

## **Junior High Writing Challenge**

**Thursdays 11:20-12:20**

**Target Grade Level: 7-8<sup>th</sup> grades (9<sup>th</sup> with teacher pre-approval)**

**Teacher: Catherine Velleco**

**Student Fee: \$30**

**Overview:** This writing course will challenge students to engage in the writing process primarily through the vehicle of literature. Titles being considered include *The Cross of Lead* by Avi, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Roger Green's *King Arthur*. Literature selections will provide the basis for analysis from Biblical perspective, class discussion, vocabulary study, and various writing formats including basic five-paragraph essay, compare and contrast, and narrative. In addition to literature-based writing, students will also write memoirs, character descriptions, and research paragraphs to develop research skills. Course topics include paragraph structure, pre-writing, outlining, developing and supporting a thesis, understanding and identifying theme, and how to construct concise introductions and conclusions. Class time will feature lecture, note-taking, quizzes, tests, oral reading (reader theater style), timed free writing, and more. To complement our challenge, students will study poets including Christina Rossetti and Robert Frost, poetic elements of rhyme, meter and tone in forms such as but not limited to the sonnet, haiku, free verse and limerick. On occasion, and with advance notice, class time will extend into the lunch hour, (students will bring their lunch with them to class on those days).

**Expectations:** Students will be expected to read selected titles in their entirety and come to class prepared for discussion. In order to participate in and benefit from active reading strategies, students will be instructed and expected to mark in the books they are reading. Students may be asked to submit writing assignments online. There will be a summer reading assignment.

**Homework:** Students can expect to spend about 3 hours a week on reading and writing assignments. Some weeks will require more, others less, depending on reading acuity and writing proficiency level.

**Required Texts:** TBD, study guides are currently being evaluated

**Materials Needed:** spiral notebook for in-class free writing, 3-ring binder (2") with 5 dividers, notebook paper, #2 pencils, dictionary or dictionary phone app, highlighters in 3-4 colors.