**English Language Arts 12 at Burnaby South Secondary**

Teacher : Ms. A. Atkinson email: alison.atkinson@burnabyschools.ca

**Welcome! I am so glad to have you here and I look forward to working with you this year.**

The goal of the BC English 10-12 program is to equip you with the communications and literacy skills you need for success in school, community, work, and life. In this course you will practice thinking critically, appreciating beauty, and considering diverse points of view, including First Peoples texts and worldviews.

We will:

* Read many texts (including novels, poetry, plays, non-fiction, film, media)
* Write and speak in narrative and analysis genres (stories, poems, memoir, essay, discussion)
* Apply an inquiry model to learning
* Take time to explore identity and personal stories during this important year in your life

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**Assessment**

Your letter grade and percentage will be generated from major assignments (projects, writing, presentations, tests) that evaluate your **literacy** and **communications** skills. You will be given opportunities to practice and receive feedback before we reach a graded assignment and I will clearly establish criteria beforehand. **You must complete all graded assignments** to receive a term mark reflective of your class performance.

You have the dubious honour of being the last group of students who will be required to write the English 12 Provincial Exam, worth 40% of your final grade. If you are an engaged, focused student in this class you will be well-prepared for the exam.

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**Guidelines and Expectations**

1. **Be reasonable, kind, and respectful to yourself, your classmates, and me.**
2. **Be patient and open minded. It can take a little while to see the “point” of something.**
3. **Practice responsible electronics use in class.**
4. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.**
5. **Attend class.**

**Course Units (subject to change!)**

1. **IDENTITY – Who are we? Where have we come from? Where are we going?** *Poetry, short fiction, memoir. Analysis writing review, synthesis, informal presentation, and narrative writing.*
2. **NOVEL STUDY:*****The Handmaid’s Tale.*** *Literary analysis and discussion, inquiry research presentation.*
3. **POETRY.** *Tools and terminology, poetry writing, poetry for social change, diverse voices, independent project.*
4. **TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION –****Indigenous Writers in Contemporary Society.** *Poetry, memoir, fiction, song, visual art. Synthesis writing, podcast creation.*
5. **INDEPENDENT INQUIRY.** *Final project: Choose a topic of study, design a research plan, and communicate your learning appropriately and skillfully.*

September 2018

Dear Students,

Welcome to class! I’m looking forward to getting to know you this year.

In a minute I will be asking you to write me a letter, so I think it’s only fair that I go first.

I have been a teacher in Burnaby for about 10 years now, but I’m relatively new to Burnaby South – this will be my second year here, so I don’t yet know many of you. You should all be proud of the welcoming, inclusive, and fun community you have here. I grew up in North Vancouver, but my father, grandmother, and grandfather are all Burnaby South graduates, so my roots here run deep.

I decided to become an English teacher because I love to read and write, and I think it’s important for young people to learn to think critically, consider different points of view, and experience beauty and art. I take my job very seriously but also try to have fun with all of you. As a teacher, I try to be a learner – this year I’ll tell you about articles and books I’ve read, courses I’ve attended, and ideas I’m thinking about, and I hope you’ll do the same. In my teaching, I try to change and grow. It’s important to me to bring you texts from diverse, authentic voices, and give you the skills to engage with them both personally and academically. I like to structure my course around projects that allow you to explore texts and ideas you find interesting. Some things we do will seem weird, at first, but stick with them and I think you’ll find them useful.

Outside of school, family life keeps me busy – I have a 2 year old, named Elisabeth (after both of my grandmothers). My partner and I live in East Vancouver, and my parents and sister are close by. I like to read (I’m in two book clubs), ride my bike, spend time with my friends and family, and volunteer. Most of my life I have lived in Vancouver, but have also lived in Nova Scotia, New Hampshire in the United States, Gambier Island, and Gibsons on the Sunshine Coast. I’ve travelled in Europe, Turkey, and the Yukon.

Thanks for reading – I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Ms. Atkinson

**NOW – It’s your turn!**

**Please write me a letter to introduce yourself. You can include:**

**-Who are you as a person? What do you like to do? Who are the important people in your life?**

**-Who are you as a learner? What should I know about you and how can I help you reach your goals?**

**I will read everyone’s letter carefully, and I file them to look at again once I get to know you better. However they are NOT for marks.**