

8TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS SYLLABUS 2017-2018

This course is designed to help students become independent readers, writers, and thinkers. Our literature study is wide and deep, and students are expected to apply active reading strategies regularly. They will read and comprehend texts individually and then expand their thinking by analyzing and evaluating these texts with peers. Writing is a consistent part of the curriculum as a tool for both personal expression and formal responses. Language arts allows students to expand their vocabularies, reinforce their grammar skills, and develop various forms of communication. Our activities include group and independent work, seminar-style discussions, creative presentations, etc. The goal is for students to become involved in their education as complex, 21st century learners.

Our first quarter will be a short story unit during which we will reinforce key literary elements and the way they work together to create meaning in a text. Students will also work on narrative writing skills. Second quarter standard classes will read *The Giver* by Lois Lowry while honors classes read *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. Third quarter standard classes will study *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson and honors classes will study *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. We will also write an argumentative essay this quarter that will include research. Finally, our fourth quarter will be a combination of preparation for testing as well as a literature circle study. Students will be able to choose a novel (from a provided list) to read with a group of peers. Guidelines and expectations will be established at that time. In addition to this, students are expected to read independently on a regular basis. They should have something of interest to read in class at all times. This text may be any genre and should be at or above their reading level. I am happy to guide students in their selections if needed.

Please secure a copy of our two key texts (in bold above) as soon as you can. Many times, school novels will sell out at local bookstores quickly. Purchasing soon will save you the rush of trying to find a copy later on. Within the first few weeks of school, Crestdale will partner with Barnes & Noble. They will provide the titles for our novel studies, and Crestdale will receive a portion of their proceeds. Be on the lookout for further information, as that would be a wonderful time to buy.

COMMUNICATION

I am always available if you have questions or concerns. You can reach me by email at krystil.wade@cms.k12.nc.us or by calling the school at 980-343-5755. My desire is for us to work together so that each student can have a successful, rewarding year.

Class Rules: L.E.A.R.N

1. Listen...but also speak.
 2. Enter and exit prepared.
 3. Always practice honesty.
 4. Respect others and ourselves.
 5. Never give excuses, only 100% effort.
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Required Supplies:

- * Binder or Spiral notebook (approx. 1 ½ in or 3-subject)
- * Composition notebook
 - * Pencils/Pens
- * Loose leaf paper
 - *Post-its

Suggested Personal Supplies:

- * White-out
- * Markers, colored pencils, etc.
- *Tape
- * Mini sharpener
- * Mini stapler
- *Safety scissors

Homework

Students are expected to read and write regularly for homework. Individual homework assignments outside of independent reading and writing will be explained in class and posted online on my website: mrsirvin04.weebly.com.

Grading and Make-Up Policy

Formal assignments are 65% of the grade, and informal assignments are 35%. Student scoring lower than a 79% on a standards-based assessment may receive a retest for up to a 79%. If absent, each student is responsible for completing all work missed. Student should take the initiative to get their assignments, either online or from me, and complete them in a timely manner. Late work will receive a 10% deduction per day. Work turned in after 5 days will receive a 50% maximum.

Technology

We will be using Chromebooks regularly in class. In addition, technology access may be necessary outside of school. If your child does not have regular access to a computer or a printer, please let me know as soon as possible. Phones should not be used in the classroom; however, tablets may be used for reading purposes only.

****Tutoring will be available Tuesday mornings at 8:15 and on an individual basis as needed.****

