Dear Students,

Hello, class of 2022! I am Ms. Cykiert and I will be your English teacher. I look forward to teaching, learning, and working with you! Congratulations on making it to another year of high school. In order for us to do our jobs the best that we can, we will need to get to know more about each other.

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| **Ms. Cykiert** |
| **About Me**  I was born in Greece and grew up most of my life in Astoria, NY (a neighborhood in Queens). I currently live in Manhattan, but I am so happy that I get to teach here at White Plains High School. I graduated from Hunter College with a degree in English literature and also obtained my Master’s degree in English education at Hunter. I love my job because I learn something new every day and I am constantly inspired by all of you. I am looking forward to getting to know each of you. |
| **What I Like**  Besides teaching, I love reading, writing, cooking, traveling, yoga, philosophical conversations and camping. Some of my favorite books include *1984* by George Orwell, *A Room of One’s Own* by Virginia Woolf ,and most recently, *Sapiens* by Yuval Harari. Anyone who knows me is well aware of my passion for cooking, and of course by consequence, eating. I spend so much of my time on websites such as foodgawker.com or watching the Food Network or Cooking Channel trying to decide what meal I should conquer next! When I camp I feel a tremendous amount of relief. Cooking food over an open fire while friends play the guitar and sit around orange and blue flames has a surreal and relaxing quality. Additionally, the wildlife is breathtaking- having deer walk around your campsite never gets old! I also want to give a shout out to my lovely thirteen-year-old yorkie-poo, Bear, who also joins me on many of my camping endeavors. He is my log-of-fur and I cannot imagine life without him! |
| **What is Important to Me**  What is important to me is working in a classroom that feels like a caring community of learners. We are all different; we have different backgrounds and experiences, and different strengths and weaknesses. I want our classroom to be a place where people’s different points of view are heard and respected, where people feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes, and where we collaborate to help each other learn and succeed. This means approaching each task with seriousness and determination, and always working to the best of your ability, even if the outcome isn’t perfect. Along with the importance of education and a safe learning environment, respect is one of the most important factors in life. As a teacher, I respect my job and my students; and I promise I will do my best to plan interesting and engaging lessons. I promise to be fair as your teacher, and I expect respect from each of my students. Respect comes in many different forms. If you come to class on time with your materials and work hard each day no matter the task, you are exhibiting respect not only for me but also for yourself—which is most important. Come see me whenever you are feeling overwhelmed, confused, or uncertain about a particular assignment. Knowing when to seek help is an important life skill, and you should never feel self-conscious about asking for assistance! Remember that if you knew everything I wouldn’t be here! |

**I would like you to write me a letter about you. You do not have to cover all the questions posed; but please give me a better sense of who you are and what you expect from this class this semester. Some questions you could answer in your letter are:**

* Where are you from? What’s your background? Do you speak another language?
* What are some of your interests or favorites (movie, book, music artist, TV show, hobby, etc)?
* What activities do you enjoy in class? What activities bore you? What else should I know about you that may affect your work? How was your English class experience last year?
* What are your plans and goals after White Plains High School?
* What are you looking forward to in this class? What are you concerned about?
* Any questions you may have for me?

Your letter is due **FRIDAY, September 7th.** I look forward to learning about you in the letter and during our year together. Thank you in advance for your hard work and dedication!

Warmly,

Ms. Cykiert