

Pequannock Township School District

Curriculum Syllabus

ELA - Grade 7

Course Description:

The seventh-grade English curriculum covers multiple facets of language arts. Students will work to further develop existing communication skills through the study of literature, reading strategies, process writing, and presentation skills. A writer's workshop approach will be utilized to aid students in the development, practice, and internalization of effective writing strategies and skills. Students will explore the English language, and use their knowledge of grammar and word choice to improve writing. From simple editing and combining sentences to producing varied forms of essay and narrative writing, students will be challenged to increase and better their writing skills. The reading program will include the use of class novels, informational pieces, poetry, supplementary materials, and comprehension toolkit. While reading novels such as *The Outsiders* and *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, students will build a list of literary terms and examine such literary elements as plot, setting, point of view, and character. Students will also develop higher level thinking skills by comparing and contrasting, analyzing cause and effect, and evaluating. All of these skills will be taught using a variety of methods including class discussion, cooperative group activities, differentiation of instruction, and individual assignments designed to challenge each student. Students will have the opportunity to explore learning using an inquiry-based approach to foster student development and critical thinking skills. In each unit, students will complete writing assignments to apply these new skills and literary terms. In addition, each unit will generate a vocabulary list for students to explore words in new ways. Finally, *students will study verbal communication, practice public speaking skills, and interact with 21st Century technology skills.*

Course Standards:

The following is a list of NJSLS that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of successfully completing this course. The following NJSLS are the basis of the assessment of student achievement. The learner will demonstrate mastery of:

Progress Indicators for Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure

RL.7.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL.7.5. Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.7.7. Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

RL.7.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

Progress Indicators Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

RI.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.7.2. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Craft and Structure

RI.7.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.7.5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

RI.7.6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.7.7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

RI.7.8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

RI.7.9. Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

Progress Indicators for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

W.7.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.7.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- A. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia).
- B. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- C. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

- D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- E. Establish and maintain a formal academic style, approach, and form.
- F. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- A. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- C. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- E. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.7.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.7.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

W.7.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

A. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).

B. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g. “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”).

Range of Writing

W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.

D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

SL.7.2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

SL.7.3. Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.7.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

SL.7.5. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

SL.7.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Progress Indicators for Language

Conventions of Standard English

L.7.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

A. Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.

B. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.

C. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

L.7.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

A. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie but not He wore an old[,] green shirt).

B. Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.7.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.7.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

A. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or

Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel).

- C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.7.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.
- B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.
- C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).

L.7.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or

Technology Standards:

- 8.1.8.A.1 Demonstrate knowledge of a real world problem using digital tools.
- 8.1.8.A.2 Create a document (e.g. newsletter, reports, personalized learning plan, business letters (or flyers) using one or more digital applications to be critiqued by professionals for usability.
- 8.1.8.A.3 Use and/or develop a simulation that provides an environment to solve a real world problem or theory.
- 8.1.8.B.1 Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event (ex. telecollaborative project, blog, school web).
- 8.1.8.D.2 Demonstrate the application of appropriate citations to digital content.
- 8.1.8.D.4 Assess the credibility and accuracy of digital content.
- 8.1.8.E.1 Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.
- 8.1.8.F.1 Explore a local issue, by using digital tools to collect and analyze data to identify a solution and make an informed decision.

Career Ready Practices:

- CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee

CRP2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.

CRP4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.

CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CRP7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.

CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

CRP10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.

Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: Dystopia/Choice Reading Unit (Trimester 1)

Students will extend their knowledge of dystopian literature based on their learning in sixth grade. They will read the sequel to *Gathering Blue, Messenger* (Third Book) by Lois Lowry. Students will examine and compare novels, short stories, and poems, all written about dystopian societies. Through this process, students will be able to make real-world connections to the way societies are governed and the way their peoples function, evaluating governing bodies and learning the importance of being an informed global citizen. In addition, students will examine story elements, how they are interrelated, and how they help to propel the story forward and ultimately deliver a real world message to their readers. In terms of writing, students will focus on literary analysis pieces, beginning with identifying and understanding the purposes of the components of this type of writing and progressing to more independent, complex analyses. Students will use an Introduce, Insert, Explain (I,I,E) method for integrating evidence into their writing. This first unit provides a foundation for more complex units and writing expectations as the year progresses. Finally, students will end this unit with a choice novel or nonfiction text. Allowing students to make their own reading selections creates a more authentic and thus valuable reading experience. This choice unit will encourage students to make a selection based on their own preferences while still measuring growth in the NJSLs with weekly choice assignments. In a culminating project, students will use creativity and technology to share their reading with peers and to further promote an interest in and love of reading.

Unit 2: Overcoming Obstacles (Trimester 2)

Students will focus their attention on informational text. They will be reading text that falls under the overarching theme of overcoming obstacles. Students will read *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* and/or *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* and . Through short research projects, students will explore how literature is influenced by history. Students will examine how historically accurate their fictional novels are. Students will examine and compare novels, short stories, and poems, all written about the same topic with a focus on the civil rights movement and civil liberties. Students will continue to extract text evidence and use it to support ideas in literary analysis writing pieces. This unit also focuses on the craft of narrative writing.

Unit 3: Self Discovery (Trimester 2)

Students will examine both fiction and nonfiction texts in this unit. They will be reading texts that fall under the overarching theme of Discovery. The focus will be on both internal (self) and external (exploration) discovery. Students will be reading *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen as their focus piece of fictional literature. Students will read nonfiction texts that connect to scientific discoveries and nature. The focus writing piece in this unit is the research/argument essay in which students use multiple research sources to support an argument in a formal essay. Students will engage in the entire writing process from researching and planning to execution of the final product with a focus on supporting the thesis with clear evidence and revising as many times as necessary to produce a coherent final piece.

Unit 4: Coming of Age (Trimester 3)

Unit 4 will build on the theme of Discovery in Unit 3 and Overcoming Obstacles (with a focus on facing prejudice) of Unit 2. Students will be exploring their own identity and what it means to “fit in.” Students will be reading *The Outsiders* as the focal piece of literature. Students will examine and compare other novels, short stories, and poems, all written about the same topic of growing up and discovering one’s identity. Students will work on taking compositional risks in their writing such as incorporating figurative language, sensory details, dialogue, flashback, foreshadowing, and including a theme that is not directly stated. Furthermore, students will be able to engage in and complete the entire writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing their work.

Unit 5: Voices of Courage (Trimester 3)

Unit five focuses on reading informational text. Students will explore World War II and the Holocaust through the reading of informational text such as *The Diary of a Young Girl* (Anne Frank). Students will be conducting short research projects and evaluating the sources they find. Students will focus on research and informational writing as well as self-reflection.

Assessments

Evaluation of student achievement in this course will be based on the following:

All units will include evaluation tools such as short answer responses, graphic organizers, multiple choice assessments, projects, and formal writing pieces. Major assessment (summative) per unit are as follows:

Unit 1: Literary analysis essay (writing a clear literary-focused thesis and supporting it with relevant evidence)
Multimedia book trailer (free read/choice text)

Unit 2: Narrative extension writing piece

Unit 3: Research simulation essay (Argumentative)

Unit 4: *The Outsiders* text to text and text to film comparison

Unit 5: Formal research essay (Informative/Explanatory)

Curriculum Resources

Anchor Programs/Teacher Materials

Novels and major texts:

Gathering Blue, Lois Lowry

Messenger, Lois Lowry

A Night to Remember, Walter Lord

The Watsons Go to Birmingham, Christopher Paul Curtis

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, Mildred D. Taylor

Hatchet, Gary Paulsen

The Outsiders, S.E. Hinton

The Diary of a Young Girl, Anne Frank

*Selected nonfiction, informational, short stories, and poetry from commonlit.org, readworks.org, newsela.com, and the *Elements of Literature* textbook

Short stories:

“Duffy’s Jacket,” Bruce Coville

“The Naming of Names,” Ray Bradbury

“The Pedestrian,” Ray Bradbury (Honors)

“The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street,” Rod Serling

“Charles,” Shirley Jackson

Home and School Connection

The following are suggestions and/or resources that will help parents support their children:

- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/signup?isparent=1>
- <https://newsela.com/join/#/teach-or-read>
- <https://www.readingrockets.org/>
- <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading.html>
- <https://www.thechildrensbookreview.com/>
- <https://www.chompchomp.com/menu.htm>
- <https://www.quill.org/>
- <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/>