**8th Grade ELA Syllabus**

Welcome to 8th grade ELA (English/Language Arts) class. I am so excited to work with you this year. The following is a rough outline for how the year is set up. To prepare you for high school and beyond, we will be working hard on developing ourselves as proficient, well-rounded readers and writers that have stamina (persevere), and rise to the challenge of rigorous texts and tasks. I will be incorporating AVID college & career-ready strategies that will help you stay organized, be an effective student, and help with note-taking skills, critical thinking, and higher-level questioning. By the end of the year, my hopes are that you will feel confident going to high school, knowing that you are independent learner that can collaborate with many different types of people (viewpoints, and stances), as well as who can read and write at high levels.

We will have a class website (\*it is currently under construction, but I’m hoping to get it up and running soon), with links to assignments, and e-book links for your new textbooks/workbooks. You should expect homework most nights, on top of regular reading (for enjoyment).

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to teach you.

Sincerely,

Danielle Tebon

8th grade language arts teacher

Gardiner Middle School

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Ext. 8194

**(Rough) Outline of school year: Broken down by each six-week grading period**

**Grading Period 1 (GP1):**

Collection 1: Culture & Belonging: Students will be citing textual evidence (RL.1), determining a theme/central idea (RL.2), analyzing how particular lines of dialogue in a story propel action (RL.3), and determining meaning of words/phrases as they are used in context, including figurative language (RL.4). During writing time, students will be using the following texts also as mentor texts to complete a personal narrative (W.3):

 -*My Favorite Chaperone* (textbook)

 -*Golden Glass* (in close reader)

 -*Museum Indians* (in close reader)

 -*House on Mango Street* (excerpt)

 -Poem by Sherman Alexie (textbook)

**Grading Period 2 (GP2):**

Collection 2: The Thrill of Horror: Students will be Students will be citing textual evidence (RL.1), determining a theme/central idea (RL.2), analyzing how particular lines of dialogue in a story propel action (RL.3), and analyzing how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader create effects as suspense or humor (RL. 6). During writing time, students will be asked to use the following texts as mentor texts to create a literary analysis essay of a scary story:

 -*Tell Tale Heart* (textbook)

 -*The Outsider* (close reader)

 -*Frankenstein* (close reader)

 -Other small excerpts

**Grading Period 3 (GP3):**

Collection 3: The Move Toward Freedom: Students will be working on informational text paired with a class novel. Students will be asked to cite text evidence that supports an analysis (RI.1), determine a central idea (RI.2), analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals (RI.3), ideas, or events, and determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in text (RI.4). During writing time, students will be asked to create an academic essay where they will compare/contrast historical events to a plot/storyline of a novel using these texts:

 -Class novel (TBD)

 -*Autobiography* by Frederick Douglass (textbook)

 -*Biography* by Ann Petry (textbook)

 -“A Mystery of Heroism”: by Stephen Crane (close reader)

 -Various video clips from History Channel, etc.

**Grading Period 4 (GP4):**

Collection 4: Approaching Adulthood: Students will be working on a mix of historical fiction, narratives, and informative text, as well as begin our second-class novel, The Outsiders. This unit may go a little longer than the previous ones, because it is very text-heavy, but is very engaging at the same time! Students will be citing textual evidence (RL.1), determining a central idea/theme (RL.2), analyzing how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story/drama propel the action (RL.3), and delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient (RI.8). During writing time, students will be asked to make an argument and write an argumentative essay that supports claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence (W.1). Students will interact with the following texts:

 -*The Outsiders* (text supplied by teacher)

 -“Teenagers” poem by Pat Mora (textbook)

 -“When do kids become adults?” (textbook)

 -*Fatal Car Crashes Drop for 16-year –olds* (textbook)

 -Public Service Announcement (textbook)

**Grading period 5 (and possibly 6) GP5:**

Collection 5: Anne Frank’s Legacy: Students will be reading Diary of Anne Frank, and comparing the book to an abridged version of a play, as well as reading a literary criticism of Anne Frank, and listen to a speech by Elie Wiesel. A lot of what students will be asked to do includes drawing evidence from literary or information texts to support analysis, reflection and research (W.9), as well as citing textual evidence (RL.1), analyzing how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action (RL.3), and determining the meaning of unknown words (RL.4).

**Grading Period 6 (GP6):**

Collections 6: The Value of Work

During this last grading period, Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) will be taking place, and therefore, this unit is TBD at this point. More information will come later.

**Grading Policy:**

The class is mostly proficiency- and standards-based grading, in order to prepare students for the rigorous demands of high school. That being said, I believe practice assignments are important, and therefore put a small amount of the grade on practice assignments, to encourage students to do them. The following is the breakdown of grades in my class:

25% Practice/Homework Assignments

25% Quizzes (cannot be made-up unless excused absence, and cannot be re-done)

50% Mastery Assessments (exams, tests-can be made up one time after filling out re-do application AND not having any missing practice/homework assignments.)

I grade on a four-point scale (except for assessments/mastery assignments, which have their own point values). This is the breakdown of what that means as a grade:

Letter Grade: Score: Percentage-range:

A 4 96-100 Exceeding grade-level

B+ 3.5 86-95 Proficient (slightly above)

B-/C 3 76-85 At grade-level

C- 2.5 70-75 Not quite at grade- level

D 2 60-69 Some progress towards standard

F 1 59 or below Not proficient/no partial

**Homework:**

Homework is given on FRIDAYS and is due on THURSDAYS (unless there is no school on Friday, then it will be given out on Thursdays and still due the following Thursday.)

**Late Policy:**

To prepare students for high school, late work will be accepted one day late at 50% off. After that, it will be accepted to show that you did the work (effort), but will not receive a grade. I encourage students to stay organized, bring all supplies to class each day, and to write in their planners to stay on top of assignments/expectations. If a student is absent (excused), the homework/assignment will be accepted the next day the student is at school (this is the student’s responsibility) with no penalty. If the student forgets because he/she was absent, and it is an additional day late, then the late policy stands as described above.

**Absences:**

If you are absent (sick, vacation, etc.) please make sure to try and get work before you leave (or call the office so I can send work home.) If it’s a one-day occurrence, etc., please plan to stay after school with me the following day to catch up on missed work. Since we rarely have worksheets/packets in this class, attendance is very important!

**After-School Help:**

I am more than happy to help you: I am in my room, after school, from 3:25 to 3:45pm. Please plan to stay after if you need help/clarification/a quiet place to work. I will be there if I don’t have any meetings, etc. If parents have any questions or concerns, please email (best option), or call to set up a conference with the student, parent, and teacher as soon as you are concerned or need clarification.

Our Open House is September 25, 2014 at 7pm. I hope to see you there!

The bottom slip is due: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of class.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ELA period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best Daytime Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

~If you would like to volunteer in my classroom this year, please check the line below and I will contact you:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to volunteer in Mrs. Tebon’s classroom