability to help you grow and learn and succeed, and - ***with your cooperation*** - we will all see the wonderful results at the end of the school year! This is a very important time in your life. You will be learning many important skills and concepts this year, and I hope to be able to enhance that learning *as much as possible* with interesting activities and engaging teaching strategies. ***Interested students are students who learn!!***

My philosophy regarding your education is that it should be fun and interesting and, therefore, rewarding. I believe that people learn through doing and cannot learn if they are simply given information. When students are engaged in learning, there are many opportunities to fail as well as succeed. This is critical because success is realized only through failure. (If at first you don't succeed - try, try again!) I also believe that my students are the most important people in the world and that adults should respect your thoughts, beliefs, and speech as we do each other's. **In my classroom, you are treated as if you are capable of thought and you are held responsible for yourself...*through responsibility comes respect.***

The instruction in my classroom follows the curriculum guidelines set in place by Kearny Christian Academy. Any extra activities that I design will be mainly student-centered, interesting, and engaging experiences. My method of instruction will depend on the students in the classroom, as I believe that we all have strengths and weaknesses in our learning strategies and I will try to emphasize everyone's strengths.

If you are absent, please have a parent/guardian contact the school office (201-998-0788). Following is a description of my make-up work procedure:

On the day of return, please check the appropriate shelf in the classroom for any instructions on assignments or activities that you may have missed.

If such instructions are missing, please check with another student for help.

*****If you will be out for an extended period of time, you MUST notify me IN ADVANCE so that I may visit with you to help explain the make-up work more thoroughly.*****

If you are late for class, it will be necessary to enter the classroom activities as if you had been there the entire time, without disrupting the class. I will check with anyone who arrives late to make sure that everything is alright and make sure he or she understands the day's assignments and activities. **(You are counted "Late" when arriving after the bell rings. This *does include* one second after the bell!)**

Classroom rules and behavioral guidelines have already been developed based on "The Essential 55" created by teacher-leader Ron Clark. You will receive a copy of a these guidelines with this syllabus. If you misplace your copy, please let me know and I will make sure to replace it! You must also sign and return the "Behavior Contract" at the end of this syllabus. Please be sure to note the REWARDS and CONSEQUENCES of your behavior, which may help to guide you in the right direction each day in class.

My goal for this year is to encourage you to become a well-rounded, responsible, and God-loving individual.

I hope to be able to teach you how to think and question, and I believe that the objectives that have been adopted by the school and the curriculum will fall into place using the instructional format that I have developed.

Your textbooks will travel from school to home DAILY. **Please make sure to handle books appropriately. This includes textbooks, library books, book report books, or any other book you might encounter.** It is **important** to understand that books are to be respected. This means that books are not to be thrown, stepped on, written in or on, or desecrated in any way. (Bookmarks are available in the classroom or you may ask for one if needed.)

Please be sure that you are prepared for class **each day**. **You can do this by checking before each class** to see that you have the following materials in your book bag: (1) completed homework assignments; (2) textbooks and workbooks; (3) binder and notebook paper; and (4) supplies needed for school work (pencils, erasers, etc.).

Being prepared and having the appropriate materials are *extremely* important. Please check to make sure you have the abovementioned materials for EVERY class period. Being unprepared will cause many unnecessary disruptions to the learning environment and will result in loss of points in your grade. You received a **list of supplies** upon enrollment and additional copies are available from the school office.

****I suggest you label uniform all shirts, pants, gym shorts, school bag, etc. All KCA students have the same uniform... If a student misplaces any part of the uniform, the school will not know who it belongs to without a label.****

Many assignments are completed each day in class. *You will also be responsible for completing daily homework assignments.* I will be utilizing journal writing in my classroom this year and all students will be required to make daily entries in their journals beginning within the first few weeks of school.

*****It will be necessary for you to bring home any written work that was not finished by the end of class. If incomplete work occurs too frequently, I will schedule a meeting with your parents/guardians to discuss your work and study habits.*****

Quiz and Test Schedule: You are scheduled to have a grammar/composition quiz and a vocabulary/spelling quiz each week. You will have a grammar/composition test approximately every three weeks. You will also be responsible for one book report per marking period. The first book report will be completed as a class and you will complete the remaining three reports independently. I will announce the books you may use for these reports in the upcoming weeks.

The grading system is that developed by the administration of Kearny Christian Academy. **Tests and Reports** account for **40%** of your grade. **Homework and Quizzes** equal **60%** of your grade. It is obviously **very** important for you to complete your homework **every day** to ensure success in this class.

The following grade scale is available to you for purposes of reference to numerical grades:

A+	99-100	C	78-81
A	96-98	C-	75-77
A-	93-95	D+	72-74
B+	91-92	D	68-71
B	88-90	D-	65-67
B-	85-87	F	64 and below
C+	82-84		

The study skills that you will experience in our classroom are both individual and independent study skills and cooperative group skills. You will have many experiences in each area to become more adaptive and responsible for your own learning. In addition, I hope that you will further develop your critical thinking skills as the year progresses.

Field trips are always fun and interesting as well as rewarding. They allow us to have opportunities to extend learning outside of the classroom and connect learning that has occurred inside the classroom to the "real" world. I will keep you posted as the year progresses on any field trip opportunities that may arise.

Please bring a bottle of water each day to class. Allowing you to have water to drink in the classroom limits interruptions and allows you to drink "as needed." Thank you!! **This is especially important during the first and last weeks of class when the weather is hot and the classroom is even hotter.**

Exception – You MAY NOT have a bottle of water in class on Test days.

Miscellaneous Information

I believe that knowing your teacher helps you to further understand his or her methods and strategies in the classroom. Therefore, I always include some personal information about myself in my syllabus. I graduated from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in May of 1996. I received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education, and I have certification to teach Early Childhood (Pre-Kindergarten through Third Grade) in the State of Oklahoma. Additionally, I am certified to teach both Early Childhood (P3) and Elementary Education (K-8) in the State of New Jersey. I attended Kean University (Elizabeth, NJ) to further my understanding of Music Education and have passed the National Certification test in Music, enabling me to teach music in grades K - 12. In June 2006, I received my Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am now working towards my Doctoral Degree in the field of Educational Leadership with an emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction.

I am married and have two children, ages 17 and 14 (who also attend KCA), and my hobbies include reading, writing, singing, spending time with my family and children, cooking, and traveling whenever possible. My children and I relocated to New Jersey from Oklahoma during the summer of 2000. We currently live in Belleville and attend City of Hope International Church in Kearny.

If there is ever a time when you need my assistance or advice, please do not hesitate to send me an email or make an appointment to see me. I am usually at KCA after school until about 4:30 p.m. The best way to reach me outside of school hours would be to email me at mrsfontana@live.com. I also have a MySpace page you may use to contact me (www.myspace.com/mrs_fontana_kca). If you would like to make an appointment to speak with me, please call the school office or send me an email. I hope that this school year is exciting and rewarding for us all!

View this syllabus online at ANY time!

Find out IMPORTANT information about our class!

Check on homework assignments, see the calendar of classroom and school events, send me a message, and find important resources and links as you complete your assignments. In the coming week, I will assign every student and his/her parents a password for access to the site.

www.myclassnotes.online/MrsFontana

In addition, your grades will be posted online at

<http://kearny.gradeline.net>

You will receive additional information in the next few days regarding access, login, and passwords.

Finally, you may contact me any time at

mrsfontana@live.com

or

myspace.com/mrs_fontana_kca

Welcome to a FABULOUS new school year!

~ Mrs. Fontana ~

“The Fontana 40”

1. When responding to any adult, answer with "yes ma'am" or "no sir." Head nods, mumbling, and "yeah" or "no" are unacceptable.
2. When someone is speaking, keep your eyes on him or her at all times. If someone makes a comment, turn and face that person.
3. If someone in the class does something well, we will congratulate that person. We will celebrate every success in this classroom!
4. During discussions, respect other students' comments, opinions, and ideas. Acknowledge them in your response.
5. If you win or do well, do not brag. If you lose or fail, do not show anger. Doing so indicates weakness.
6. If you are asked a question in conversation, you should ask a question in return. It is polite to show others that you are just as interested in them as they are in you.
7. When you cough or sneeze or burp, it is appropriate to turn your head away from others and completely cover your mouth. Afterward, say "Excuse me."
8. Do not smack your lips, roll your eyes, "tsk," or show disrespect with gestures or other body language.
9. Always say thank you when I give you something. If you do not say it within 3 seconds, I will take it back. There is no excuse for not showing appreciation.
10. When someone gives you something, never insult that person by making negative comments or insinuating that the gift isn't appreciated.
11. Surprise others by performing random acts of kindness. Go out of your way to do something surprisingly kind and generous at least once a month.
12. When grading another student's work, you are only allowed to mark "X" on any mistakes. Incorrect marks or inappropriate comments will result in lost points for YOU.
13. When reading together as a class, you must follow along. If I call on you to read, you must know exactly where we are and begin reading immediately.

14. Answer all questions - written or spoken - with a complete sentence. Use part of the question to form the correct answer.
15. Homework will be turned in each day by every student with no exceptions.
16. You will make every effort to be as organized as possible. Chaos leads to confusion.
17. When homework is assigned, no moaning or complaining. Doing so will result in a **DOUBLE** assignment.
18. When a substitute is present, all class rules still apply. **NO EXCEPTIONS** to **ANY** rule.
19. Do not get out of your seat without permission unless you are ill. Do not speak unless:
 - *You raise your hand and I call your name.
 - *I ask you a question.
 - *I instruct you otherwise.
20. You may bring a bottle of water to class. Do not disrupt the class by asking to get a drink or go to the bathroom unless you have an emergency. You are old enough to take care of such issues between classes.
21. Greet all teachers by name when entering or leaving the school building or between classes in the hallway.
22. Sharing germs is unhealthy and unclean. Be sure to wash your hands before leaving the bathroom. In the classroom, use hand sanitizer after sneezing or coughing.
23. When a teacher is speaking to or disciplining another student, do not look at that student. If you are the student being reprimanded, do not get angry with others who look at you. Let me know and I will take care of it.
24. If you have a question about your homework, you may email me. Please send a message explaining your question. There is no need to send repeated messages.
25. If someone drops something, pick it up and hand it back to them, even if they are closer. Be polite and go out of your way to help others.

26. If you enter a door and someone is following you, hold the door for them. If the door opens by pulling, pull it open and stand to the side for others to walk through.
27. If someone bumps into you, even if it was not your fault, say "Excuse me."
28. Whenever you enter a room or building with other people, do so quietly. This rule applies at school, at the movies, at church, or any other public place.
29. Come to me with any problem you have with another student before taking matters into your own hands. Follow school policy when handling any dispute with other students or any teacher on staff.
30. Stand up for what you believe in. Follow your dreams and depend on God to show you the right direction to take.
31. Be positive and enjoy life. Some things just aren't worth getting upset over. Keep everything in perspective and focus on the good things in your life.
32. Live so that you'll never have regrets. Never let fear, doubt, or other obstacles stand in your way. If you have a dream, fight for it with all of your heart. Do whatever you have to do to achieve your dream.
33. Accept that you are going to make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. The key to success is learning from your mistakes and never repeating them again. Learn from failure and you WILL realize success.
34. No matter what, always be honest. If you've done something wrong, admit it. Others will respect your honesty. Such honesty will often result in less severe repercussions for wrongdoing.
35. You only have one life on this earth, so don't waste it. Life consists of special moments, many of which happen when you throw caution to the wind, take action, and seize the moment. Carpe diem - seize the day!
36. In everything you do and in every day you live, BE THE BEST PERSON YOU CAN BE.
37. During a test, you may not have ANYTHING on your desk or on the floor near you. No water bottles are allowed in class on test days. No personal items are allowed on your desk during a test. All cell phones must be "off" and put away.

38. Respect garners respect. I will respect you and trust you unless and until you break that trust or act disrespectfully. If you have a problem with me, please speak with me. I will do my best to resolve any issue between us. I expect you to do the same.
39. Help keep the classroom clean. Class is not dismissed with garbage on the floor or on desks. It doesn't matter who dropped the garbage, take responsibility for throwing it away. The same holds true for the cafeteria and school grounds.
40. If you need help, don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for it. I can't help you if you don't ask for help. I am available after school most days to help you. It isn't just part of my job, it's the reason I'm here. YOU are the reason I'm here.

***Kearny Christian Academy
High School English
Mrs. Teresa Fontana, B.S.Ed., M.A.Ed.
Classroom Contract***

Keep this page for
your records.

Behavior

1. Students are to follow all classroom rules and procedures.
(Copy provided to student, parent/guardian, and posted in classroom.)
2. Students are expected to work in large and small groups as a team, displaying attitudes of support and encouragement at all times.
3. Students are expected to keep personal belongings, classroom, and school property clean and in good order at all times.
4. Students are to follow all school policies as stated in the KCA Student Handbook.

Procedures

1. Students will be assigned homework Monday through Friday, except on special occasions specified in the Student Handbook.
2. Tests, daily work, homework, and special assignments will be graded and returned to the student every Friday (with a one-week delay). **Any test earning a 77% or below** MUST be signed and returned to school on Monday and will be kept on file until the end of the marking period. Any daily work not completed will be sent home and must be returned completed the next day.
3. Students **MUST** be prepared for class every day (books **and** supplies).
4. Participation in class is part of a student's grades. Excessive absences and/or lateness as well as missing homework will result in a lower grade. (See Student Handbook)
5. Students will be assigned make-up work for any absence. (See Student Handbook and Syllabus)

Consequences

Behavior, both good AND bad, has consequences. Good behavior and adherence to the classroom and school policies will be justly rewarded. If a student does not observe and follow these policies, he/she will be issued two verbal warnings. Please see the following information regarding the classroom policies and consequences for both good and bad behavior.

Keep this page for
your records.

The Fontana 40 - Rules, Rewards, & Consequences

Possible Rewards for Good Behavior

Homework Pass 📖

Popcorn Party 🍿

Movie 🎬

Reward Jar 🏆

Stickers or Stamps 📌

Dunkin' Donuts Dollars 💵

Other rewards as determined by consensus and student interest

If you CHOOSE to break the rules...

After two warnings, you may be assigned extra class work or homework.
After three or more warnings, you may be assigned detention after school.

(Automatic Detention will be given for violent behavior or leaving the classroom without permission.)

If you continue to break the rules...
I **will** make an appointment to meet
with you **AND** your parents/guardians.

I'm currently working on a plan to incorporate points for appropriate behavior and following school and classroom policies and guidelines into your weekly grade.

😊 I will keep you updated on any progress!! 😊

Parent / Teacher / Student Behavior Contract

I have read and understand the Fontana 40, class syllabus, and the rewards and consequences policy. I agree that I must do my part in making sure that

I follow these guidelines and policies. I further agree that I will speak to my parents daily about my behavior in school and that I will encourage them speak to Mrs. Fontana if they have any questions or concerns about my behavior or progress. I also understand that Mrs. Fontana will offer advice and assistance as needed to help my parents reinforce this policy at home.

Student's Printed Name

Student's Signature

I have received the syllabus and policies for my child's classroom and talked about them with my child. I also understand the possible rewards for good behavior and what will happen if my child chooses to break a rule.

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

I have discussed the Rules, Rewards and Consequences policy with my class. I will do my best to ensure that the policy is followed in the classroom each and every day, being honest and fair to all students. I will offer my assistance to my students' parents and family to try and help everyone understand the policy. I agree that I will be available to answer any questions or concerns brought to me by my student and his/her family.

Mrs. Terresa Fontana, Teacher

**Please sign and return this page of the
Behavior Contract by 9/12/08.**

You may keep the top two pages and the class syllabus for your records.