

2019 -
2020

8th Grade English/Language Arts

****This syllabus is subject to change at teacher discretion.**

TEACHERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION



Mrs. Lisa Whaley

lisa.whaley@chestercountyschools.org

Mrs. Summer Willis

summer.willis@chestercountyschools.org

Mrs. Christina Varvel

christina.varvel@chestercountyschools.org

***Email is
the best
way to
contact
us.**



Daily Planning Period: 1st Period 8:00 – 8:54



School Phone: (731) 989 – 8135



School Website: chestercountyschools.org

CLASS MATERIALS

Required:

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Multiple pencils/pens
- ☐ One folder*

•With the limited supplies required, all students should come to class prepared EVERY DAY.

*This folder will be used and left in the classroom. It may be helpful to have another folder or space in a binder for class work and notes to take with you.



CLASS DESCRIPTION

This reading/language arts class is designed to increase communication skills through reading, writing, speaking, and the study of the English language. Our primary focus will be the mastery of the different writing styles, demonstration of the rules of grammar, and the ability to express yourself orally.

This year we will read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts including novels, short stories, dramas, poetry, and essays. These writing pieces will model the different writing styles we will be working on ourselves. Writing assignments may include timed responses, journal writing, essays, critiques, and creative pieces. Vocabulary and grammar assignments will also be an important part of this class. Because we are a community of learners, please also expect to work periodically in group situations and to present information to your peers in groups or individually.

Please understand that at-home reading is expected and is a component of our course. Students will be held accountable for at-home reading by various methods. The best way to improve reading skills and vocabulary is to read more and more. Reading ability affects all aspects of life.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- 1. We are a team.** We are to work together, build relationships, and encourage each other to become a team.
- 2. We respect everyone.** We are to respect every person, his or her belongings, and his or her ideas.
- 3. We do our best.** I will do my best every day, and I expect the same from you. This includes not making excuses, trying our hardest, and believing in ourselves.
- 4. We follow school rules.** (See School and Board handbooks for detailed information)
- 5. We bring a positive attitude every day.** Unfortunately, bad days do occur; however, we should try to bring a positive attitude to each class.
- 6. We work hard every day.**
- 7. We come to class prepared.** Materials are listed above, and it is expected that you will come to class with these materials and a willingness to learn.
- 8. We will approach each task with GRIT, GROWTH, and GRATITUDE in mind.** Make it your goal to learn something new every day. If you do this, you will learn.



BOOK STUDIES

- Our standards will be taught through book studies. Each student will be provided a book to use in class. We do have a few extra books that can be checked out with your child's teacher if needed. If your child would prefer or benefit from having their own copy of the class novels, we plan to read *Touching Spirit Bear*, *The Outsiders*, *March*, *Chains*, and *The Diary of Anne Frank* this school year. These books will be read in class, so purchasing the books is completely optional.
- Lessons including writing, grammar, reading comprehension, critical thinking, will be centered around themes from each book.

ABSENTEE POLICY

•YES, WE WILL DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT IF YOU ARE ABSENT.

- It is the student's responsibility to check the class make-up work bin to find any assignments missed and also check with the teacher to make sure they have everything they need to get caught up.
- Students have the number of days absent plus one to turn in any missed work.



PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Each teacher will be setting up a Google classroom to send out important information, reminders, updates, lesson resources, and announcements.
- All students will be members of the group through their school email accounts. Parents are welcome and encouraged to join using their own email account or may access through their child's school email account.
- We would also like to keep communication open through individual parent emails, so we are asking that you send your child's teacher an email. Please complete the **Parent Homework** and include your child's first and last name as the subject of the email.

GRADING POLICY

- The Tennessee State Standards will be assessed throughout the grading periods.
- It is our goal that each student and parent stay up to date on the progress being made in class.
- All work will be graded and returned in-class in a timely manner. (Please allow a while longer for lengthier writing assignments.)
- We encourage you to login to ParentVue* weekly.
- Therefore, we ask that if you have concerns or questions about your child's grades you speak to your child first before contacting the teacher. He/she should be able to explain the error(s), what the correct answer is, and why it is the correct answer.

*If you need help logging in to ParentVue, contact the office for assistance.



REDO/RETAKE POLICY

- Only one redo per assignment will be allowed, excluding homework.
- The higher of the two grades will be recorded.
- Student will be required to fill out a Redo Request with parental signature.
- The Redo Request must be submitted within one week of receiving the graded work.
- The teacher will assign remedial work and establish a due date.
- The student must show understanding of the skills assessed.
- The teacher may choose to assign more remediation.
- The teacher and student will then schedule a date and time for the redo/retake outside of regularly scheduled class time.

GRADING SCALE

A	93-100
B	92-85
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	0-69

Additional scoring information will be given by the specific teacher.



YEAR-LONG SKILLS

- This list consists of skills that will be continuously reinforced, practiced, and assessed. These skills are fundamental to most portions of reading and writing, and it is essential that students build on these basic skills.
- Year-Long Reading and Writing Skills:** parts of speech, subject-verb agreement, types of sentences, clauses/phrases, other grammar skills, central idea, key details, text analysis, and citing textual evidence.

UNITS OF STUDY

Our major units of study will include but are not limited to:

Unit 1: *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson

Unit 2: *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

Unit 3: *March* by John Lewis

Unit 4: *Chains* by Laura Halse Anderson

Unit 5: *The Diary of Anne Frank* (drama)



Throughout all of our writing we will also utilize the multi-step writing process to develop, revise, evaluate, and improve our writing.

In all units, we will address the various element of specific genres (including but not limited to organization, purpose, audience, narration, conflict, sound, graphics, tone, and theme).

*Teachers will add or delete resources as needed.

PARENT HOMEWORK

No one know your child better than you. As a parent, your perception of my student is a valuable resource. The more I know and understand about your child, the more effective I can be as a teacher.

I would appreciate your participation in a "Parent Homework" assignment that will be of great value to me. It will also model for your child the importance of completing homework assignments in a timely manner. This lesson may be especially important now that your child will be receiving homework in preparation for the rigor of high school.

You might want to include a brief biography, problems, special abilities, fears, strengths, weaknesses, and past school experiences. Keep in mind there may be information you would like me to know about your child that he/she would not volunteer. What are your hopes and dreams for your child?

I am looking forward to reading your letter and working with you to make this your child's best year yet. Please submit this through email by next Friday, August 10. If you do not have access to email, please feel free to send it in a sealed envelope with your child. All information will be kept confidential and greatly appreciated.

Thanks for sharing your child with me,



We are looking forward to a fantastic year!

Parents, please sign and remove the slip below. Return it to your child's English/Language Arts teacher by the end of next week. The syllabus can also be found on the school website as well as the Google classroom for future reference. Please don't forget to do your **Parent Homework**.

#CCJHSEaglePride

By signing below, I am agreeing I have read the syllabus for eighth-grade **English/Language Arts** and understand the course's grading policy, classroom expectations, intended units of study, and supplies needed.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____