August 17, 2020

Dear Junior English Student:

Welcome to our classroom. I know this is a weird year, but I know that we can make the best of whatever 2020 throws at us. I am extremely proud to teach English at AACT. I have taught at several other local high schools, and this is absolutely the best high school in the area. As I am sure you know, the students at AACT are motivated and intelligent, and you treat each other with respect and compassion. It is because of you that I consider myself lucky to be here, even with everything that is happening around us right now.

We have shared the same building for four years, but I am meeting many of you for the first time. Even if we have worked together in the past, I would like to know how you and your priorities have changed as you are approaching graduation. I am curious about your writing and reading abilities, and I would like to get an idea of what you want out of high school and what your plans are next year. Your first homework assignment will be to write a letter to me.

Even in the age of tweets and texts, it is important to be able to write a business letter when looking for a job or applying to college and scholarships, and it is still important to use traditional letter writing protocol in all professional and academic email communication.

We will discuss in class how to format your letter, but it should be one page in length and should use this assignment sheet as a formatting guide. Make sure that your letter addresses the following three things:

1. Introduce or reintroduce yourself to me. Tell me something interesting about you that I don’t know.
2. Tell me about your expectations for this class. How much work do you expect to do in an English class? What grade you expect to get in this class, and why? What grade do you usually get in English? Do you like novels, plays, and poetry? Do you like to read and analyze difficult texts?
3. Tell me something that I need to know to make your experience successful. What did your favorite teachers do to help you learn? What did your least favorite teachers do that I should avoid? What do you want to learn in an English class that might help you in the next year or two?

I expect this letter to be typed. If this is not possible, you may neatly handwrite it in black ink, but please let me know this ahead of time. I look forward to learning from and about you.

Sincerely,

Greg Burge

English Department

Academy of Arts, Careers & Technology