

Course Expectations for Descartes Main Lesson

Course Overview. Occasionally, in the course history, one extraordinary person is bold enough to put forth a new idea that changes the way we think and the way we perceive the world. René Descartes was one such person. First introduced to the world in a book published in 1637, his ideas revolutionized math, science and general philosophy. This course integrates math, science, writing, history and philosophy.

Basic Expectations.

As the teacher, you can expect me to:

- Do my best to make the course interesting, and explain the concepts clearly.
- Ensure that the material is accessible to everyone, not just the “advanced” students.
- Be available for questions and help.

As the student, I expect you to:

- Attend class and be on time.
- Be engaged and focused in class.
- Try your best; don’t give up!
- Ask questions and ask for help when needed.
- Produce a quality Main Lesson book.

Class Participation. The classroom discussions are an important part of the course, and are enlivened when everyone makes thoughtful contributions. Your class participation grade is reflective of your effort and focus, your contribution to the classroom discussions, and your engagement during group work.

Final Exam. There will be only one test during the course, and it will take place on the last day of the block. This final exam will be based upon everything that was discussed during the whole block. There will be a review sheet given out just before the exam, but it will not cover all possible topics for the exam. Good notes will greatly help you to prepare for the exam.

Main Lesson Books.

- Main Lesson books will be collected for grading *every Friday* (except the first Friday). Late books are graded down by one letter grade per school day. Your final book grade is an average of your weekly grades.
- Each time the book are collected, there should be four entries/essays – each one consisting of about 500 words, or the equivalent. Each entry should be a reflection of something that was covered or discussed during class. You have the freedom to decide what to include in your book; it is your creation.
- *An Excellent Main Lesson Book* (“A” quality work)...
 - Is something that you are proud of. It reflects your original work and thoughts.
 - Is a balanced representation of what we covered in class.
 - Shows that you have a solid understanding of the material.
 - Is a resource for you, to be used as a reference in the future.
 - Is well presented and clear. Math concepts are clearly explained for the reader.
 - Could be given to another person, who was not present in the lessons, and, by reading the book, that person could have a good sense of what was done in the class.
- *Individual Work and Plagiarism.*
 - A violation of any of the following may be considered plagiarism:
 - *You may not use the Internet for any purpose in this course.*
 - All Main Lesson book work is *individual work* (which means that it is your creation) unless otherwise stated by Mr. York.
 - Any information coming from a source outside of the classroom (e.g., another person, a book, etc.) *must be adequately footnoted.*
 - *Under no circumstances may a student borrow another student's Main Lesson book, or look at another student's essay or assignment (in rough draft or finished form).*
 - A student who assists another student in plagiarism is also considered guilty of plagiarism.
 - Plagiarism will result in at least failing that particular assignment, will likely result in failing the Main Lesson book, and could lead to failing the entire course.

Main Lesson Book Grades

- 85% – Page-by-Page Grades
(Content, Details, Proofreading, etc.)
- 15% – Presentation

Course Grades

- 55% – Main Lesson book
- 20% – Test
- 25% – Class work, participation & effort