

Welcome to Fisher Middle School

Fall
2014

6TH GRADE ENGLISH

ROOM R-1 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our English class — I hope you're ready for an awesome year! As your teacher, it's my mission to make you feel at home and welcome in our classroom, so let me take a moment to share with you what we will learn this year, as well as go over our classroom guidelines so that you know what to expect. Please read this newsletter carefully and share this information with your parent(s)/guardian(s) and return the last page by the beginning of next week: Monday, August the 25th.

Ms. Gage
Room R-1
408-335-2352

6TH GRADE ENGLISH CURRICULUM: BASED ON THE CALIFORNIA COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- **Reading:** Our English text is Prentice Hall Literature, which features short stories, poems, plays, informational text, and non-fiction. We are tentatively scheduled to read Where the Red Fern Grows, one of several books in a literature circle, some Greek plays, as well as an independent novel (on your own) each month from different literary genres.
- **Writing:** We will write a personal narrative, response to literature essays, explanatory essays, and argument (persuasive) essays throughout the year. The TBEAR paragraph format that I'll be teaching you will make it easy to organize the key ideas in your paragraph. You will find that your history and science teachers will use the same format too.
- **Speaking/Listening:** All students will participate in class discussions pertaining to the topics, themes, and readings we will study. Each student will have multiple opportunities to deliver speeches, participate in group presentations and a panel discussion. Attentive listening, impromptu responses, and creative input are expected from all students.
- **Spelling/Vocabulary:** The study of word origins and their meaning based on historical clues will teach us both how to spell words and what they mean. We will study Greek and Latin roots to help find patterns of meaning in different words.
- **Grammar:** Our study of grammar will be closely linked to our writing. We will study effective use of pronouns and how a pronoun can either sharpen or diffuse the meaning of our ideas. The time we spend learning to properly combine our sentences will reinforce correct comma and semicolon usage and help us to detect common sentence errors. Through editing exercises and studying capitalization rules, we will learn to proofread to catch our own mistakes in capitalization, grammar and punctuation.

Ugh, Homework?!

Homework each day is written on the classroom whiteboard. Additionally, all homework assignments are posted on my website: http://rjfisher.lgusd.edlioschool.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=377966&type=u. Whenever possible .pdf versions of homework will be available to download from my website.

The most up to date information will be on the whiteboard in the classroom so be sure to check it daily. You will be provided with a planner so that you can write down your assignments.

You will be expected to read an independent novel every night for 15 minutes. In addition, on average you will be assigned 20 minutes

of homework per night. Some nights, there may be less; other nights, there may be more. Pace yourself and attend to your assignments daily so that you don't procrastinate (wait until the last minute).

Important Note: Know the Fisher Homework Policy! Please communicate with me if you have a problem with an assignment before it is due! It is much better to discuss your concerns with me rather than to unnecessarily receive a low score or half-credit on an assignment.

Absent?

If you are absent, please check my website to see what work you missed each day. I will upload powerpoints and homework assignments daily to help you stay on track. You may

email me if you have questions. I'm always available by email, or by appointment before or after school upon your return, so we can review your questions and/or review what you missed in class.

According to the Fisher Homework Policy, a two-day grace period is allowed for each day absent. Tests and/or quizzes missed with an excused absence will be made up in TNT within two weeks or by end of the quarter (whichever comes first). All tests not made up within the time limit are at risk of receiving no points. In the event of an extended illness or absence, special arrangements can be made.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR ENGLISH

Please purchase the following items for this class:

- **3 section binder with folder pockets (you can combine with other subjects to keep things light) OR 3 folders with pockets (use what works best for you)**
- **Spiral notebook or a Composition book as a journal (100+ pages)**
- **Pens, pencils, pencil sharpener, scissors, binder paper, and a glue stick**
- **3 x 3 Post-It notes**
- **2 fine point dry erase markers (red and any other color)**
- **3 differently-colored highlighters**

GRADING POLICY

Grades are calculated on a traditional point scale. Rubrics are provided for each major assignment to define the expectations for each possible grade. At any time, you may view your grades on PowerSchool. Grades are entered and updated as the year progresses. If you see a grade that was incorrectly entered, please make me aware of the error as soon as possible, so I may promptly correct it. If you have questions regarding a grade, please talk to me about it before or after school or by appointment.

I do not give you grades — you earn them based on the work you submit. If you earn a grade that you feel does not represent your best work on a test or writing assignment, you may request to retake the test or resubmit the assignment with changes. If you let me know you want to retake a test, you will be given additional homework so that you may practice the concept. Most of the time you can then retake the test after school during TNT where you are given a different version of the test to retake. Your grade will be based on the best grade received. Please come prepared to learn each day with homework done to the best of your ability. You don't need to "know all of the answers," but I do expect you to put forth your best work.

CLASS CONDUCT

Since you are new to middle school, I understand that you have a lot to adjust to. However, understand that it is YOUR choice to decide whether or not you want to be an active participant in your education and your future, and you need to know that others are impacted by your conduct in class. I feel most classrooms run best when all members of the class agree to abide by a level of mutual respect. Come prepared to learn, work hard in class, and you will have a very successful sixth grade year!

CONSEQUENCES

The consequences of a conflict will be addressed on an individual basis. If it's a small conflict, I will first ask you to solve the problem yourself. If the problem continues, I may suggest several solutions and let you choose — it is YOUR choice how you want to deal with things in the classroom, just be sure you understand the consequences of your actions. If a problem continues, we may need discuss it with your parents, and if it continues from there, we may need to participate in the school's referral process with the front office.

About Ms. Gage

Ms. Gage lives in Los Gatos with her husband, dog and cat. She was born in Oakland, CA and has lived in the Bay Area most of her life. She spent two years living in France where she studied French. She loves to travel and has visited many countries in Europe, the Middle East and Central America.

She also loves to go camping and hiking locally with her husband and her dog, GInger. Ms. Gage loves reading novels and writing short stories and poems. Teaching writing is a special treat for her because she is a writer and has had her poems and short stories published. She has a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing and a Bachelor of Arts in French.

This is Ms. Gage's eighth year at Fisher, and her seventh year teaching 6th Grade. Sixth graders are her favorite age group to teach. Prior to being an elementary education teacher, she was a computer instructor for a vocational school. Before that she taught Creative Writing to college students at San Francisco State University.

After you and your parents have read this newsletter thoroughly, please sign and complete the confirmation slip below. I'm look forward to getting to know you. I know we will have a fantastic year!

Student's name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

I have reviewed the above information and understand the expectations of me:

- I will put forth a high level of effort in and outside of the classroom.
- I will come to class prepared with the proper materials and an attitude ready to learn.
- I will stay organized by maintaining my planner and binder of my coursework.

Student Signature:

_____ Date _____

I have reviewed the above information and will help my child by:

- Establishing a time and place for my child to study
- Providing the materials listed above
- Reinforcing the importance of organization and hard work to succeed

Parent or Guardian Name:

_____ Date _____
Parent or Guardian Signature:

_____ Date _____
Parent or Guardian Contact Info (please circle preferred method of contact):

Email: _____ Home Phone: _____

Cell phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Additional Contact information:

Parent or Guardian Name:

_____ Date _____
Parent or Guardian Signature:

_____ Date _____
Parent or Guardian Contact Info (please circle preferred method of contact):

Email: _____ Home Phone: _____

Cell phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM WITH YOUR PARENTS AND RETURN IT TO ME BY MONDAY,
AUGUST 25, 2014