

Seventh Grade

English Language Arts

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Course Description:

7th grade English Language Arts at St. Joseph School challenges students to continue developing their writing and reading skills through a variety of roles, audiences, formats, and genres. Students will apply their understanding of writing conventions (spelling, grammar, proofreading skills) through ongoing practice to contribute to their writing portfolios and create their best works. We will use book club, workshop models, and writing journals to practice thinking and reflection throughout the academic year. Over the year, students will produce diverse writing samples, explore written and oral storytelling traditions, and participate in publishing opportunities. 7th grade English Language Arts will build upon skills and techniques good writers practice and apply to their reading, writing, and understanding of Literature.

Course Objectives:

Our year-long theme **“Storytelling: Exploring Written and Oral Traditions”** will evidence itself in each genre we explore. This theme will also play an integral role in our own writing and reading practice.

Our learning units will include:

Unit 1: Reading: Short Stories

Unit 2: Reading: Novels

Unit 3: Reading: Poetry and Memoirs

Unit 4: Reading: Research and Inquiry

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Character Sketches

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Responses to Lit.

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Creative Writing

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Research Writing

- Organizational skills and strategies
- Listening and speaking skills
- Appreciation for various genres of literature and writing
- Creative writing
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Grammar
- Mechanics of writing
- Spelling
- Composition
- Vocabulary
- Reference and research skills

Learning Activities include:

- Writing Portfolio
- Writer’s Notebook
- Classroom Blog Site
- Collaborative Poetry
- Free Choice Reading
- Small Group Learning Activities
- Large Group Learning Activities and Discussions
- Dramatic Engagement of Texts
- Collaborative projects with other core and specialty teachers

Course Textbook:

- Voyages in English: Writing and Grammar, Loyola Press 2006

Supplemental Instructional Materials:

- Glencoe Literature: The Reader’s Choice, Glencoe 2007
- Notebook Know-How: Strategies for Writer’s Notebook, Aimee Buckner
- In the Middle: New Understandings About Writing, Reading, and Learning, Nancie Atwell
- Writing Reminders: Tools, Tips and Techniques, Jim Burke
- Literacy for the 21st Century, Gail E. Tompkins

Grading Policy

The grades will be totaled from the points that a student earns on homework, writing, and reading assignments, periodic quizzes and tests, as well as the participation points a student earns from consistent writing journal entries and classroom blog responses.

Grading Categories	Percentage	Examples
Homework	10%	Daily assignments
Writing Assignments	15%	Formal, informal responses and essays
Reading Assignments	15%	Texts, essays, online videos and excerpt responses
Quizzes	10%	Grammar, vocabulary, etc.
Writing Portfolio	25%	Mid-term reflection, ongoing contribution to portfolio
Tests	15%	End of unit tests, comprehension
Participation	10%	Classroom blog responses, writing journal

Eighth Grade

English Language Arts

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Course Description:

8th grade English Language Arts at St. Joseph School challenges students to develop their writing through the application of their skills in a variety of roles, audiences, formats, and genres. Students will apply their understanding of writing conventions (spelling, grammar, proofreading skills) through ongoing reflection and selection to contribute to their writing portfolios and create their best works. Critical thinking and reflection are key elements of class that will be seen through students’ use of writing journals, self-evaluations, peer- conferencing and teacher conferences throughout the academic year. Over the year, students will produce diverse writing samples with multiple publishing and sharing opportunities in-class, on our classroom blog, and in national contests. 8th grade English Language Arts will build upon skills and techniques good writers practice and apply to their reading, writing, and understanding of Literature.

Course Objectives:

Our year-long theme “**Reflection: Looking Back to Move Forward**” will evidence itself in each genre we explore. This theme will also play an integral role in our own writing and reflection. It is vital to practice ongoing *authentic* reflection in our own writing in order to practice the effective, positive habits of good writers.

Our learning units will include:

Unit 1: Reading: Short Stories

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Literary Essay

Unit 2: Reading: Novels

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Literature Responses

Unit 3: Reading: Poetry and Memoirs

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Creative Writing

Unit 4: Reading: Research and Inquiry

Writing: Writer’s Notebooks, Research Writing

- Organizational skills and strategies
- Listening and speaking skills
- Appreciation for various genres of literature and writing
- Collaborative Poetry Fridays
- Creative writing
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Grammar
- Mechanics of writing
- Spelling
- Composition
- Vocabulary
- Reference and research skills

Learning Activities include:

- Writing Portfolio
- Writer’s Notebook
- Classroom Blog Site
- Collaborative Poetry
- Free Choice Reading
- Small Group Learning Activities
- Large Group Learning Activities and Discussions
- Dramatic Engagement of Texts
- Collaborative projects with other core and specialty teachers

Course Textbook:

- Voyages in English: Writing and Grammar, Loyola Press 2006

Supplemental Instructional Materials:

- Glencoe Literature: The Reader’s Choice, Glencoe 2007
- Notebook Know-How: Strategies for Writer’s Notebook, Aimee Buckner
- In the Middle: New Understandings About Writing, Reading, and Learning, Nancie Atwell
- Writing Reminders: Tools, Tips and Techniques, Jim Burke
- Literacy for the 21st Century, Gail E. Tompkins

Grading Policy

The grades will be totaled from the points that a student earns on homework, writing, and reading assignments, periodic quizzes and tests, as well as the participation points a student earns from consistent writing journal entries and classroom blog responses.

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Homework	10%	Daily assignments
Writing Assignments	15%	Formal, informal responses and essays
Reading Assignments	15%	Texts, essays, online videos and excerpt responses
Quizzes	10%	Grammar, vocabulary, etc.
Writing Portfolio	25%	Mid-term reflection, ongoing contribution to portfolio
Tests	15%	End of unit tests, comprehension
Participation	10%	Classroom blog responses, writing journal