

FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Course Outline
Honors English 7**

Date: November 2003

Proposed Grade Level(s): 7

Grading: A-F

Prerequisites: Combination of achievement tests and grades consistent with demonstrated above grade level work in English Language Arts

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The curriculum for this course meets the California Standards for English Language Arts in reading, writing, written and oral English language conventions, and listening and speaking for the seventh grade. In addition, students are accelerated to explore standards for subsequent grade levels. They are given opportunities to delve more deeply into literature searching for complex themes and relationships and to support their assertions with textual references. This course requires students to understand and apply in writing and oral discussion the academic language of the discipline.

GENERAL GOALS/PURPOSES:

Honors English Language Arts at the seventh grade level is designed to prepare students with skills and strategies that will allow them to be successful in honors and/or advanced placement classes. This course focuses on active engagement with the text including a firm understanding of the author's purpose. Students are required to analyze, identify, define, explain and critique fictional and non-fictional text, and primary source documents and to support their assertions in well-organized written and oral presentations.

STUDENT READING COMPONENT:

Word origins:

Students will be given explicit instruction in the use of word origins to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary.

Reading Comprehension:

Students will be given instruction and guided practice in describing and connecting the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose.

Literary response and Analysis:

Students will be given instruction and numerous opportunities to read and respond to historically or culturally significant works that reflect and enhance their studies in history and social science. They will be taught to clarify ideas and connect them with other literary works.

STUDENT WRITING COMPONENT:

Writing:

Students will receive explicit instruction on writing clear, coherent, and focused essays, including how to exhibit awareness of audience and purpose. Students will be taught how to use formal introductions, supporting

evidence, and conclusions in their essays. Students will be assessed on their ability to write with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level and given instruction to reach this goal.

STUDENT ORAL COMPONENT

Listening and Speaking:

Students will be given instruction and numerous opportunities to deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience, including demonstrating a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level. Students will be given instruction and guidance in evaluating the content of oral communication.

DETAILED UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

See attached appendix with descriptions of the units of instruction including how the CORE curriculum will be differentiated for honors students. Differentiation elements include:

Acceleration:

Students will explore selected standards, representing more complex and in-depth analysis of text, found in subsequent grades.

Enrichment:

Students will be given opportunities to research in-depth topics related to English Language Arts, such as author or genre studies, or topics related to other curricular areas, and to bring their own novel but well-supported interpretations to their research.

Independent Reading:

Students will be exposed to reading material representing various genres and points of view. Students will be encouraged to read widely and to begin to develop a sense of their own personal reading preferences, and biases. Students will be asked to expand their reading beyond their current personal tastes.

THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE HSEE AND / OR FCUSD EXIT EXAMS IN:

Writing, Reading, and Language Arts

LAB FEE, IF REQUIRED: None

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

Please see Appendix.

DISTRICT ESLRs TO BE ADDRESSED:

Middle school English students will become:

- **Self-directed Learners** who will read and write independently, gaining confidence in their abilities to think on their own and take responsibility for their own learning. They will be able to use notes and a textbook to assist them in continuing their learning outside of the classroom setting.
- **Effective Communicators** who can clearly articulate their ideas in writing using standard American English and deliver effective oral presentations and arguments in both formal and informal settings. They will be able to analyze appropriate levels of formality in speech and writing and hone active listening skills.
- **Quality Producers/Performers** who understand the importance of neat, organized work (both written and oral) that demonstrates their thinking and understanding. They will take pride in all assignments and realize the value of creating an error-free product.

- **Constructive Thinkers** who are able to complete tasks with organization, logic, reasoning, and writing skills that they have developed. They will reflect on their work and/or actions to enhance the outcome and value of their contributions.
- **Collaborative Workers** who can work in a variety of settings in culturally diverse groups. They will be able to form and use collaborative groups to strengthen their own understanding in addition to providing constructive feedback and support for others.
- **Responsible Citizens** who are prepared to contribute to our democracy in positive ways. They will be people who accept the consequences of their actions and who demonstrate their understanding of their role in the learning process.

| CHAPTER 1 (7 weeks) | CHAPTER 1 – continued (1 week) |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Reading Acceleration</i></p> <p>Move students to the 8th grade standard 3.2 in which they determine structural elements of a plot. Students create a two-tiered plot chart in which they identify the plot and the subplot. Is the climax believable? Were you surprised with the plot’s resolution?</p> | |
| <p><i>Adding Depth to Writing</i></p> | |
| <p><i>Enrichment</i></p> <p>Discuss with students the archetype of good versus evil. Discuss other monster-slaying heroes such as Hercules who take on difficult tasks and descent into an underworld.</p> | <p>Ask students to find 2 examples of the same type of informational material. Have students explain how reading and comparing the two pieces might help them make a decision.</p> |
| <p><i>Research</i></p> <p>Research other sightings of strange creatures such as Big Foot and the Loch Ness Monster. Ask students to consider how reliable eyewitnesses are. Have students take different sides and debate the credibility of these sightings.</p> | |
| <p><i>Additional Reading</i></p> <p><u>Behind the Headlines</u> by Thomas Fleming</p> | |

Use the Language feature found toward the end of each chapter

Grade 7

2nd Quarter

| CHAPTER 2 (5 weeks) | CHAPTER 3 (4 weeks) |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Reading Acceleration</i></p> <p>Move students toward the 8th grade standard 3.3 to compare and contrast motivations and reactions of characters from different historical eras confronting similar situations. Talk about characters from different eras who are faced with fighting a bully. How do they react to the bully?</p> | <p>Move students toward the 8th grade standard 3.5 for which they compare themes across works of different eras. Ask students to identify other works they have read that deal with true love, lovers parted or tragic or unrequited love. Then, have students discuss whether human nature has changed over the centuries. See p.206 for relevant questions.</p> |
| <p>Adding Depth to Writing</p> <p>Give students a list of fantasy writers. Ask each student to read a short story or excerpt from a longer work of comparable length to “The Smallest Dragonboy”. Have students write short essays comparing their chosen works with “The Smallest Dragonboy.” Suggest that they begin comparing the fantastic elements, invented vocabularies, and unusual creatures in the two works.</p> | <p>Ch.3 . Move advanced learners to the 8th grade standard 3.5 which requires they identify and analyze recurring themes across traditional and modern works, have students choose two stories – one traditional and one modern, in which characters of different backgrounds overcome their differences to reach understanding. Then ask students to write a brief dialogue between the main characters of each story in which the shared theme is discussed in the context of each story’s historical setting.</p> |
| <p>Enrichment</p> <p>Move students to the 8th grade standard 3.7 for which they examine how literature reflects the heritage, traditions, attitudes and beliefs of an author. Have the students read “Four Selections” from <u>Interactive Reading</u>. Then have them work in small groups to write paragraphs showing how these selections, as well as “A Rice Sandwich” p.141) reflect the following about Cisneros: her Mexican heritage; her attitude growing up poor in Chicago; her beliefs, hopes, and dreams as a young child. Remind the student to keep in mind what they learned in “Meet the Writer” as they write.</p> | <p>Select two poems by the same author with similar themes. Then have students discuss the differing treatments of these themes in each poem.</p> |
| <p>Research</p> <p>Have the students find a legend about a dragon. Possibilities include the legend of Perseus, St .George, and Chinese and Japanese tales.</p> | |
| <p>Additional Reading</p> <p><u>The Dragon’s Boy</u>; by Jane Yolen</p> | <p><u>The Moves Make the Man</u> by Bruce Brooks</p> |

Grade 7

3rd Quarter

| CHAPTER 4 (4 weeks) | CHAPTER 5 (5 weeks) |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Reading Acceleration</i></p> <p>Move the students to the 9th gr. Standard 3.9 in which they explain how choice of narrator affects the characterization and the tone, plot, and credibility of the text. After reading selected text, have the students discuss the narrator. Why did the author choose this narrator? What in his personality and story telling method add to or detract from the story.</p> | <p>Move students toward the 9th grade standard 3.2 – discuss how a topic might be addressed in different prose forms. Have students choose any prose work they have recently read on their own. Each student can write a literary critique that identifies the form of prose of this work, analyzes its relationship to the work’s overall theme, and discusses how the work might have been different if it had been written in a different form of prose.</p> |
| <p><i>Adding Depth to Writing</i></p> <p>Tell students that many scholars and psychologists believe that the fairy tales we learn as children play an important role in the development of our personalities. Have students read an essay on fairy tales by one of the following experts: Bruno Bettelheim, Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Verena Kast, Marina Warner, Terri Windling, Jack Zipes. Tell them to select a fairy tale and examine their choice from that expert’s perspective and prepare an oral report to the class.</p> | <p>Encourage students to incorporate humor when writing their persuasive essays. You may want to suggest ways the writer of the model could have used exaggeration, sarcasm, absurdity or comic understatement to illustrate a point. Point out, though, that students need to keep their audience in mind and avoid offense.</p> |
| <p><i>Enrichment</i></p> <p>Challenge students to follow O’Henry’s method of finding stories “everywhere.” Have each student confine his or her search to a single three-square-foot area of the classroom or school. Within that area, the student is to identify something to write a story about. Suggest that each student try to create a surprise ending for his or her story, in the manner of O’Henry’s endings.</p> | <p>Have students create a poster which depicts an extended metaphor which describing U.S. society today. Present these to the class</p> |
| <p><i>Research</i></p> | <p>Have students do some reading about Mohammed Ali and other great boxers who sustained serious injuries. Have them gather for a debate about the boxing controversy. Do they think boxing should be banned? Should safety measures be taken to insure the fighter’s safety? Are changes in the rules advisable? Have them support their arguments with detail from their research.</p> |
| <p><i>Additional Reading</i></p> <p><u>Treasure Island</u> by Robert Louis Stevenson <u>Postcards From France</u> by Megan McNeill Libby</p> | <p><u>Adam of the Road</u> by Elizabeth Janet Gray <u>Amos Fortune: Free Man.</u> by Elizabeth Yates</p> |

| CHAPTER 6 (7 weeks) | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Reading Acceleration</i></p> <p>Move students to the 8th grade standard 3.7 for which they analyze how a work reveals its author’s heritage. Point out that every work of literature is the product of an author writing at a particular time and from a particular point of view. Ask the students to draw up a list of questions that could be used to prompt a discussion of a literary work based on the author’s background and how it is revealed in the work.</p> | |
| <p><i>Adding Depth to Writing</i></p> <p>Have students find hero stories from different cultures. Have them compose and contrast the characteristics of heroes from different cultures. Encourage them to make a presentation to the class.</p> | |
| <p><i>Enrichment</i></p> <p>Have pairs of students discuss and evaluate essay 1 or essay 2 and make a list of suggested revisions. Then have each student write a revision of the essay. They can share and compare revised essays (p. 433).</p> | |
| <p><i>Research</i></p> <p>Point out to students that “Beauty and the Beast” tales always involve a metamorphosis from ugliness to beauty and that implied in this metamorphosis is a change from evil or imperfection to goodness. Have students research stories of metamorphosis from ugliness to beauty. Are beautiful people always good and ugly people always bad? what messages, especially about women, do tales like this send readers?</p> | |
| <p><i>Additional Reading</i></p> <p><u>The Arthurian Legends: An Illustrated</u> by Richard Barbar</p> <p><u>Anthology; The World of Arthur and His Court</u> by Kevin Crosley</p> | |

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