Guidelines for requesting recommendations:

In the coming years, you may need teacher recommendations for college applications, extracurricular programs, jobs, or scholarships. The vast majority of colleges do not specifically require a recommendation from an English teacher. You should think carefully about which teachers are best suited to write about you. The best recommendations come from teachers who know you well and who have seen you in settings where you are engaged and growing. Ask someone to write for you who will have good things to say about you. This does not necessarily mean the class in which you have the best grade; rather, you should think about where and when you shine. Remember – you do not have the right to see your letters of recommendation; make sure to ask someone who will write you a good one.

General etiquette to keep in mind when you ask for a recommendation from any teacher:

* Teachers are not required to write recommendations for students. You are asking the teacher to do a favor for you, and you should approach the conversation accordingly.
* Anytime someone writes a recommendation for you, you should give the person a handwritten thank you note afterward.
* Anytime someone writes a recommendation for you, you should follow up and let the person know how it all turned out. Did you get the job / scholarship / college acceptance letter, etc.?

If you decide to ask me for a recommendation, follow the steps listed below:

1. Write a letter to me asking me to write the recommendation. In this letter, discuss:
   1. what you are applying for and why.
   2. why you want a recommendation from me; talk specifically about moments in my class that you want me to remember. Describe specific assignments, activities, or interactions in detail.
   3. anything that you would like me to know about you that I do not necessarily know already – significant extracurriculars, talents, challenges, ambitions, etc.
   4. what specifically you need from me (a letter? a form?), where/how it should be submitted (naviance? some other platform? an actual piece of paper?), and when it is due (if there are multiple deadlines, tell me when the earliest one will be).
2. Do not assume that I am going to write the recommendation until I respond to your letter.
3. Ask me at least one month\* before the letter is due. I will be more inclined to say yes to college recommendation requests that I receive in the spring of your junior year than I will be to requests received in the fall.
4. Give me any necessary supplies. If there are paper copies of forms, fill out as much information as you can ahead of time. If anything needs to be sent in the mail, include a stamped and addressed envelope. If the recommendation should be submitted digitally, send me an email that includes details and links. All necessary materials should be well organized, clearly labeled, and given to me shortly after I agree to write you the recommendation. If you do not get materials to me in a timely fashion or if the materials are not complete, I will not necessarily be able to submit your recommendation on time.
5. I will send you an email letting you know when I have submitted the recommendation. If you have not yet heard from me, send me a polite and gentle email reminder one week before the first deadline.

\*If you need a short or quick recommendation that does not require me to write a letter, you may ask me closer to the due date. You should still follow the steps listed above, but the letter can be brief.