
English Language Arts 7/8

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CLASS DESCRIPTION: Welcome to our 2017-2018 school year and this English Language Arts class. I am looking forward to spending this year with you. I believe reading, writing, and speaking are critical life skills that will help you succeed in High School and beyond, and you will have plenty of time and practice doing all three this year. In this class you'll have the opportunity to find and read books you'll fall in love with and write stories, essays, and poems that you are proud of.

Our class time will be spent in a workshop model. This is an instructional model that is designed to give you as much in-class time as possible to read and write. Through these reading and writing workshops, you will be able to increase the volume of your reading and writing while building a toolkit of strategies and skills that can be applied to whatever book and writing piece that you're working on.

In this class you will:

- Read poetry, fiction and non-fiction books and articles
- Write on an informal basis to practice key writing principles and strategies, as well as the Standard Conventions of the English Language.
- Use Utah Compose and provided prompts to practice writing in a formal setting.
- Write a narrative essay, an argumentative essay, and an informative essay.
- Craft speeches and presentations and participate in debates.
- Practice and master the ELA standards appropriate for your grade level as established by Utah's Board of Education.
- And most important... *have fun*.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RESOURCES: (Please bring all of these resources to class each day)

- A composition notebook
- At least one tab or section in a three-ring binder.
- Paper and a writing implement.
- *Wonder* by RJ Palacio. (First unit/term only) Books will be provided to those who are unable to bring their own, but having students purchase or borrow a copy will help our class out immensely.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY: Your attendance is essential and will directly correlate to your success in this class. Please be on time and ready to learn every day. If for any reason you need to miss a class, you are responsible for checking the class blog, asking a peer, or meeting with me (before or afterschool) to find out what you missed. Please do not email me to ask what you missed without checking the blog and asking a peer first.

COMMUNICATION: Be sure to check the class blog regularly. I will post assignments and all the resources you will need to complete them each week. If you have questions, please email me or drop by before or after school to talk. I'm here to help and always want you to feel comfortable with assignments and engaged in learning.

FOOD AND DRINK: You are welcome to drink water and snack on fresh fruits and vegetables in class. Please do not bring other food for snacks in class.

ASSIGNMENTS AND CHECKLISTS: All class work will be submitted and reviewed on a biweekly basis. Please follow your checklists to stay up to date on classwork and assignments. At the end of each two-week period, you will have and submit a completed work checklist, a written reading response, and responses for 2-3 journal prompts. You will also complete and submit projects and longer writing pieces from time to time.

REASSESSING WORK: Because our school uses Standards Based Grading to assess student proficiency, I welcome and encourage resubmissions of work to demonstrate your growing proficiency. Specifically, if you don't like your assessed level of proficiency on any given standard, meet with me to find a different way of demonstrating your proficiency or rework and edit your assigned work. It's really that easy to master each standard we assess on.

However, the important thing to note is that you must submit each assignment by its due date in order to determine your baseline proficiency and have the opportunity to reassess on that assignment and standard. If at least an attempt at the assignment is not turned in by the due date, it's going to be labeled as missing work and the option for reassessments will not be available.

PLAGIARISM: Please be aware that using anyone else's words or work without citing the source is plagiarism. You can always quote or paraphrase words you find and like- but you need to appropriately give credit for those words. We will cover this topic extensively later, but I want to bring this important issue to your attention early on.

GRACE AND COURTESY: An underlying value of our program and Dr. Montessori's philosophy is grace and courtesy. I won't have a lot of classroom rules, but I will insist that we align all of our behaviors with this core value. As we work through our class norms, we will talk about grace and courtesy in more detail.

Syllabus Acknowledgement Form

Please be sure you've read through this syllabus and feel comfortable with all that I'm presenting. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to let me know. Once you understand all that I've outlined, please sign with your parents below.

My student and I have read and reviewed this syllabus together;

PARENT / GUARDIAN NAME: _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Do you prefer to communicate through telephone or email? *(Please help me ensure I have the best contact information for you)*

Telephone _____ (optional)

Email _____ (optional)

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