

Miss Sweiss's Eighth Grade English Language Arts Course Syllabus

CONRADY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | NORTH PALOS SCHOOL DISTRICT 117 | 2019-2020

***PARENT ORIENTATION ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2019, from 6-8PM**

Contact Information:

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Course Objectives and the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards:

Welcome to Ms. Sweiss's English Language Arts classroom! Throughout the year, we will explore numerous genres of literature, namely fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and folk literature. Students will develop an appreciation for literature, while also developing strategies to read and write for success. ***The course is designed to meet the rigor of the Common Core Reading and Writing Standards:***

"The Common Core asks students to read stories and literature, as well as more complex texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas such as science and social studies. Students will be challenged and asked questions that push them to refer back to what they've read. This stresses critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that are required for success in college, career, and life" (Common Core State Standards).

Literary, Poetic, and Informational Terms and Concepts:

Students will be able to read and discuss a text after developing an understanding of the following elements of literature, poetry, and informational/argumentative texts respectively:

Literary Terms and Concepts		
Allegory	Foreshadowing	Plot and Plot Diagram
Allusion	Flashback	Point of View
Archetype	Genre	Satire
Character (Protagonist/Antagonist)	Irony	Setting
Characterization	Monologue	Static Vs. Dynamic Characters
Conflict (Internal vs. External)	Mood	Symbolism
Dialect	Motif	Theme
Dialogue	Personification/Pathetic Fallacy	Tone

Poetic Terms and Concepts			
Alliteration	Consonance	Metaphor vs. Simile	Pun
Allusion	Hyperbole	Onomatopoeia	Slang vs. Archaic Words
Aside	Iambic Pentameter	Oxymoron	Soliloquy
Assonance	Idiom	Paradox	Sonnet
Connotation vs. Denotation	Imagery	Personification	Stanza

Argumentative and Informational Terms and Concepts			
Aesthetics	Central Idea	Inference	Refute
Ambiguous Statement	Claim	Logos	Relevant vs. Irrelevant
Assumptions	Counterargument	Medium	Subjective
Author's Point of View	Ethos	Objective	Sufficient vs. Insufficient
Author's Perspective	Fact	Parallelism	Thesis Statement
Bias and Stereotypes	Generalization	Pathos	Understatement

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an integral component of class. Students will acquire vocabulary knowledge through daily vocabulary reinforcement activities. Students will also be assessed often on vocabulary throughout the year. Vocabulary words are derived from the following:

- Literature and Informational Texts ("Forever" Words)
- ELA Reading Common Core Standards (Academic Vocabulary)
- Greek and Latin Roots (Morphology)

Writing

Students will be able to demonstrate effective writing skills and will develop writing strategies through weekly writing. Each quarter, students will be expected to engage in the following writing activities and/or assessments:

- Narrative, Informational, and Argumentative Essays
- On Demand Writing Prompts
- Common Core Writing (writing in response to a Common Core standard)
- Midterm Assessment Writing
- Quarter Assessment Writing

Classroom Materials:

- Binder with 4 dividers (Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4)
- Student Chromebook
- Pens and pencils
- Highlighter
- 1 Dry Erase Marker
- Box of Kleenex

Homework Policy:

Students are responsible for completing their homework and submitting it on time. Students who do not complete their homework will serve a detention the following day (before or after school) and points will be deducted. Students should expect to have homework most nights of the week. Students should be reading for their monthly reading log; it is expected that students are reading for a minimum of 20 minutes each night. **There will be extensive READING AND WRITING in this class.**

Chromebooks, Student Email, and Schoology:

Students should expect to use their Chromebooks everyday; students are responsible for charging the Chromebook each night and coming to class prepared to use the Chromebook during the ELA period. Most assignments and activities will be shared via Google and Schoology. Students are further expected to check their school Google email on a daily basis.

Absence and Tardy Policy:

Students who are absent will have two days to complete the homework assignment. Tardies will be handled in the manner delineated in the student handbook.

Classroom Rules:

- Listen when others are talking
- Follow directions
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Work in a safe and quiet manner.
- Show respect for school and personal property

Classroom Consequences:

- First Offense: Verbal Warning
- Second Offense: Lines or Essays
- Third Offense: Detention [students will receive a detention slip and have it signed by parents]
- Fourth Offense: Call parents to schedule a conference

Reading Logs:

Each month, students must submit a Reading Log which documents that the student has read 400 minutes (500 Minutes for Honors). Students should read approximately twenty minutes each night in order to fulfill the 400-minute requirement. Students must read at least one age-appropriate novel. However, students may also choose to read newspapers, magazines, comic books, etc. to fulfill the four-hundred minute requirement.

Independent Reading Time [IRT] and Reading Logs

Students will spend the first 15 minutes of each class engaged in Independent Reading Time. Students may choose any fiction or nonfiction book to read during this time. One of the goals for this course is to develop life-long readers; IRT allows students the freedom to read age and level-appropriate books that address their individual interests. The teacher will further conference with each student on the book that he or she is reading. Students may use the minutes of IRT on their monthly Reading Log to fulfill the 400-minute (500-minutes for Honors) reading goal.