

2018-19
8th Grade Language Arts
Mrs. Young

Welcome to 8th Grade Language Arts! I am excited to have the opportunity to teach your child this year. The study of English Language Arts is primarily a skills acquisition and application course. There is substantive content, but it is directed at raising the level of comprehension, analytical, collaboration, and communication skills the individual possesses and can use to ensure a deeper understanding of and therefore, more effective participation in the real world. The level of these skills has a profound effect on the personal, social, and economic aspects of one's life. Your child's experience will be both challenging and rewarding, and I look forward to helping them develop along the way.

This sheet is intended to provide you with some essential curriculum and contact information. I post all daily assignments and homework on my Schoology calendar, which can be found on the main page of my website. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year.

Email: Catherine.young@gmsdk12.org

Website: <http://cyoungresgmsd.weebly.com>

School Website: http://www.gmsdk12.org/riverdaleelementary_home.aspx

School Phone: 901-756-2300

Planning Time: 1:15-2:00PM

Texts: (All novels and supplemental readings used throughout the course will be provided for students.)

To Kill a Mockingbird

Unbroken

Workbooks

Grading Scale (Individual Quarter Grades):

Tests/Projects – 50%

Quizzes/Classwork – 40%

Homework 10%

Semester and final grades are determined as follows:

8th Grade Language Arts

S1= Q1 is 50%, and Q2 is 50%

S2= Q3 is 50%, and Q4 is 50%

***Please check Skyward often to keep up with your student's grades.

Skyward login: (Final and accurate grading program)

<https://sis-germantown.tnk12.gov/scripts/wsisa.dll/WService=wsGERStu/seplog01.w>

Homework:

- Reading/rereading text excerpts and CLOSE reading/annotation strategies
- Studying for assessments
- Long-term research and essay assignments

Assignments:

- Detailed daily tasks, including homework, due dates, and test/quiz dates, will be listed on the Schoology calendar. (Absent students MUST check the calendar for details of missed instruction.)
- Schoology is where all digital assignments and documents are located. (My website does offer links to Schoology and additional resources, but I will not continue updating my website once all students/parents are able to access Schoology and Skyward.)
- I will post and grade most daily lessons/assignments, all supplemental activities/materials, most assessments, all rubrics, and all links on your child's Schoology ELA course. (Note: Skyward is the grading system and will always have the most up-to-date average, not Schoology.)

Course Basics:

- Essays and Research Papers
- Vocabulary Analysis
- Literacy, Writing, and Grammar Skills
- Analyze texts
- Debates/Oral Presentations
- Collaborative groups/activities
- Digital assignments

Late work:

Most assignments receive a 10-point deduction for each day late.

Tutorials:

I am available most mornings to help students. To ensure my availability, please prearrange a time with me.

Note: I never turn away a student in need.

Course Goals:

The eighth grade English Language Arts program is a true integration of literacy skills: reading, writing, creating, communicating (listening, speaking, and presenting) and collaborating. In this course, students will learn and practice critical reading, thinking, and writing skills through a variety of genres. Students will learn and apply a variety of strategies to uncover hidden layers of meaning in literary texts and to examine sophisticated literary techniques to strengthen their abilities to use language purposefully and skillfully. Acquisition and application of Twenty-first Century Skills, including global awareness and Digital Media Literacy, will be fully integrated into the curriculum.

While the goal is to produce a rigorous program of learning for increased student ability and achievement, the ELA course also strives to provide an engaging and relevant environment that values the individual student both regarding need and interest without regard to present ability or past performance. Our goal is to raise the level of student ability and achievement, period! We begin where the student is and work from there for ALL students. The only failure is not to try or to give up. Through genuine and constant effort, unflappable persistence, and an attitude of resiliency ALL students will find success!

Other Information:

1. Please encourage your student to take thorough notes on a daily basis.
2. Please help them develop the habit of recording assignments (long-term and short-term) in agenda pad and making them accountable to these due dates.
3. I will provide methods/suggestions to help stop procrastination habits. Please encourage students to plan accordingly and adhere to the long-term strategies. This will benefit students both academically as well as reduce stress levels.
4. Please help in emphasizing the importance of reading. Reading is essential to all academic areas. My one true wish is for all students to develop a passion for reading not just for my class but also for their future. Reading is the key to success!
5. I encourage all students to ask questions if they do not understand a concept or if additional help is needed. The only way we can both be successful is by communicating throughout the year.

Thank you for allowing me to have the opportunity to teach your child this year. I look forward to working with you and your student towards a fruitful and enjoyable eighth-grade experience.