



Cecil County Public Schools
Division of Education Services
Serving learners, families, and the community.



Grade 9 English Language Arts

Purpose of the Document: This document provides an overview of this course. The information provided below is designed to support students, parents, and the school community to understand the major content of the course and the standards used to design it. To support the needs of students, teachers may make adjustments as needed. Please contact your child's teacher and/or review the course Schoology page with your child for additional information.

Program Mission: The Secondary English Language Arts Department will empower all students with the agency to navigate a diverse and technologically fluid society, articulate informed viewpoints, engage in productive collaborations, and disrupt limiting patterns so that they can pursue personally meaningful goals.

Commitment Statements:

In recognition of the honor and privilege of being Teachers of English Language Arts, we commit to the following values and behaviors that will strengthen our community and promote lifelong learning.

- We will collaborate with our colleagues, students, parents, and communities to develop teaching practices that are grounded in research, relevant to our students' lives, and reflective of technological and cultural advancements.
- We will engage in honest self-reflection, supporting one another as we build on our strengths and recognize our limitations, always seeking to balance autonomy and accountability.
- We will strive to educate the whole learner, demonstrating empathy and respect while providing learning experiences that are aligned with state standards and flexible enough to adapt as we meet the needs of each learner.
- We will earn the trust of our students, providing a safe space for vulnerability and diversity. As guides and advocates, we will help our students find purpose and meaning in their lives, working alongside them to remove barriers to their personal and academic growth.

Course Description: Aligned to the 9-10 grade band of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, this course requires students to demonstrate proficiency in these standards as they apply to reading, writing, speaking, listening, and using language. As students explore short and extended pieces of literature, they are expected to transfer their understanding of author's purpose

and choice to make deliberate decisions in their own writing. Assignments in this class may expose students to mature and sensitive texts.

MODULE 1 - The Art of Storytelling

<p>Essential Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do authors develop themes? How are universal truths present in themes across literature? • How can I use narrative techniques to develop experiences, events, and/or characters that contribute to a theme? 	
<p>Standards/ and or skills taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a theme or central idea and analyze how it emerges and is shaped by specific details in a text • Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences • Use narrative techniques to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Use various types of phrases and clauses 	
<p>Unit 1</p> <p>How students are graded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text annotations of narrative techniques, details, and themes • Short formative written assignments aligned to the summative task • Summative written assessment of student understanding of theme development in short stories • Final Unit Assessment: After reading several short stories in this unit, select two stories and write an expository essay in which you identify a common theme of those two stories and analyze the narrative elements the authors use to develop that theme. Make sure to pull specific evidence from both texts you select. You may discuss narrative elements such as symbolism, mood, imagery, dialogue, and conflict. <p>Resources: Not all stories listed below will be used. Offerings will vary by teacher/school.</p> <p>The following selected stories from <i>Fresh Ink: An Anthology</i> edited by Lamar Giles (parent letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Kodama’s Ramen Shop” by Ellen Oh • “Don’t Pass Me By” by Eric 	<p>Unit 2</p> <p>How students are graded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original plot diagram planning tool for short story • Narrative skills assessed formatively using model texts • Final Unit Assessment: Select one of the following characters from a story we read and write a narrative that relates one incident in the character’s past that helped the character to become the way he or she is presented in the story or that relates what happens to the character next, after the story’s ending. Consider the events and decisions in the character’s past along with the character’s present traits, attitudes, and position. You must stick to what we know about the character from the story, but you are welcome to invent anything that is not spelled out in the text. Choose at least one narrative device/strategy that we’ve discussed in this unit to fully develop in your narrative. <p>Resources: Students have options for YA novels to read</p>

<p>Gainsworth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Be Cool for Once” by Aminah Mae Safi • “Why I Learned to Cook” by Sara Farizan • “A Boy’s Duty” by Sharon G. Flake <p>The following stories are from the 9th-grade Literature textbook from McDougal Littell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst • “Hamadi” by Naomi Shihab Nye • “Daughter of Invention” by Julia Alvarez • “American History” by Judith Ortiz Cofer 	<p>while writing their narratives. Offerings will vary by teacher/school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Turtles All the Way Down</i> by John Green (parent letter) • <i>Flight</i> by Sherman Alexie (parent letter)
<p>Home and School Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you view movies or TV series together as a family, talk about the message or theme the writers are trying to convey. How do the characters, main events, dialogue, etc. help to contribute to that theme? 	<p>Home and School Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When watching a show together, brainstorm what could have happened to the character before the show or after it ended.

MODULE 2

<p>Essential Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does an author unfold an analysis or series of ideas to support a claim?
<p>Standards/ and or skills taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine how an author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas • Analyze how authors’ claims are developed by particular sentences/paragraphs/sections
<p>How students are graded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizer to capture author’s use of persuasive appeals • Exit tickets • Short written response, analyzing claim • One pager visual analysis • End of unit assessment: MCAP style assessment which features two reading passages, one from <i>Just Mercy</i> and one from an article called “The Ununited State of Juvenile Justice in America.” Each passage is accompanied by selected-response questions, and a multi-paragraph written response completes the assessment. The written response addresses the following prompt: After reading the passage from <i>Just Mercy</i> by Bryan Stevenson and “The Ununited State of Juvenile Justice in America” by Katherine Sypher and Anthony Wallace, write a response (3-5 paragraphs) that identifies a claim the authors make about juveniles in the justice system and analyzes how the authors develop the claim throughout the text.

Resources:

- Core: *Just Mercy: A True Story of The Fight for Justice (Adapted for Young Adults)* by Bryan Stevenson ([parent letter](#))
- Honors: *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson ([parent letter](#))

Supporting Texts: Short texts to supplement student understanding of argument analysis including

- Article, “The Ununited State of Juvenile Justice in America” by Katherine Sypher and Anthony Wallace
- TED talk, “We need to talk about an injustice” by Bryan Stevenson
- Video clip, trailer for *When They See Us* (Netflix documentary)
- Article, “Everything to Know About the Central Park 5 Case Featured in Netflix Miniseries” by Laura Barcella
- Video clip, *60 Minutes* about Walter McMillian
- Podcast, Criminal “The Job”
- Website, *Equal Justice Initiative*

Home and School Connection

- Watch a documentary or listen to an informative podcast together. Talk about the ways that the creator develops their central message or analysis of the topic.

MODULE 3-**Essential Questions**

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Standards/ and or skills taught**Unit 4****How students are graded:**

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Unit 4**Resources:**

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Home and School Connection

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MODULE 4-**Essential Questions**

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Standards/ and or skills taught
Unit 5 How students are graded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Unit 5 Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Home and School Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •