Welcome to English 122 Honors.

I want to get the conversation rolling with some quotes from a few of the texts we shall be reading for this class. These quotes highlight self-conscious narrators who discover something about themselves and their beliefs as they wrestle with their growing and distressing sense of mortality.

“I thought that being extremely smart would take care of it. But I see I have been found out.”
Margaret Edson, *Wit*

And

“We are the bright new stars born of a screaming black hole, the nascent suns burst from the darkness, from the grasping void of space that folds and swallows-a darkness that would devour anyone not as strong as we. But we are oddities, shadows, talk show subjects. We capture everyone’s imagination.” – Dave Eggers, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*

And

“A wise reader reads the book of genius not with his {her} heart, not so much with his {her} brain, but with the spine.” –Vladimir Nabokov, “Good Readers and Good Writers”

As writers/narrators ourselves, we will explore various narrative voices in our readings not only for the sheer delight of the language, but also for writing inspiration. We will ask critical questions about narrators: their reliability, their self-awareness and the challenges they present to us-- the readers-- when they spin their stories. We will have to ask ourselves such questions as: What makes a “good reader”? How does a self-aware narrator or voice affect our experience of authenticity? What is authenticity? Finally, we must ask what do we get as
readers by inhabiting other people’s worlds. Do writers change us? The readings and your writing will explore some of the “big” issues in life such as love, joy, anger, death, loss and grief and in doing so will—I hope—open up an opportunity to think about life’s most important experiences.

In this class we are going to continue the conversation you had in English 121. We will use Remix for our text along with two plays and a novel/or memoir and occasionally at a few poems and critical theory articles. So in addition to our study of narrators and narrative voices in the readings, I will also emphasize the role of culture in shaping our individual beliefs and practices. Much of your research will connect cultural and historical themes to the texts, so consider yourself a cultural analyst of sorts. At other points, your research will veer in the direction of your interests, curiosity, and creative exploration of the concepts we are pursuing.

The readings will also raise questions about how we live and what we live for. There will be a few poems to read and you will be doing some projects that ask you for original thinking and experimenting with ideas. You will be writing in a variety of styles including personal, analytic and finally writing an ambitious hybrid blend of research, analysis and personal essay. Many of the writing assignments will ask you to approach topics in untraditional ways or way perhaps ones that are new to you.

**Required Texts:**
*Wit,* by Margaret Edson, Dramatist’s Playservice, Inc. (Very Inexpensive in bookstore or online)
*Proof,* by David Auburn. Dramatist’s Play Service (CLC is putting Proof on, so we will be seeing it.
*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius,* Dave Eggars, Vintage books, 2001 (Please order it through Amazon Books or other reputable online book sellers for a less expensive price).

**Required Materials:**
CLC email account
Computer access for Blackboard
Folders for handouts: you may use your laptop or a reader in class to pull up some readings flash drive

**Recommended:** *They Say, I Say,* Gerald Graff

**Other Materials:** a journal section in your binder for in-class work, a flash drive, and a few sturdy folders for holding many handouts.

**The Catalogue Version of English 122:**
Catalogue Description Gen ED IAI Number: CI 901R
This class will be a writing course using literature and essays to further the work done in English 121 or 120 by giving the students more experience as academic writers, readers, researchers and critical thinkers. To help students construct their own meaning while
engaging with the texts of others, they will develop the ability to collect, evaluate and incorporate varied sources in thoughtfully written analyses and arguments. Students’ work should demonstrate the ability to position themselves within the context of academic and societal conversations, using a variety of texts, which may include literature, arguments on various issues, news articles, films, advertisements and websites.

**How This Class Works:**
This Honors class will work differently from the regular English 122 class in approach. As in the other English 122 classes, we will be reading some challenging material—essays, stories, a memoir, and two plays—but we will also be exploring these works in more rigorous, and creative ways that involve creative research. I am hoping you will find the experience challenging but also rewarding. The writing and and research assignments fulfill the English 122 requirements; they also demand some serious thinking and questioning of ideas and cultural assumptions about life, death, art, love, commitment and ethics. This course utilizes anthropology, psychology, and history to do this. I also want to provide space for you to use the creative and intellectual abilities that as honors students I know you possess. This course content lends itself to some potentially interesting research and writing assignments. Effective research, in fact, will be integral to giving context to the material we will be reading, so we will be using research not only to enhance our understanding of the subject matter, but also as an experimental writing tool.

**Writing and Thinking:**
I will be asking you to write reflectively as well as critically about literature. Sometimes you will get writing assignments from me that will ask you to respond purely to the style and language of a text. Other times I will ask you to connect the writer’s style to its ideas. All of the assignments are to induce original thinking and original writing from you. It’s easier to write a safe paper; I am not looking for safe papers. Sometimes you will find aspects of a work with incongruities or elements that it would be easier to dismiss. I’d rather you grapple with the puzzling aspects you encounter. Ultimately, I am hoping that you will see that writing an analytical paper is not so very different from writing a personal essay. Just as in the essays and the other non-fiction we will read, you will perhaps see that the lines between fiction and non-fiction get blurred when metaphors, precise language are used to create freshly expressed arguments...

**Research:**
As a course requirement, I will ask you to conduct research on topics that emerge in our course units. This conducted research, first usually around week 4, will benefit everyone as you share it with the rest of the class your group. The research will help us shed light on topics by providing important historical contexts and we will see how ideas evolve through different centuries. You will also doing other research, research for your final paper and research as well for one of your essay assignments on community. You may want to do research on an idea from one of our texts that you may develop in your culminating final writing project. For this project; the writing challenge will be in integrating the research into your essay in a way that adds further dimensions to your arguments.
Grade Components:

Assignments: Percentage of Final Grade

Reading Response Journals 10%
Essays (10 % per essay) 20%
Final Paper Proposal 5% (turned in on time)
Annotated Bibliography: 10%
Final Research Essay /Works Cited 20%
Attendance/Participation.) 20%
Research Assignment. 10%
Research Paper Presentation 5%

Total Points: 1000 100%

Grading Scale:
A: 90 – 100
B 80 – 89
C 70 - 79
D 60 - 69
F 59 and below

Important Dates:
Last day to drop the course and receive the full refund: 2/7/2013
Last Date to Withdraw with Grade: 4/10/2013
Last class day:
Holidays:
Martin Luther King Day: 1/22
Spring Break: 3/25 – 3/31
Semester Ends: 5/17
Final Exam for Class: Thursday 5/16 12:30 -2:20

Course Policies:

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for academic success and is defined by full class presence. You are allowed 5 absences, no questions asked. After five, there will be a final grade reduction, unless you provide documentation. Lateness, defined by a full 15 minutes, will count as a half absence. Chronic lateness will not work for this class. Absence does not excuse you from submitting an assignment or essay on time (unless there is a documented reason). It is always better to come to class, even if you have not completed an assignment because that way you are not compounding your problem. This class is a face-to-face one, so turning work in lieu of attending class on a regular basis will not allow you to be successful for this class. Should you have extra-curricular or commitments even related to our school
and that affect your attendance, then you need to talk to me beforehand so that we can decide if you should continue the class or take it in a later semester.

**Essays:** You will be writing two 3-5 page essays on each of the first two units. These essays will require a synthesis of the readings we have done from which you will formulate a thesis, provide arguments and evidence of a selected readings. The goal for these essays is to further your ability to synthesize materials and grapple with ideas through critical analysis. (More specifics will come later.)

**Reading Journals: Three Levels of Thinking:** (1.5 – 2 typed double spaced pages with Level headings) They will be graded numerically: 5, 4, 3, 3 and 1 and each journal counts as 5 points. I will accept revised journals because it does some getting used to the concept behind how they work and should be formatted. Think of them as reflective and analytical responses: They are responses to stories, essays, articles, film and require a very specific formatting. (unless you are otherwise directed). The journal requires three separate paragraphs. I am requiring you to write one developed paragraph for each section (5 -10 complete sentences) *Again, this is 1.5 pages.* Please briefly quote from the text to provide evidence. Notice details. As famous writer Vladimir Nabokov says, “In reading, one should notice and fondle details.” —*Good Readers and Good Writers*

**Level 1:** Record your initial responses (your visceral, gut level impressions, opinions, associations regarding the story or article. Questions you might answer: What stands out to you as you are reading? What is troubling, puzzling, inspiring about a particular scene? What language took you by surprise or pleasure? What stood out in structure or the ending?

**Level 2:** Interpret the characters, dialogue, or conflict within the essay or story or article by focusing primarily **on one** character, one scene or conflict between characters or ideas presented. Be very specific. Don’t try to cover the entire reading. You will be able to do a better job by taking one element and zero in on that.

**Level 3:** How does the reading connect to past or present social, psychological, historical or cultural issues present in our world? What ideas does the reading explore? What complexities are apparent? How does the reading problematize cultural issues?

**Research Assignment 1:** You will be doing some research on topics that emerge from our second unit from *Remix*, our textbook. You will be responsible for conducting research on a topic by finding the most credible and important primary and secondary texts that relate to this topic. You will write up a formal annotated bibliography for these sources and submit them individually and as a group. As a group, you will also briefly summarize your research findings.

**Annotated Bibliography:** This annotated bibliography will encourage you to take your time researching sources. This bibliography will summarize and assess the significance of five sources and will also explain where and how you intend to integrate your source material into your essay. Each annotation will be in 2 full paragraphs: one that summarizes your source in terms of its primary content and relevancy to your topic. The second paragraph will evaluate
the source’s effectiveness. (More information will be given later as the research paper is assigned).

Research Essay Proposal: You will be writing a 1.5-2 page typed formal research proposal that outlines your topic, research questions, and the kinds of sources that you will be integrating into your essay and the relevance of your topic for you and in terms of the course and the ideas that it will develop. Should a topic be unrelated to the course and its concerns and themes, I will be able to ascertain what you need to do to find a suitable topic and research approach.

Research Paper: Using one of the literary texts, Wit, Proof, or A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius as an exploratory project for your thinking, experiences, and more specifically you will be writing a culminating and experimental research paper of 12 pages plus that will tie in all the concepts and approaches to writing that we explored in the course. You will have the opportunity to present this paper for the final day class in an informal, roundtable format.

Paper Guidelines: All essay assignments must be typed using standard MLA format (left-hand heading including name, class, date, my name and paper assignment). Double space throughout, Always creates a careful and thoughtful centered title. Make sure you have 1 and 1/4” margins on all sides. No title pages are necessary. Please use the standard fonts of Arial or New Times Roman. (Unless it is for stylistic purposes related to your final project).

Late Essays: You will be able to revise two of your essays and journals for a higher grade providing you turned your essay in on time. I strongly encourage you to turn in your essays on time because late papers will drop one grade every week that it is late for a two week period until after which the grade drops to 0. It is foolish, as I said before, to make matters worse by not coming to class because of a late paper. Then you are missing two classes: the one you missed and the next one (the assignments, work, and participation.)

Missing Work: I will not accept work at the end of the semester that was due earlier in the semester. If you haven’t turned in the required work that was due at midterm, I will simply drop you. I will accept revisions with a less strict deadline structure but not late drafts. Nor will I make as many comments on late papers If you miss doing an essay after two weeks, then you are too late to do the assignment (unless you have mitigating circumstances and documentation). It is understandable that once in a while you may turn in an assignment a little late. However, you must do the work in a timely fashion and not hope to pass by stockpiling assignments for times that are convenient for you. I simply won’t accept work that is profoundly late.

Missed Class: It is essential that you find out what you need to do for the next class should you miss. Check on Blackboard or with me or with a classmate. If something is due on the day you miss class, it is still due (unless you make arrangements with me) and will count as due.
**Disappearing Students:** Never simply stop coming to class without communicating with me about your reasons for missing. This is a face-to-face class, and you will be dropped or failed--if there is too much missed class, in spite of satisfactory work up to the time you disappeared.

**Readings and Quizzes:** We will be doing some challenging reading by writers experimenting with structure and style. In some cases the content will also be challenging, even if the structure seems traditional. You may need to read a particular essay twice or even more to understand the writer’s arguments. Try to accept the difficulty of the language or argument without giving up. The class discussions will help make the readings understandable, and you will be surprised how the writers will become comprehensible. So just trust in the process and know that the writer is trying to say something important and is doing so in a way to make a point. With a little help and teamwork, we will piece together the meaning together. Never think you are too stupid. I am deliberately challenging you. For the stories, plays and the memoir, I may give reading quizzes to make sure you are keeping up with the reading, if I have doubts.

**Group Work:** The goal of group work is to help you with your writing and thinking. It is critical to your participation grade, so clearly attendance affects it.

**Class Policies:** I expect and require your attention and polite behavior during class. This means that you will need to come to class on time and without disruption. I am sympathetic with the various reasons you might be late once in a while, But chronic lateness of ten minutes or more is unacceptable, and your grade will drop. Electronics including ear buds, mobiles, pagers, and unrelated reading material such as for other classes) need to be put away at all times (unless for a project I permit them). This includes all music paraphernalia. Lap tops are permitted but only if they are used appropriately. Facebook or other social network sites are not permitted (again unless specified for assignment). If I find you are using a social network or any other inappropriate site, I will ask you to put away your device.

**Participation:** Attendance and participation go hand in hand, and for that reason they are 20% of your final grade. I define participation as being present, prepared (completing reading and writing assignments on their due date), and being ready to work. It does not mean that you must be outgoing to receive a good grade. Shyness is not a character defect; it is a personality trait. You do not get lower grades for being quiet. If an entire class is silent, I may have to give a reading quiz. I do expect everyone to participate in the work we are doing including the group work because it is a useful learning tool. But there are all sorts of ways to participate in groups as well as in class as a whole. Even if you do A level work, but you fail to be in class because of attendance, your grade will suffer based on the connection of attendance to participation. So having a friend or girlfriend “fill you in” still doesn’t make up for your missed class. If on a day there is to be a class discussion of a work and nobody is talking, then I will be tempted to have a reading quiz.
Class Etiquette: I require you to be respectful towards me and the others in the class, even if you are disagreeing with the comments someone might be making by listening, avoiding ridicule, avoiding distracting behaviors, or anything that could be taken as offensive. The best way to have a successful class is to be engaged with other students and the matters at hand.

Disappearing From Class: I simply cannot excuse long, unexplained absence. If you are an athlete or performer who must be gone for several weeks, or must attend a long trip with family, or need to visit a friend in crisis for two weeks or more, you must talk to me prior to your taking leave. If you approach me before you leave, then we can make arrangements or I can then advise you if you can stay enrolled in the class. If you reappear after having not talked to me, I still might drop you or not allow you to continue. This is a studio class, and I am unwilling to bend the rules even for exceptional students who don’t attend. We will need to have a conversation about your attendance before you miss. If there are problems that challenge your attendance, simply drop the course.

Film and Ratings: Part of the requirement of this class is to watch three movies. These movies may portray brief scenes of nudity: One, *Wit*, briefly shows a middle-aged woman who is undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer. The other, *Prof*, shows a brief sexual scene of partial nudity of the main character, Catherine and is essential to one of the themes of the text. Because this is a college-level class for adult students, I ask that you see the films or otherwise drop the course if you have concerns. The other film will have cursing but no nudity. You are welcome to preview these texts at home on your time.

In addition to the brief scenes with nudity, the films and some of the texts will employ language obscenities for dramatic and artistic effect. As a college instructor, I am not bound by specific laws governing what can and cannot be in a college curriculum in the way of profanity and nudity.

Resources Available to Students:

Writing Center: located on Floor 1 of the Grayslake Campus Library. The extension is 2452. It is free of charge and is an excellent resource for anyone looking for help with composing, thinking, and grammar and formulating a thesis statement. Students who regularly visit the writing center tend to improve their writing skills and their grade. There are also writing centers at Lakeshore and Southlake sites. Lakeshore: #2179, Southlake: # 6544.

Office for Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability and may need academic accommodations such as extended time and/or a note taker, please present documentation to the Office for Student Disabilities in L112 at the Grayslake Campus. To schedule a call, please call: Voice®847) 543-2055, TTY: 223 – 0134.

Crisis Intervention: The Counseling, Advising, and Transfer Center in C110 can help students who are experiencing an overwhelming inability to cope with traumatic events, inner conflicts and or life situations. If you need assistance, please contact them at (847) 543-2060.
Policy on Academic Integrity: College Policy states: “The very nature of higher education requires that students adhere to accepted standards of academic integrity. Therefore the College of Lake County has adopted the Students Rights and Responsibilities Policy (403) and a Statement of Student Integrity. These may be found in the Student’s Handbook. Among the violations of academic integrity listed and defined are: cheating, plagiarism, falsification and fabrication, unauthorized complicity, abuse of academic materials, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsification and proxy of records and official documents, personal misrepresentation and proxy and rights and bribes, favors and threats. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty. Pursuant to due process guarantees contained in the Student Right and Responsibilities Policy and Procedures on Student Academic Integrity, the minimum punishment for the first offense for a student found in violation of the standards of academic and integrity is failure in the assignment. In addition, a disciplinary record will be established and kept on file in the office of the Vice President for Student Development.”

Plagiarism is, by far, the most common violation of academic integrity in composition classes, and I encourage you to ask me for advice on citing sources whenever a question arises. It is very easy for me to detect plagiarisms with the technological advances available to our faculty. My advice: Don’t lift (steal) anything, and if you have appropriated many key ideas of authors, give them credit in your citations. Ask me about questions that come up about what you can use and how you can use it. I find overtly plagiarized papers insulting personally and depending on the degree it, I will decide whether to submit the plagiarized work to the Ethics Committee, which would be a blight on your college record.

Formal Course Outcomes (Gen ED IAI Number: C1 901 R)

*Use writing as a tool for intellectual discovery and for explaining the context and scope of a text /issue
*Recognize and analyze the often unstated assumptions about ourselves, others, and the world that derive from personal experience
*Demonstrate an understanding of the ways writing can be employed to further critical thinking and show, through writing, results of such critical thinking, which may include: ----- -Questioning of sources information and facts;
--- identifying validity and fallacies in the arguments presented in sources
--- Providing a reasonably laid out chain of evidence to support a claim.
--- Stating and considering and answering counter-arguments.
*Demonstrate the development of a clear rhetorical stance.
*Read and analyze a variety of texts, including visual media (such as film, ads, websites, cartoons, charts, etc.) in their social, historical and rhetorical contexts, critiquing the texts’ rhetorical strategies.
*Demonstrate the ability to formulate clear and interesting research questions and theses that are arguable; investigate those questions using multiple and varied types of sources.
*Evaluate all sources used and show an understanding of their rhetorical context and how that affects the information/ideas presented.

*Compose well-reasoned and researched academic arguments that include: integrated sources, appropriate documentation, and employment of the writing process of drafting, considering instructor feedback and revising.

*Practice varied academic rhetorical styles that observe the conventions of Standardized English.

*Demonstrate the ability to paraphrase and summarize information and ideas found in sources and to integrate original ideas with those of others.

Compose well-reasoned and researched academic arguments that include:
--integrated sources
--appropriate documentation
--employment of the writing process of drafting, considering instructor feedback and revising

*Practice varied rhetorical styles that observe the conventions of Standarized English usage.

*Demonstrate the ability to edit writing so that essays exhibit a minimum of grammar/punctuation errors to convey meaning clearly.

I sincerely hope you enjoy your semester.

****Important final word. I am in the process of trying to set up the grade center on Blackboard, which would allow you to turn in your papers –but now your journals-- through Blackboard—never through email no matter what. If I am able to make this change, then you will not have to worry about having hard copies ready on the day of an assignment. I will give you status updates, but please assume the hard copy policy is in effect until or when I let you know otherwise. There will undoubtedly be setbacks to this process, and I ask you now to exercise some patience with me. I am adding this clause in the syllabus policy to allow for this possible alteration. If an assignment is completed later than the class day, you will be still able to submit it by midnight under this new paper delivery system, unless it is a major essay and is being peer reviewed on the day it was due.