

LANGUAGE ARTS 8TH GRADE

Course Syllabus

Course Name: 8th Grade language Arts

Course Description: This course will target students' growth in the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, discussion, reflection, and viewing. Reading strategies, critical thinking skills, and vocabulary building comprise the main elements of reading instructions. Through fiction, non-fiction, and poetry reading, students will practice reading strategies and comprehension skills. The focus of writing will be on narrative, informational, argumentative, and research writing. The overall goal of the class is to increase the literacy and writing ability of students.

Course Resources

- *Literature: Language and Literacy 8*, Prentice Hall (short stories, poetry, drama)
 - Novels: *The Boy in Striped Pajamas*, student choices from suggested literature circle book list/library

Reading Instruction will focus on:

- Short stories, nonfiction, drama, poetry, novels, narrative, and released reading assessment materials. Focus will be on pulling evidence from several sources for answers to questions.
- Reading comprehension and critical thinking strategies, elements of literature, poetic elements, text features, summarizing, analysis, and all Common Core State Standards.

Writing Instruction will focus on:

- Narrative, Informational (Explanatory), research, and Argumentative Writing
- All Common Core State Standards
- Four or more complete essays and/or letters
- Literary writing—providing text-based responses to literature and poetry
- Responses to nonfiction articles and essays

State Assessment:

Students will take the reading and writing **Smarter Balanced Assessment** in the spring.

Course Outline/Instructional Units

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SEMESTER ONE

Novel study/Literary analysis (*Boy in the Striped Pajamas*)

Essays/Writing for variety of audiences (blog)

Short Story Unit (Plot, Setting, Character, Theme)

Vocabulary – Commonly confused words, Literature Dependent words

Grammar – Parts of speech, basic sentence structure

Speech/Oral Presentation

SEMESTER TWO

Poetry

Research Process and Note Taking

Informational Writing (research paper)

Novel Unit – Literature Circles

Non Fiction – essays, reading for information

Essays/Writing for variety of audiences (blog)

Grading:

Major Assessments

Essays and Blogs

Novel study journals

Written responses to literature

Tests

Projects

Research Paper

Students and parents can check grades at any time on-line through Family Access (contact the Main Office for help accessing Family Access).

- Teachers will update grades at least every 2 weeks.
- Progress reports will be available every quarter (9 weeks) through Family Access. If you do not have on-line access, contact the Main Office for a hard copy of the progress report.
- Report cards (official grades) are produced at the end of each semester (18 weeks), and are available through Family Access. If you do not have on-line access, contact the Main Office for a hard copy of the progress report.

NWMS Grading Scale Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93% and above
A-	90% - 92%
B+	88% - 89%
B	83% - 87%
B-	80% - 82%
C+	78% - 79%
C	73% - 77%
C-	70% - 72%
D+	68% - 69%
D	60% - 67%
F	59% - 50%

Weighted Categories Category	Percentage of overall grade
Work Habits (meeting deadlines, completing work assigned, participation)	10 %
Formative Assessments (Constructed response to reading, discussion, essay drafts, vocabulary)	45%
Summative Assessments (Tests, Final Drafts, Quizzes, Constructed Responses)	45%

NWMS Plagiarism Policy

Any student, who knowingly turns in any work that has been done by someone other than himself or herself, and fraudulently represents it as his/her own, shall be considered to have cheated. Cheating also includes aiding someone else in cheating. Students found cheating will earn a failing grade for that work and may or may not be expected to re-do work at teacher's discretion.

Re-do Policy

Work assigned in class is important for learning and to determine student progress. Students are expected to complete ALL major assignments to standard, even if they turn in the work late or need to re-do the work.

Late work will be accepted, and the grade may be reduced to reflect poor work habits. Work turned in on time and demonstrating full effort may be re-done for up to full credit. In order to re-do part or all of a major assignment, the student must:

1. Talk with the teacher to understand what needs to be done for re-do.
2. Demonstrate effort to improve or re-learn the material (determined by the teacher).
3. Complete the revised work within 2 weeks of receiving the original graded work. Mark the work "Late", "Absent", or "ReDo" and put it in the special bin.

Extra Help/Staying After School

NWMS expects all students to meet the learning targets and earn passing grades in their classes. For students who need more time or individualized instruction to be successful, opportunities for extra help are available. Students are encouraged to seek extra help on their own as soon as they recognize that they are struggling. Also, teachers may assign students to come in for extra help when they see a student falling behind or struggling.

Teachers are available before and after school to provide extra help for students on a regular basis. Teachers will provide a schedule of extra help times that they will be available in their classroom. Special arrangements can be made by contacting the teacher directly via email or phone.