Eighth Grade Instructional Plan for English Language Arts and Reading

Course Overview

In 8th grade English Language Arts and Reading, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) guide students through reading, writing, speaking, and listening in increasingly complex and diverse ways. Students will strengthen foundational language skills while exploring a variety of genres including fiction, poetry, drama, literary nonfiction, expository, and argumentative texts. They will analyze how authors use craft, purpose, and structure, while applying comprehension strategies such as inferencing, evaluating details, synthesizing information, and analyzing characters. Vocabulary development is also emphasized, with students using context, roots, and reference tools to expand word knowledge and refine their ability to read fluently for meaning and purpose.

Alongside reading, students will grow as writers and communicators. They will compose essays and responses across genres, using the full writing process from drafting to publishing, while practicing revision and editing skills to strengthen their command of grammar and conventions. Collaborative projects, academic discussions, and presentations provide opportunities for students to apply their learning in meaningful, real-world contexts. By the end of the year, students will be prepared not only for the STAAR assessment but also for the transition to high school English, with the skills to think critically, express themselves effectively, and engage with challenging texts and ideas.

Throughout the year, students will:

- Read varied and complex texts
- Compose written responses of varying lengths
- Revise and edit their own writing and that of others
- Collaborate with peers on projects, academic discussions, and other forms of learning.
- Participate in enrichment and intervention activities to reinforce previously taught material and expand mastered skills

Classroom Expectations

Our classroom is a safe learning place that encourages teamwork, positive feedback, and academic achievement. All students will be respectful to others. We will be good listeners to the teacher and to others' ideas. All students will be hard-working contributors in the process of getting their education in order to be successful and reach their full potential.

- Step 1: Redirection & Reteaching

  -Student is redirected and reminded of classroom expectations.

  -Teacher revisits the classroom social contract and reteaches expected behavior.

- Step 2: Parent Contact

  -Student signs the Discipline Book.

  -Teacher makes parent contact and privately discusses expectations with the student.

- Step 3: Parent Conference & Office Referral

-A parent conference is scheduled.

-The assistant principal meets with the student, calls home, and determines appropriate consequences.

- Step 4: Office Referral

-Continued or severe behaviors result in an office referral and parent contact.

Some behaviors may result in immediate referral depending on severity, per campus policy.

Positive reinforcement and consistent routines will be used to encourage students to meet expectations before moving through these steps.

Attendance Policy & Its Importance

Regular attendance is vital to your child's academic development. Eighth grade is an important year in English Language Arts and Reading—this year lays the foundation for future high school English courses. When students attend daily, they stay current with new reading and writing skills, strengthen their vocabulary, deepen their comprehension, and practice important habits that support lifelong learning and academic success.

Please notify the school if your child will be absent. Frequent or extended absences may make it more difficult for your child to learn the necessary foundational skills that ensure student success this year and in future school years. Notify the school as well as their individual teachers.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the school year, students will be able to:

1. **Develop vocabulary and word analysis skills** by using context clues, word parts (roots, prefixes, suffixes), and print/digital resources to determine meaning and apply new words in speaking and writing.

2. **Read fluently and independently** by adjusting pace and expression based on purpose and text type, and self-selecting texts for sustained independent reading.

3. **Comprehend and analyze literary texts** (fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction) by identifying themes, making inferences, analyzing characters, and evaluating the impact of figurative language and literary devices.

4. **Examine informational and argumentative texts** by determining central ideas, evaluating evidence, analyzing author's purpose, and comparing across multiple sources.

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5. **Respond to texts** through written and oral responses that demonstrate understanding, analysis, connections to other texts, and personal reflections.

6. **Apply the writing process** (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to create clear and coherent writing in multiple genres, including expository, argumentative, and literary essays.

7. **Use correct conventions of English** by applying grade-level grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in all writing tasks.

8. **Engage in collaborative discussions** by listening actively, building on others' ideas, asking clarifying questions, and presenting viewpoints with evidence.

9. **Conduct short research and inquiry projects** by developing questions, gathering information from reliable sources, paraphrasing and summarizing, and presenting findings in written and oral formats.

10. **Strengthen media and digital literacy** by evaluating how information is presented across print, digital, and multimodal texts and using technology responsibly to create and share original work.

Course Resources

- Chromebook (provided by Midland ISD)
- Journals and writing utensils (part of the school supply list)
- Amplify
- I-Ready

Grading Policy

According to Midland ISD Grading Policy:
The summative evaluation of a student's grade during a recording period should be based on sufficient data collected in class in the form of various assessments. Regular and periodic assessment of student progress ensures that a student has ample time for remediation.

Students will receive feedback on graded assignments within three to seven days. Major assignments will receive feedback within ten days. Regular communication may be electronic through the adopted Student Information System (Skyward) or other messaging applications. Conferences can be scheduled by appointment.

Major assignments - 60% Minor assignments - 40%
Semester exams count as 15% toward the final semester grade

Late Work/Redo and Retake

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MISD has a board policy regarding late work and redo/retakes on assignments. Assignments may be turned in one day late, earning a maximum grade of 90. Assignments turned in two days late will earn a maximum grade of 80. A 70 is the highest grade an assignment can earn if it is three, four, or five days late. After five school days, assignments will not be accepted, and a grade of zero will be assigned.

In an effort to ensure mastery of objectives, MISD policy allows for redo/retakes on assignments for which a student scores below 75. This policy only applies to assignments that are turned in on time. The redo/retake must be done in tutorials within four school days of the return of the graded assignment and cannot extend into the next six weeks grading period. Teachers may use alternate assignments for redo and retake.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are excited to work together to make this a successful year of learning!