

Language Arts: 8th Grade
Riverside Middle School
2009-2010

Instructor: Mrs. Sara Roberts

Room: G-119

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Course Description:

Eighth grade Language Arts/Literature Strategies block is a study of grammar, composition, vocabulary, novels, and research skills. Students will use knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, and evaluation as they explore their language through reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Goals, objectives, and activities follow the district's curriculum and are aligned with eighth grade state curriculum standards. Students will study one novel each quarter as a class. Also, students will be required to read novels outside of class for assigned projects/presentations. They will complete a variety of writing assignments including oral presentations, the examination of grammar usage in different formats, studying spelling words, and working with vocabulary through a cumulative study of STEMS and in the literary context of literature we read.

Course Objectives:

Literature

1. to identify universal themes in the assigned literature and to relate these to personal experiences
2. to recognize major literary forms and techniques
3. to identify the characteristics that distinguish literary forms and techniques
4. to examine a literary selection from several critical perspectives
5. to explore the genres of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama

Writing

1. to write using the structures, principles or rules of grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and diction covered in the *Prentice Hall Literature* textbook and lectures
2. to outline, draft, write, and revise essays demonstrating the ability to:
 - create effective thesis statements
 - express ideas by using various methods of development according to the South Carolina ELA curriculum standards
 - write for various audiences
 - produce effective essays under time constraints

Speaking/Research

1. to use verbal and nonverbal presentation skills to deliver formal oral presentation
2. to select major points from written research, prioritize pertinent information, and present literary findings
3. to establish criteria for self- and peer-evaluation of spoken text

4. to analyze and synthesize information from a variety of sources to produce research reports
5. to cite, through MLA documentation, a minimum of 8 sources used in the research project
6. to define the meaning and consequences of plagiarism
7. to distinguish one's own ideas from information created or discovered by others

English Language Arts Standards/Objectives: <http://www.myschools.com/offices/cso/>

Class Policies and Procedures:

Required Text: *Prentice Hall Literature, Grade 8* Penguin Edition

Attendance and Make-up Work: Students are urged to keep absences to a minimum. They are responsible for work missed and should be ready with the appropriate assignment on the day they return. All make-up work must be completed within five days after returning to school. Failure to do so will result in a grade of "0" on the assignment.

The Eighth Grade Team Recovery Program

- 1) All assignments will be turned in to the teacher on the appropriate day/time in order to receive full credit.
- 2) Assignments turned in the next day will be graded according to the teacher's standards and then thirty points will be deducted.
- 3) Assignments turned in more than one day late will be graded according to the teacher's standards and then fifty points will be deducted.
- 4) Teachers will evaluate their grade book each week and evaluate which students will be assigned to Assignment Recovery for that week. Students will not be allowed to miss more than five assignments before they are assigned to Assignment Recovery.
- 5) Projects and tests will be made up at the teacher's discretion.
- 6) Students may not participate in any extracurricular activities if they are missing assignments.

Materials Needed in Class Daily: a 3-ring notebook, loose leaf wide ruled notebook paper, pencil or ball-point pen, and the assigned text(s)

Classroom Rules:

1. BE POLITE.
-Be in your seat before the bell rings.
2. BE PREPARED.

- Have your materials every day.
- 3. BE POLITE.
 - Respect other people and their belongings.
 - Respect your teacher.
 - Respect yourself.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Any plagiarism or cheating earns the involved parties a grade of "0" for the assignment.

Receiving credit for assignments: Your work must be completed and turned in on time in order for you to receive credit. Homework is due at the beginning of class. No partial credit will be given for late work. No late work will be accepted.

Grading Distribution: Major tests, essays, projects = 50%; Quizzes = 30%; Homework and class participation = 20%

Grading Scale: A = 93-100, B = 85-92, C = 77-84, D = 70-76, F = 69 or below

Tentative Course Outline:

First Nine Weeks

Daily Oral Language, Stems, and Journal Writing

Unit 1: Fiction and Nonfiction

Reading Skills Addressed:	Analyzing the genre Comparing and contrasting Making predictions
Ongoing Grammar Study:	Nouns
Writing Portfolio:	Description of a person Autobiographical essay
Novel:	<i>The Outsiders</i> by S.E. Hinton

Second Nine Weeks

Daily Oral Language, Stems, and Journal Writing

Unit 2: Short Stories

Reading Skills Addressed:	Analyzing the genre Evaluating character and setting
Ongoing Grammar Study:	Pronouns
Writing Portfolio:	Short Story

Unit 3: Types of Nonfiction

Reading Skills Addressed:	Evaluating articles and essays Analyzing current topics and issues Relating to the lives of others Examining the author's tone, voice, and organization
Writing Portfolio:	Persuasive Essay
Novel:	<i>The Pigman</i> by Paul Zindel

Third Nine Weeks

Daily Oral Language, Stems, and Journal Writing

Unit 4: Poetry

Reading Skills Addressed: Surveying the work of various poets
 Analyzing the forms and components of poetry

Ongoing Grammar Study: Adjectives, adverbs, phrases, and clauses

Writing Portfolio: Research paper

Play: *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Fourth Nine Weeks

Daily Oral Language, Stems, and Journal Writing

Unit 5: Drama

Reading Skills Addressed: Studying the dramatic conventions
 Analyzing a dramatic work

Ongoing Grammar Study: Prepositions, interjections, and conjunctions

Writing Portfolio: Business letter

Play: *A Comedy of Errors*

*Because our primary goal is to maximize student achievement, material may be added, deleted, and/or substituted at the teacher's discretion based on the individual needs, levels, and learning styles of each class. Creative projects, written assignments, and supplemental materials may also be included throughout the year as opportunities arise.