

Q-Review Syllabus

“News is the first rough draft of history.”

Graham, Philip L.

Q-Review students are responsible for writing, editing, and designing the school newspaper on a monthly basis. This course will be as exciting as you want it to be! By taking advantage of every opportunity, you have the chance to walk out of class as a better writer while looking at the world differently.

Things you'll need for this class:

- A binder or folder to KEEP YOURSELF ORGANIZED
- Paper and pen/pencil EVERY DAY
- A notebook for interview questions and answers
- A planner or calendar to keep track of deadlines

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ATTENTION: There are no inferior jobs in this organization. No matter what the assigned task, if it is done well and with dignity, it contributes to the function of everything around it and should be valued accordingly by all. Without you, we would not be able to put out an improved paper each month.

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What your grade consists of:

- **Current events** will be discussed and journaled about on Fridays. Watch your local news or read the paper regularly because your knowledge will help you create better entries and discussions. Topics and entries/discussions are intended to help you become better journalists. **These journals are worth 10 practice points a piece.**
- **Pieces of Writing** are assigned each month. You may write a feature article, an editorial about a topic of your choice, or a review of a book, movie, restaurant, television show, musical group/album, etc. You may not always have long to work on your pieces of writing so make sure you are working on them during any downtime in class. **These are worth 50 performance points.**
- **Pictures** will become the responsibility of those on the staff and will be handled in two ways. Once stories have been assigned, the editors will write a list of the needed pictures on the board. Students will then have the opportunity to sign up for the pictures they are willing to take. **Grades will be given in the following ways for USEABLE pictures:**
 - **Students may take three pictures and write a cutline for each to take the place of a monthly POW.**
 - **Students may choose to take pictures for up to ten points of extra credit.**

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ONLY HAVE TWO DIGITAL CAMERAS. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO USE YOUR OWN CAMERA, WE WOULD APPRECIATE IT.

- **Mini-lessons** will be taught by me or the editors every Monday and Wednesday. The first five to fifteen minutes of class will be devoted to these lessons. Topics range from the First Amendment to brief reviews on story types/characteristics. Mini-lessons are intended to help you become better journalists so their lengths and topics will depend on the needs of the class. **If assignments are given, they will be worth 10 practice points a piece.**

- **Grammar** will not be taught specifically, but if the same error consistently appears in your writing, you will find yourself practicing in that area. Mini-lessons will focus on specific errors when necessary. Make sure to follow your style guide too in order to avoid stylistic errors.
- **Deadlines** will be strictly enforced. If a publication is going to be distributed on time, deadlines must be met by each person on the staff. **If one staff member fails to meet a deadline, the whole production schedule is thrown off and we risk having empty pages or no paper at all.** Story assignments earn you two grades: one for simply making deadline and another for the actual assignment. **DON'T GET BEHIND** because, again, your staff depends on you! **Stories are worth 200 performance points (100 = meeting initial deadline with section editor, 100 = story).** **If you fail to turn in a corrected story to me by the assigned deadline, you will receive a 10% penalty.** This is the price you pay for having others do your work.
- Students are required to meet a certain number of **inches** per quarter based on their experience in the Q-Review. The requirements are as follows; however, requirements are subject to change based on how many issues are published each quarter:
 - 1st year student: 25 inches (1st and 2nd quarters) and 35 inches (3rd and 4th quarters)
 - 2nd year students: 50 inches per quarter
 - 3rd year students: 60 inches per quarter

Students can write more than their required number of inches for extra credit. Extra credit is determined by me and will be capped.

- **Critiques** will be completed after each issue is published and distributed. They will be completed individually, in small groups, as a whole class, or in any combination of the three. Your critiques will focus on diversity in student voice, good angles, objectivity, and other content issues. Sometimes you will also discuss design elements in the paper. Your focus should always go beyond conventional errors. **These will be worth 20 performance points.**
- **Self evaluations** play an important role in helping you become a better journalist. You are required to set a personal goal at the beginning of each semester and your periodic self evaluations will allow you to reflect on how well you are doing and if you are close to meeting (and exceeding) your goal. **Your periodic evaluations will total 50 performance points.**
- **Ads** are necessary in order to fund our newspaper. In order to make sure everyone is doing their fair share since we do not have an official business manager, each staffer is required to attempt selling **three ads per quarter.** Requirements for this assignment will be explained.
- **Attendance** isn't optional. Your classmates and I depend on you EVERY DAY. If I notice that you are always gone during 8th hour, we will need to talk. I understand that some things cannot be avoided, but I also quickly notice when patterns develop.
- **Rubrics are used on all assignments that require grading.** Since all of your writing assignments are performance grades, you do have the opportunity to rewrite them, even after we have gone to press and you have received a grade. I am around most days after school so if you need help, please let me know.
- **Plagiarism will not be tolerated! If you are caught plagiarizing in any manner at any time, you will receive a zero for your piece. You will NOT be allowed to rewrite the assignment or write another one to make up for the grade. You also will be put on probation for the rest of the semester. If more than once incident occurs, you will be dropped from the class. If you don't understand what plagiarism is, SEE ME IMMEDIATELY!**