Dire Ambition
YOU CAN'T POLISH A TURD

I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

TEACHER: Chris Waugh
CHALLENGE LEVEL: Challenging
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT: 40%
STYLE: Stop at nothing.

Content

Choosing Dire Ambition as your English programme for Level 1 means that you probably like the world to see you as a political, more socially-conscious type; you're probably irritated by injustice and your ironic humour has probably got you into trouble on more than one occasion… This programme will explore way ambition can **destroy or empower** groups and individuals. You're not here to study English for the sake of it, you're acquiring a set of skills that you will immediately put to use in life. You'll need to think fast, question everything and be willing to speak up. You will be asked to challenge yourself as well as others, take risks and show ambition.

We'll explore **modern text communication** and online language and compare this with your own speech to learn why, in spite of social attitudes to the contrary, these modern idiolects thrive.

We'll read **Macbeth** and you'll have the option to explore the impact of unfettered ambition in **Lord of the Flies** as well as the moral injunctions presented in the film **Gattaca** and its meditation on the consequences of human ambition**.** Throughout, you will be practising the key skills required to succeed in the NCEA examinations. In parallel to this everyone will be completing for homework their own longitudinal inquiry by investigating links between self-selected books, films and art and presenting these in **written form.**

Course Rationale

A sound knowledge of the mechanisms behind English Language and Literature is arguably more essential to your future than ever before. A critical mind and a deft appreciation of the subtleties of the English language are going to be essential for success in all walks of life.

This course is for students who want to keep all options open and are ready to put themselves to the test. Nothing ventured, nothing gained, my pretties.

Online Learning

This course involves the use of Wordpress blogging in order to provide access to all learning resources and, more importantly, to provide students with a publishing platform for their work.

Everything related to this course will be published via the class hub at the address:

scorpions.edutronic.net

Assessment

The course will be assessed using a range of NCEA assessment tools which will be selected from the table on the following page. The English department is guided by the following principles when selecting which assessments will be offered:

- Ample opportunity is given to students to achieve the New Zealand Universities' "Literacy" criteria, both through internal and external assessments; this course fulfils the requirements for University Literacy (in Reading and Writing).

- All areas of learning in English should be assessed throughout the year

- Assessment should happen only once a student has developed the requisite knowledge and skill to tackle the task effectively

REASSESSMENT

During assessment teachers can validly make suggestions about areas where further development is needed (this is acceptable in the 'hands on' phase, which is usually the first 4 periods of an 8 period assessment phase), but constructive feedback should not compromise the authenticity of students' work. All submitted material must be your work alone.

In the final phases of the assessment ('hands off' phase), it is the student's responsibility independently to polish their work to a publication standard.

All written assessments should be completed under supervision and during class time unless specifically approved by application to the Head of Learning Area.

The Achievement Standards offered in this course may be re-submitted under very specific circumstances, and only at the discretion of the Head of Learning Area. However, if a student does not achieve in their first attempt, then a reassessment opportunity may be offered to students. This opportunity will only be offered to students who have shown a reasonable initial effort and who can demonstrate that further learning has occurred since the initial assessment opportunity.

All reassessments are composed of an entirely different assessment task. These will be completed during a time that is organised by the department.

The English department retains the right to set final dates for submissions and these will be clearly stated by your classroom teacher and published on your class blog.

SUBMISSION OF WORK

All NCEA assessments must be completed in their entirety, including early drafts, on your English Department blog. Where appropriate your teacher may give feedback in the comment section below your piece as you are developing it. This feedback will be of a holistic nature, rather than addressing specific components, as each assessment requires student ownership. You may also use this commenting function to seek feedback or ask clarifying questions.

When submitting your work you need to follow the guidelines below:
- Ensure the completed piece is published on your blog headed with the Assessment Title and NCEA Achievement standard number
- The blogging system will record the time and date of the final edit.
- Any editing of your work subsequent to the final submission date and time will render the submission invalid.

LATE WORK

Work submitted late for the internal assessment standards will not be marked. You may have the opportunity to gain the credits through reassessment, if available. If you have a genuine reason why you are unable to submit work by the due date, then you are able to apply for an extension. However this should occur prior to the due date, not after it. Absence from school due to sickness is not normally regarded as an acceptable reason for the non-submission of assessed work. Alternative arrangements, electronic or otherwise should be made in this event.

STANDARD	TITLE	CREDITS
1.1 EXTERNAL	Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), using supporting evidence	4
1.3 EXTERNAL	Show understanding of significant aspects of unfamiliar written text(s) through close reading, using supporting evidence	4
1.5 INTERNAL	Produce formal writing	3
1.6 INTERNAL	Construct and deliver an oral text	3
1.8 INTERNAL	Explain significant connection(s) across texts, using supporting evidence	4
	TOTAL	22