Course Overview

Middle School | 8 | ELA HA - *Last Updated on October 28, 2024*

DESCRIPTION

K-12 Content Area | Mission & Philosophy Statement

- Foster a love for literacy across diverse backgrounds and abilities, ensuring equitable access to rich learning experiences equipping learners with the skills, mindset, and passion to engage actively as informed readers, writers, and communicators throughout their lives.
- Cultivate communicators and critical thinkers, empowering them to inquire, analyze, and create meaningfully from a variety of texts and perspectives, preparing them for the responsibilities of active participation as a citizen in our democracy as well as in an evolving global society.
- Engender collaborative and creative environments where learners innovate, elevate diverse voices and modalities to express themselves effectively and imaginatively.
- Promote a culturally responsive English Language Arts education that honors the identities, cultures, and experiences of all students, integrating diverse texts and voices to promote empathy, understanding, and respect.

Course Description

In eighth grade, students begin to study complex psychological, philosophical, and moral themes in literature. The High Achievement Language Arts course enriches the standard curriculum with higher-level reading selections and a focus on higher-level thinking. In the comprehensive journey through the curriculum, students embark on an enriching exploration of various themes across four interconnected units. In these units, students consider relationships between setting and theme in literature. Ultimately, students will examine how setting affects the individual in both literature and “the real world.” The units culminate with an essay that asks “What is the ‘real’ America?” in which students will explore whether urban, rural, or suburban settings are the true heart of our nation. From there, the units take various directions. “Authors and Artists” examines the similarities between artists and authors in an attempt to determine what drives the creative process. “Looking Back on America” begins by continuing to explore how ideas about perspective (first examined in the “Authors and Artists” unit) apply to how we view history. The unit then moves on to take an interdisciplinary look at the Constitution (with Social Studies classes). Students are then asked to explore pivotal events in our nation’s history and prompts students to ask how these events relate to key concepts established in the Preamble to the Constitution.

Next in, “Dramatically Speaking,” requires students to consider what makes a good performance. Students will read, listen to, view, and perform various pieces of poetry, and drama, gently navigating the elusive concept of heroism, encouraging students to critically examine media portrayals and develop their own perspectives on heroism by studying heroes from diverse cultures and time periods. Through a two-part structure, students first explore the Hero's Journey archetype and narrative writing, crafting original narratives, before delving into explanatory writing, culminating in the formulation of their definition essays. Students are invited to explore utopian societies and the essence of heroism amidst adversity, fostering deeper understanding through literature analysis and argumentative writing. The unit concludes with students crafting research-based argumentative essays on contemporary issues. In Students confront historical challenges through Holocaust literature, transitioning to the examination of current global issues, employing critical reading and collaborative writing to advocate for positive change. Finally, student will

celebrate humor as a coping mechanism, guiding students through an exploration of comedic writing and Shakespearean comedy, culminating in collaborative analysis and performance of scenes from A Midsummer Night's Dream. Through these immersive units, students not only deepen their understanding of diverse themes but also refine their analytical, collaborative, and expressive skills, empowering them to navigate the complexities of the world with empathy insight, and drama, gently navigating the elusive concept of heroism, encouraging students to critically examine media portrayals and develop their own perspectives on heroism by studying heroes from diverse cultures and time periods. Through a two-part structure, students first explore the Hero's Journey archetype and narrative writing, crafting original narratives, before delving into explanatory writing, culminating in the formulation of their definition essays. Students are invited to explore utopian societies and the essence of heroism amidst adversity, fostering deeper understanding through literature analysis and argumentative writing. The unit concludes with students crafting research-based argumentative essays on contemporary issues. In Students confront historical challenges through Holocaust literature, transitioning to the examination of current global issues, employing critical reading and collaborative writing to advocate for positive change. The SpringBoard ELA curriculum develops real-world skills that will help students become successful in college—and beyond. Students build critical thinking and problem-solving skills through close observation and analysis of texts, evidence-based writing, higher-order questioning, and engaging academic conversation. In the High Achievement course, students work at a faster pace and deeper level. They read higher-level core novels, have additional choice novel reading opportunities, embedded into their pacing, and have a creative argumentative research project they develop.

STANDARDS

Pennsylvania - Grade 8 - English Language Arts ELA

CC.1.2.8.A CC.1.2.8.B CC.1.2.8.C CC.1.2.8.D CC.1.2.8.E CC.1.2.8.F CC.1.2.8.G

CC.1.2.8.H CC.1.2.8.I CC.1.2.8.J CC.1.2.8.K CC.1.2.8.L CC.1.3.8.A CC.1.3.8.B

CC.1.3.8.C CC.1.3.8.D CC.1.3.8.E CC.1.3.8.F CC.1.3.8.I CC.1.3.8.H CC.1.3.8.G

CC.1.3.8.J CC.1.3.8.K CC.1.4.8.A CC.1.4.8.B CC.1.4.8.D CC.1.4.8.C CC.1.4.8.E

CC.1.4.8.I CC.1.4.8.H CC.1.4.8.G CC.1.4.8.F CC.1.4.8.J CC.1.4.8.K CC.1.4.8.O

CC.1.4.8.N CC.1.4.8.M CC.1.4.8.L CC.1.4.8.P CC.1.4.8.Q CC.1.4.8.R CC.1.4.8.T

CC.1.4.8.S CC.1.4.8.U CC.1.4.8.V CC.1.4.8.W CC.1.5.8.A CC.1.4.8.X CC.1.5.8.B

CC.1.5.8.D CC.1.5.8.C CC.1.5.8.E CC.1.5.8.F CC.1.5.8.G

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives for this course are aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards for English Language Arts and Eligible Content State Standards for English Language Arts.

ASSESSMENT TYPES

- Diagnostic Assessments
- Core/Choice Novel notes and seminars
- Curriculum-based measures
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments

SUGGESTED METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Below is a list of suggested strategies for high-quality instruction in English Language Arts:

- Instructional components outlined in the Framework for Teaching by Charlotte Danielson
- Goal setting
- Collaborative Learning through Socratic Seminar
- Formative opportunities to drive instruction
- Think-pair-share
- Reciprocal teaching
- Read Alouds and student independent choice novels

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RESOURCES

District Approved Program Resources	District Approved Supplemental Resources	District Approved Technology Resources
Student Text Resources: The College Board, Advanced Placement Program. Springboard © English Language Arts Grade 8, 2018 • Student Text Printed Version • Student Text Online Version **Teacher Resources:** The College Board, Advanced Placement Program. Springboard © English Language Arts Grade 8, 2018 • Teacher's Guide Printed Version with Online Access • Assessment Resources	**Novels:** The Sword in the Stone by T.H. White Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury Night by Elie Wiesel	

Teacher-created resources