

SYLLABUS

TEACHER: Donna Marco Melia

COURSE/GRADE LEVEL: Eighth Grade Language Arts

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Textbooks: Prentice Hall Literature, Grade 8
Write Source 2000
Understanding Nonfiction

Various novels from QPS Curriculum, Grade 8 including, but not limited to:

The Outsiders - S.E. Hinton
The Pearl - John Steinbeck
Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl - Anne Frank
Across Five Aprils - Irene Hunt
To Be a Slave - Julius Lester

Excerpts from the following:

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
The Eighteen Best Stories of Edgar Allen Poe
Fantastic Worlds: Myths, Tales and Stories - Eric Rabkin
I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings - Maya Angelou

Various short stories, poems, and articles from multiple sources will be integrated into each unit of study. Grammar lessons will be taught from a variety of texts.

MAJOR TOPICS*

1. Writing

The process of writing, using the five-step method, will be our major focus. Students will practice the various forms of writing (narrative, descriptive, persuasive and expository). Students will be taught how to research and write a thesis paper with the appropriate citations.

2. The Interpretation of Literature

Students will be guided in-class and practice independently the analysis of the various forms of literature (novels, plays, poetry, short stories, and nonfiction).

3. Oral Communications

Students will be expected to give informal "book talks" as well as participate in formal oral presentations, such as debates. Students will practice the appropriate techniques for oral persuasion.

4. Independent Reading

Students are expected to read at least six books independently and complete an active reading bookmark, reader response log and "book talk" for each book.

5. Vocabulary Development

Students will work toward increasing their vocabulary through the literature we read in class as well as their independent reading.

6. Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

Students will practice the correct use of standard English conventions as a way to improve their own writing and oral presentations.

* All topics will be taught throughout the course of the year.

***ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

Portfolios

Rubrics

Teacher observations

Oral presentation rubrics

Projects

Interdisciplinary activities

Co-operative learning projects

Multimedia presentations

Take home tests/writing assignments

Exams

Research papers

Homework

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Homework will be given to reinforce what has been taught in class or to activate thoughts about a topic that will be introduced the next day. Homework assignments will be posted on the board everyday and students are expected to write down the assignment. Assignments are also posted on the school web page. If a student does not complete a homework assignment, he/she will receive an incomplete for the assignment. If the student makes up the assignment, he/she will be given partial credit. If the student misses three homework assignments in a term or a major project deadline, I will send a note or call home.

MAKEUP PROCEDURE

It is the student's responsibility to check class work and homework missed due to an absence and to complete that work within one week of returning to school.

GRADING POLICY

Homework 10%

Independent Reading 10%

Quizzes and Tests 40%

Writing Assignments/Major Projects 40%