



8TH GRADE ENGLISH, READING & LANGUAGE ARTS

2021 – 2022
COURSE SYLLABUS

Teacher: Ms. Angela Williams

Tutoring: To Be Determined

Conferences: With an appointment or Before/After School by appointment only

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Course Description Overview/Welcome Statement:

Welcome to 8th Grade Pre-AP English! I am so excited to be your teacher this year. Understanding and using words in the written and spoken language has an amazing power to it, and I look forward to helping you unlock that power throughout this year. Pre-AP ELA is an intensive curriculum that focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The class objectives are taken directly from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and the pacing is guided by Houston Independent School District.

Learning Expectations

These are the key learning objectives (or “English 8 “I Can’s”) that we will be assessing this year. You will be required to demonstrate proficiency in these areas.

#1a: I can provide an objective summary of a fiction text.

#1b: I can provide an objective summary of a nonfiction text.

#2a: I can determine the theme of a literary text.

#2b: I can determine the central idea of an informational text.

#3: I can cite text evidence that most strongly supports an analysis.

#4: I can determine the structure of a text.

#5: I can determine the author’s purpose of a text.

#6: I can write an argument essay.

#7: I can write an informational essay.

#8: I can cite specific text evidence in my writing to support ideas drawn from the text.

#9: I can demonstrate grade level command of grammar and conventions.

#10: I can make one year's growth in my reading comprehension and abilities.

Assessing Progress

Independent Reading: Every six weeks, students will be required to read 2 books with a minimum of 150 pages each and complete a Reading Response Sheet and a Reading Response Log. Some units, we will be reading novels as a class, and that novel can count towards their 3 books for that semester. This assignment will be done outside of class. Students will be using a digital reading app called, MackinVIA to ensure that every student has access to a book of their choice. At the beginning of the year, students will be taking a Diagnostic Reading Assessment to see the current reading comprehension level. At the end of the year, we will take the STAAR Test – and our goal is to make one full year's growth in our reading comprehension (**I Can #10**). Like any sport, musical instrument, or talent, we improve our reading skills through **PRACTICE**. The Independent Reading throughout each term gets us practicing our reading skills.

Reading Response Logs

As students are reading their required books, they will be responsible for tracking their reading. The purpose of these logs is to develop a deep understanding and a deep passion for reading and writing. It is also to help students collect data about their reading and writing habits, so that they can correct those bad habits.

Absences: Students who have missed assignments due to absences, will be responsible to look in the day of absent folder and retrieve any missed handouts, or work, and discuss with the teacher the specifics of the assignments and their due dates. Once established, the district late work policies go into effect. If the student is missing the work due to an absence, they will have one day for each day they were absent plus one extra day. For example, if they were absent 3 days, they will have 3 days + 1 for a total of 4 days to get the work in without being considered late.

Tardy Policy:

If a student is tardy to class, they will be required to sign a class tardy log, or make sure they have a written excuse. After three unexcused tardies, students will be required to have lunch detention. If tardies continue, they will be referred to their grade level principal

Late Work Policy:

Students are expected to do their best on each assignment in a timely manner so the teacher can enact accurate feedback and instructional response.

A student has 3 days to turn in late work:

- 1 day late = 10 points will be deducted from the top of the grade.
- 2 days late = 20 points will be deducted from the top of the grade.
- 3 days late = 30 points will be deducted from the top of the grade.
- **NO LATE WORK** will be accepted after 3 days. A zero goes in the grade book.

For those that failed a test:

- Students are eligible to be retested. One opportunity will be given if original grade was less than 70%
- Must complete a reteach activity and parents need to sign the original test.

- Major grades only - exception is projects, essays, or nine-week exams, and semester finals. Those are not allowed a retest opportunity.
- Cheating or no effort do not have a retest opportunity.
- Highest retest grade is 75%.

Homework:

In addition to the outside reading, reading response sheet and reading response log, students will have homework at least 2 times a week. The homework will be designed to provide a means of re-enforcing the curriculum after the student has been provided the proper instruction. It is very important that your child complete the homework in the time provided and turn it in on the correct due dates.

Tutorials:

Students will have the opportunity to attend tutorials. Students will be provided with a schedule.

Cell Phones:

Students can bring their cell phones to school; however, they must be put away. There will be times that students will need to use their phones for an assignment; in that case, the teacher will instruct students to take out their phones and will be given strict guidelines for its usage. This will better help students to focus more on their work, instead of being distracted by their phones. The goal is to ensure that all students achieve success.

Unauthorized use of the cell phone will result in it being collected and turned in to the main office, where a parent will need to pick it up and pay the \$15.00 fee.

Supplies (These supplies will be needed once we return to school)

- 2 composition notebooks (one for the first semester and the 2nd one for the second semester)
- A folder to store past assignments/homework (optional)
- Pencils (blue or black)
- Index cards

Wish List

- Kleenex
- Hand Sanitizer

Classroom Expectations:

The goal is to create a safe and encouraging learning environment for every student. Students are expected to treat everyone around them with kindness and respect, and approach learning with a positive attitude.

Be Punctual: Be on time with all materials

Be Prepared: Bring required materials to class. If you are unable to get classroom supplies, let me know.

Be Polite: Wait respectfully and calmly for your turn. Actively listen when someone else is talking.

Be Productive: Maximize learning time by being engaged, motivated, focusing, and following directions.

Additional Expectations

- Come to class eager to learn, ask questions, and debate the material learning.
- Challenge the limits of their learning.
- Be responsible for his/her own learning.

- Be open to other students' opinions and beliefs.
- Work to develop strong literary and writing skills
- Complete and submit all assignments on time.
- If you are struggling to understand the content or skill, speak up and ask for help
- Come to tutorials **IMMEDIATELY** when you do not understand the material.

Students can expect that I will:

- Come to class daily prepared with meaningful and relevant lessons.
- Provide instruction that motivates and engages students.
- Be fair and not judgmental.
- Treat all students with respect.

If students choose not to follow these expectations, we have a **Classroom Behavior Discipline Plan** set in place. It is as follows:

- 1st Offense: Verbal or Written Warning
- 2nd Offense: Take a Break Fix-It Plan (and/or seat change and other loss of privileges)
- 3rd Offense: Parent notification/conference
- 4th Offense: Office Referral

Connecting Home with School

As a parent or guardian, I believe you should know exactly what is happening in the classroom and what your child is learning and doing. That is why, this school year, I will send out a classroom weekly newsletter. This will inform you of reminders, bright spots, what we plan to cover, and any upcoming assignments and due dates you need to be aware of. I will be emailing it, so please make sure to provide update information on the assignment below so you may receive that access to information on what's happening in our classroom.

I am looking forward to working with you and having a great year. I do place a lot of responsibility on my students to do their best while in my class. I will do everything in my power to educate and empower your child and I expect your child to do everything in his/her power to learn and succeed.

I am always available if students have questions or need help. **“I dunno” or “You weren’t here or in class” isn’t an excuse if you don’t come for help when you need it.**

I look forward to a wonderful and exciting school year. If you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. “Positive communication is essential to a successful relationship.”

Contact Information:

Angela Williams
 8th Grade ELAR, Teacher Specialist
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 (713) 732-3670, ext. 1230

ASSIGNMENT

Parents, or Guardians, please complete the attached form and signed it verifying that the syllabus has been read and return it to me no later than Thursday, **September 10th**. Your Child will also complete the Syllabus Scavenger Hunt. **The completed signed form will be your child's first grade for this class.**

Acknowledgement of Syllabus

Student Name (Print)

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- I have read the Syllabus and understand it.
 - I am aware of what supplies are needed for the class.
 - I understand that it is my responsibility to contact my teacher if I have questions regarding my grade.
 - I am aware of Ms. Williams and Ms. Porter's e-mail address and understand that I should communicate any questions, or concerns.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Contact Information (Please write CLEARLY):

Mother's Name: _____ Email: _____

Mother's Work #: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Father's Name: _____ Email: _____

Father's Work #: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Any other information you would like me to know about your child:

The Fine Print: Everyone can be successful in this class. Reading and Writing is in demand and in use throughout the world and your mastery of it will help you communicate effectively whether reading, writing or speaking for higher education purposes or the workforce. **Reading** is the most important skill you need to master since you must read to understand and learn. **Studying** and discussing the issues that literature presents will make you a better thinker and a well-rounded person. This class, even if you've had a tough time with reading before, can be one of your favorites or your most memorable because you **enjoyed** it. YOU decide that, not me. Yes, first impressions are important, but the impression left **ON YOU** by the experiences in this class is what will shape you and your mind. Education is something that can never be taken from you; invest your time and energy into it and it will pay off. This class will challenge you, frustrate you, make you laugh, make you sad, make you think, and ultimately prepare you for success. **Make it count!**

8th Grade ENGLISH, READING & Language ARTS Course Syllabus **Scavenger Hunt**

Directions: Using the Course Syllabus, answer the following questions.

1. What is "I Can" number 10? _____
2. How many books do you have to read in six weeks? _____
3. What's the purpose of the Reading Log? _____
4. How many days do you have to turn in late work and what are the penalties?

5. Explain what happens when you fail a test.

6. Summarize the homework section in 20 words or less.
7. Name the four P's.
8. What can the students expect from the teacher (Ms. A. Williams)?
9. List the classroom discipline plan.

10. What is your assignment at the end of the syllabus?