

ENGLISH COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: English 8

Department: English Language Arts

Primary Course Materials:

Prentice Hall Literature Anthology

A Writer's Reference

Write Source 2000

Warriner's English Grammar and Composition

Course Description:

This course is designed to meet the needs of all students and builds upon the seventh grade curriculum to prepare students for high school success. The study of literature explores all genres, including short story, poetry, novel, non-fiction and drama. The novels selected serve as a focus for discussion and writing assignments. A major theme for eighth grade reading is coming of age, and the selections help prepare students to make effective choices in life. Speaking skills are also developed in literature circle discussions and other oral communication assignments.

Students engage in the writing process and produce a variety of writing pieces with special emphasis given to answering open response questions, analytical writing and literary analysis which help prepare students for the MCAS test. Instruction continues in grammar, spelling, and sentence structure within the context of students' writing. Students maintain a writing portfolio in an effort to maintain their own growth and development in composition. At the end of the year this portfolio is sent to the 9th grade English teacher. Students will be expected to complete much of the work outside of class with a minimum of direction, reserving class time for discussion and editing. Many class lessons are contingent on homework completion; therefore, students will assume more personal responsibility for their learning. The grade eight curriculum is designed to provide students with the background to achieve success in grade nine. It is important to note that students need to maintain an A average, have excellent writing and study skills, and receive teacher recommendation to participate in the honors selection process for grade nine.

Essential Questions:

1. How does literature help students appreciate the past, understand the present, and plan for the future?
2. How does the study of authors' styles help students appreciate and recognize literary and writing techniques?
3. How does "coming of age" literature prepare students to make effective choices in life?

Course Objectives: Students will:

- Craft a multi-paragraph essay with a well-developed thesis statement using evidence from the text and documenting using the MLA style of writing
- Write effectively using the criteria established in the six traits rubric
- Construct a business letter
- Use more sophisticated language conventions
- Explore elements of the short story and create a work of fiction
- Read, learn and appreciate a variety of literary works including short stories, novels, poetry, drama, memoir and non-fiction
- Practice public speaking in small and large group classroom settings
- Build upon existing vocabulary through literature
- Balance time more efficiently

Content Outline:

The Short Story

Students read a variety of short stories from the anthology as well as other sources. The elements of the short story are discussed in this unit and include: plot, conflict, crisis, resolution, characters, point of view, setting, theme, tone, and mood. *Selections may be used at the teacher's discretion.* Sample titles include:

Title	Author
“Tell Tale Heart”	Poe
“Monkey’s Paw”	Poe
“Necklace”	De Maupassant
“The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”	Irving
“The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calavara’s County”	Twain
“The Drummer Boy of Shiloh”	Bradbury
“Anabelle Lee”	Poe

The Novel

In addition to reading three novels, students engage in literature circles where they read at least one piece of literature of their choice. *Selections below may be used at the teacher's discretion.* Through reading and writing, all of the literary terms (Addendum A) are covered by the end of the school year.

Title	Author
<i>Johnny Tremain</i>	Forbes
<i>Soldier’s Heart</i>	Paulsen
<i>The Alchemist</i>	Coelho
<i>Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>	Twain
<i>Red Badge of Courage</i>	Crane
<i>A Member of the Wedding</i>	McCullers
<i>Animal Farm</i>	Orwell
<i>Kidnapped</i>	Stevenson

<i>The Devil's Arithmetic</i>	Yolen
<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Frank
<i>A Farewell to Manzanar</i>	Wakatsuki
<i>Daniel's Story</i>	Matas

Drama

Dialogue, stage direction, dramatic structure, public speaking, character interpretation, non-verbal communication, and literary techniques are the focus of the drama unit. Students read at least one of the following plays:

Title	Author
<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Shakespeare
<i>Brian's Song</i>	Blinn
<i>Miracle Worker</i>	Gibson
<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Goodrich and Hacket

Non-fiction

In order to prepare students to comprehend and analyze factual information, several short selections are read. The non-fiction pieces are meant to inform or persuade the reader as well as serve as a basis of discussion and writing. Selections are taken from the Prentice Hall Literature Anthology as well as newspapers and magazines.

Poetry

Poetry is a genre of writing studied for its unique qualities and form. Students read and examine a variety of poems to become more aware of structure, style, and author techniques. Many of the poems are selections from the Prentice Hall Literature Anthology and The Edgar Allan Poe Reader. Sample titles include:

Title	Author
"The Road Not Taken"	Frost
"Grandma Ling"	Ling
"The Raven"	Poe
"Concord Hymn"	Emerson
"Paul Revere's Ride"	Longfellow

Vocabulary Study:

Students' vocabulary development is ongoing. Vocabulary is carefully chosen from the literature studied and literary terms are covered. (see Addendum A) Students use context clues; roots, prefixes, suffixes; and, finally, the dictionary to unlock the meaning of unknown terms. Students use a thesaurus for word choice, to include new vocabulary in their writing and speaking, and to determine the appropriate meaning of a word in context.

Writing Expectation:

Students are expected to write the following pieces in eighth grade: narrative, literary analysis, expository, persuasive, open response, and poetry.

ORGANIZING WRITING PROMPTS ACROSS GRADE LEVELS

Grade	NARRATIVE	EXPOSITORY				POETRY
		Informational Essay (Gr. 5-7 MCAS Requirement)	Literature Analysis (Gr. 8-10 MCAS Requirement)	Persuasive	Research Paper	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student writes about his or her personal experience A true or fictional story <p>2</p>		5	1	Done in social studies	1

Learning Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks:

Language Strand		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 1: Discussion	Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 2: Questioning, Listening, and Contributing	Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions or interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 3: Oral Presentation	Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 4: Vocabulary and Concept Development	Students will understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading and writing.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 5: Structure and Origins of Modern English	Students will analyze standard English grammar and usage and recognize how its vocabulary has developed and been influenced by other languages.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 6: Formal and Informal English	Students will describe, analyze, and use appropriately formal and informal English.
Reading and Literature Strand		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard 7: Beginning Reading	Students will understand the nature of written English and the relationship of letters and spelling patterns to the sounds of speech.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 8: Understanding a Text	Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 9: Making Connections	Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 10: Genre	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 11: Theme	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in a literary work and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 12: Fiction	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 13: Nonfiction	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the purposes, structure, and elements of nonfiction or informational materials and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 14: Poetry	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of poetry and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 15: Style and Language	Students will identify and analyze how an author's words appeal to the senses, create imagery, suggest mood, and set tone, and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard 16: Myth, Traditional Narrative, and Classical Literature	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
Reading and Literature Strand(cont'd)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 17: Dramatic Literature	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of drama and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard 18: Dramatic Reading and Performance	Students will plan and present dramatic readings, recitations, and performances that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience and purpose.
Composition Strand		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 19: Writing	Students will write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 20: Consideration of Audience and Purpose	Students will write for different audiences and purposes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 21: Revising	Students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, paragraph development, level of detail, style, tone, and word choice (diction) in their compositions after revising them.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 22: Standard English Conventions	Students will use knowledge of standard English conventions in their writing, revising, and editing.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 23: Organizing Ideas in Writing	Students will organize ideas in writing in a way that makes sense for their purpose.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 24: Research	Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 25:	Students will develop and use appropriate rhetorical, logical, and stylistic criteria for

	Evaluating Writing and Presentations	assessing final versions of their compositions or research projects before presenting them to varied audiences.
Media Strand		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 26: Analysis of Media	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the conventions, elements, and techniques of film, radio, video, television, multimedia productions, the Internet, and emerging technologies and provide evidence from the works to support their understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standard 27: Media Production	Students will design and create coherent media productions (audio, video, television, multimedia, Internet, emerging technologies) with a clear controlling idea, adequate detail, and appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and medium.

Addendum A:

Literary Terms
Grade 8

Alliteration

Analogy

Anecdote

Assonance

Character

Characterization

Conflict

Denotation/Connotation

Consonance

Dialogue

Fact

Fantasy/reality

Feet

Flashback

Foreshadowing

Form

Haiku

Homophone

Hyperbole

Idiom

Irony

Lyric

Metaphor

Meter

Mood

Narrative

Onomatopoeia

Opinion

Personification

Persuasive Techniques

Plot

Point of view

Prediction

Repetition

Rhyme

Rhythm

Sensory images

Setting

Simile

Sound devices

Stage directions

Symbol

Theme

Tone