

August 2020

Dear students,

Welcome to our English course. For those of you who don't know me already, I would like to use this letter to introduce myself without my rambling on.. This way you can stop reading if you need a breather.

So, here goes... I was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates in 1973 where I went to school through ninth grade. There were no American/ international high schools in Dubai back then, so I had to go to a boarding school in Belgium. In hindsight, I am glad I went to Europe even though at the time I adamantly pushed to return to the U.S. Instead, I had the opportunity to explore many countries and now have the travel bug in me. I attended Loyola University in New Orleans where after a one-year stint as journalism major, I earned my BA in English with a certification in Secondary Education. I have since earned my Masters degree in Secondary English Education and would like to take more graduate-level English courses.

My first full-time teaching job after college was as a reading instructor at the New Orleans Job Corps Center, which is an alternative to the traditional high school with a focus on attaining the GED and job training. I married in 1993, and we moved to Maine where my teaching jobs ran the gamut from community college ESOL, to adult education, to an assistant for a first grader who had been physically and emotionally abused. We then moved to Gadsden, Alabama where I taught French I and II and English I and II. In 1997 we moved to Englewood, Florida where I have been teaching English at Lemon Bay for the last twenty-three years. Yes, I know it's a long time-- my ex-students are now teaching here, and I may have taught some of your parents! I also have the honor of sponsoring Lemon Bay's Creative Writing Club and our Shout Out at the Bay Poetry Slam, which I hope you will consider joining.

I love traveling and have had some amazing trips: Chile, India, Greece, and Italy to name some favorites. This summer we stayed close to home, though, and worked on sprucing up our home a bit. In addition to travel, I also love camping and sports, getting together with friends around a good meal, foreign films, (especially Indian ones), and concerts-- not one style in particular -- but rather music inspired by mood and context. I love reading, which is no surprise, and this summer I was on another dystopian/ post-apocalyptic kick. If you enjoy that genre, you may enjoy *The Girl with All the Gifts* by M.R. Carey, which puts a unique twist on the zombie genre.

I dislike scraping ice off windshields at 4 a.m. and blow drying frozen pipes, but the dog-days of summer are getting to me as well. PICKY. I dislike raw tomatoes, rare meat, and lobster. I dislike my technological ignorance, and I have to admit a nostalgia for the simpler days; the pure-remote teaching experience was challenging for me. I also have an aversion to dishonesty, disrespect, and negativity-traits which, in any proximity, are downers.

Well, I will finally close this. I am really looking forward to a great year. Work hard. Communicate with me. Let's collaborate on this venture through AICE English General Paper. I wish you the utmost success. Make your voice heard, and relish every second.

B. Powell