

## **Civics**

### **Focus on Analysis**

#### **Overview**

First, let me state that I have a major passion for politics. I follow politics closely and have a similar passion for imparting what I know to students. Keep in mind that this course is not leveled. When you enter a voting booth, nobody will ask you which courses you took in high school, what your gpa was or what you scored on your SATs. You're all equal at that point. This is the principle of one man or woman and one vote. As such, you might ask yourself whether you are ready to enter the adult world and what knowledge you will need as it pertains to how your community, state and country run. That is where this class comes in. My goal for you, at minimum, is to be able to pass a test that would be given to someone seeking American citizenship, with flying colors.

#### **Expectations**

As much as anything else, I expect engagement. I will do my best to make the class interesting, entertaining and interactive. There are days I may fail miserably in that endeavor. However, I expect that you ask good questions, offer answers when possible, and act like somebody who is ten months away from being a high school graduate and depending on your birth date, an adult with all of the rights and responsibilities that go along with that title. Or if you are a younger student, I expect you to conduct yourself like someone who plans to vote in the near future and be an active participant in the political process at the local, state and national levels. I do not expect you to have a plethora of prior knowledge, and if you know zero about the way the government functions, this will not place you at a disadvantage. With this in mind, whether you do or do not have prior knowledge of issues, stances, policies, laws and functions, you will respect your classmates viewpoints, questions and comments. The academic expectation for this course is **Literacy**. As such, there will be assessments that use the Literacy rubric for grading.

#### **Grading**

As it relates to grading, please keep in mind that receiving Civics credit is a graduation requirement. Given this, I'm confident none of you, nor me, want to be concerned about your grade in June and face the prospect of finding a way to achieve the Civics credit required to graduate. Or, again, if you are a younger student, you do not want to be faced with the prospect of taking Civics again on top of all of the classes you would currently be taking in a future semester. Thus, it would be in your best interest to shoot for the stars, particularly in the first quarter. I foresee several tests, an occasional homework assignment, a

mini-paper, grades for assignments completed in class, and possibly a debate and/or individual or group project. Next, students are required to attend a minimum of two town meetings (**Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectman, Town-wide meeting, to name a few**) during the semester. An assignment sheet with directions for attending these meeting will be distributed early in the semester. Additionally, as I have always done, I will award three extra points at the end of each quarter to non-disruptive students who contribute frequently and substantively to class discussion.