



7th Grade Language Arts
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Welcome to your seventh grade Language Arts class. I am excited about this 2013-2014 school year.

I believe that each student has valuable insights and ideas about the world and his or her place in it. Words can take us anywhere and everywhere, open our minds, and help us to see things from someone else's point of view. We will embark on this adventure together. Let's go!

Course Description

Reading

To read well, students must read often. I plan many opportunities for independent, group, and class reading with a variety of texts. Some texts will be part of the district's curriculum, but students will also have opportunities to choose what to read. An exploration of various genres will be part of our reading study this year with both class novels and other texts. Also, they will also be required to reflect on their reading regularly by responding to reflection questions. Selected novels will be available to purchase in the school supply room or on students' individual electronic readers such as a Kindle, Nook, or iPad. (Novels may not be read on phones.)

Writing

"Writing is learned by imitation. I learned to write mainly by reading writers who were doing the kind of writing I wanted to do." ~William Zinsser

As is the case with reading, students must write often to become effective writers. Writing is a powerful instrument of thought. Writing allows students to learn not only about themselves, but also about other people, cultures, and the world itself. Writing encompasses a process in which the writer develops a purpose, sets goals, builds ideas, drafts, revises, and edits until the piece has met its intended purpose. Students will compose diverse writing pieces of varying lengths throughout the school year including responses to literary text, thematic analysis, persuasive writing, personal narratives, and various expository pieces. Teacher-led lessons will be used frequently to teach specific aspects of writing, grammar, and spelling. Students will then practice these new skills and knowledge in their writing pieces. Finally, reading what others have written, responding to others' writing, and listening to others' responses to his or her own writing are important activities in the classroom. **Writing drafts for peer and teacher conferences and final drafts must be typed.** By the end of the year, students will have created a portfolio based on many different writing genres allowing them to reflect on their growth as a writer during seventh grade.

Cooperative Learning

We will work in cooperative groups quite often. It is an important life skill to learn how to work well in a group. Some of the benefits of cooperative learning are increased dependence on one another for success, increased individual accountability, enhanced face-to-face interaction, and promotion of active learning.

Public Speaking

You will become comfortable presenting in front of our class. We will work on this throughout the year. Our classroom will be a safe and cordial environment because we will support each other. We are not able to become better at something unless we are stretched and feel brave enough to try new things.

Class Supplies

1. Three-ring binder
2. Loose-leaf notebook paper- Please replenish throughout the year.
3. Five dividers for writing, grammar, vocabulary, notes, graded work
4. Wide ruled composition book (100 sheets)
5. Blue/black pens, red pens, pencils, highlighters, and white out
6. Novels as needed
7. Flash drive

Class Procedures and Expectations

1. Enter the classroom on time with all materials.
2. Be seated promptly.
3. Copy your daily agenda and begin your warm-up.
4. Actively participate.
5. Be honest and kind.



The bottom line is you know how to behave in a classroom. Your goal is to make individual progress in your learning. You need to do that without causing a problem for someone else. I am here to help you be your best.

Make-up Work

Try your best to come back prepared.

All homework is posted on my website. When you are absent, you should check my web page before returning to class. Make-up work will be available in folders on the missed work board in the classroom. It is also a good idea to call a friend in your class to see what you missed. Use all of your available resources to return to school in a prepared state. If your first day of absence is the day an assignment is due, the assignment will be expected the first day you return to school.

Grading Guidelines

1. **Grading:** Each six weeks students will receive grades for daily work (classwork, homework, and quizzes) and major grades (tests, writings, and projects). Students and parents are encouraged to check grades on-line using Skyward. Daily work is worth 40% of the six weeks grade, and major work is worth 60% of the six weeks grade. Make sure that your name is on all of your homework. Work without names will not be graded and will be considered late if handed in again.
2. **Re-takes:** Students may retake tests and quizzes to earn up to a 70 within five school days of grades being posted. Students are responsible for making arrangements for the re-take.
3. **Late work policy:** Any work assigned to students has value and importance and needs to be completed thoughtfully, thoroughly, and on time. The maximum grade earned for one day late is a 70; the maximum grade for more than one day late is a 50.

“Life is tons of discipline. Your first discipline is your vocabulary; then your grammar and your punctuation... Then, in your exuberance and bounding energy you say you’re going to add that. Then you add rhyme and meter. And your delight is in that power.” ~Robert Frost

