

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This is my sixteenth year teaching at Rogersville City School and I am excited to begin this chapter in my life as your child begins a new chapter in his/hers. Let me introduce myself to you. I graduated from Carson-Newman College in December 2005 with a Bachelor's Degree in English with a minor in Secondary (7-12) Education. This is my 21st year teaching at the middle school level. My wife Autumn and I have been married for 23 years and have two children Brylea, attending WSCC for nursing and Zander, a 10th grader at CHS.

Teaching wasn't always what I wanted to do; but after looking back in my own experiences in school and remembering the impact my teachers had on me, I realized what I was supposed to do. I wish to impact lives through teaching. I look forward to being an impact on your child's life, education, and preparation for high school. I am available to you if you have any questions or comments. Feel free to call the school during my planning time or email me with your questions. **Please review the attached Course Syllabus with your child to better understand what is expected this year.**

Thanks for your time.

Adam Harris
School Phone: 272-7651
Email: harrisa@rcschool.net
Planning Time: 11:00-11:45

Mr. Adam Harris
Rogersville City School
8th Grade English/Language Arts

Email: harrisa@rcschool.net
School Telephone: 272-7651
Planning Time: 11:00-11:45

Class Introduction:

My class will cover all main areas of English/Language Arts including Reading, Language, and Writing. Vocabulary, Speaking and Listening are also areas we will be building on. Each class period is 85 minutes long; therefore, much cooperation is needed in order to cover all material. Students will participate in a variety of learning opportunities. *It will be up to each student to do his/her part in the learning process.*

Tentative Course Calendar (See Module Synopses below)

Module 1: *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
Module 2: *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque
Module 3: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare
Module 4: *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* by Claudette Colvin

ELA Standards may be found online at

<https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/academic-standards/english-language-arts-standards.html>

Hard copies can be made available upon request.

****Required Materials****

- 2-inch binder with Subject Dividers
 - Response Journal
 - Vocabulary Journal
 - Knowledge Journal
 - Writing Journal
 - Tests
- Pencils, a red pen, and highlighters
- Post-It Notes/Post-It Tabs

Procedures:

- Students are expected to come to class prepared. So bring your notebook, pencils, textbooks, etc...
- Entering class...
 - Students are expected to sanitize their hands.
 - Students are expected to sit down quietly and be ready for instruction.
- During Class...
 - Students are expected to be **quiet** and **attentive** when the teacher is talking.
 - SLANT (Sit up, Listen, Ask and answer questions, Nod your head, Track the speaker.)
 - Students will not be allowed to leave the classroom unless it's an emergency.
 - Students are expected to follow directions the first time they are given.
- Leaving class...
 - Students should tidy up their workspace
 - Students should push in chairs upon dismissal.
- Students are responsible for any missed work due to absence(s).
- All students are expected to show respect and, in turn, respect will be given to them.
- 100% Compliance. All students will be held accountable for following classroom expectations.

Discipline Plan

I will be using the “3 strikes” policy as outlined in the “8th Grade Welcome Letter” previously provided.

Grading

The student’s average will be determined by grades in the following areas:

- Participation
- Quizzes/Tests*
- Class Projects*
- Homework
- Writing

*Advance notice will be given for these items.

All work will be assigned into one of three categories, homework, quizzes, and tests.

The grading system is as follows:

Homework:	20 %	93-100	A
Quizzes:	30 %	85-92	B
Tests:	50 %	75-84	C
		70-74	D
		0-69	F

Computer Use

Computer time is at the teacher’s discretion. Any computer use that is inappropriate could result in a detention.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to not only have a good work ethic, but also to work with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in dishonest behavior as in cheating or plagiarizing will receive a grade of zero on the assignment. No exceptions.

What is cheating?

1. Receiving or providing information during a test or for a test given in an earlier period.
2. Using material on tests when the teacher has not given permission to do so.
3. Violating the teacher’s testing rules and procedures.
4. Using somebody else’s writing (word for word—or almost word for word) and saying it is your own. (Plagiarism). Or using somebody else’s ideas and saying they are your own and not giving credit.
5. Using or copying another student’s assignment to turn in as your own work.
6. Allowing other students to use your work on assignments-- with the exception of specific group, lab, or collaborative projects.

There are other actions that may be considered cheating or dishonesty. The above list contains the most common ones

****Final Note****

I reserve the right as the teacher to modify the syllabus at any time. Students and parents will be notified if anything changes.

Grade 8 Module 1: The Poetics and Power of Storytelling				
Summary	Students explore how stories can help us make sense of ourselves and the world. They learn the power of stories to help humans navigate complex social situations, become more empathetic, and understand different views.			
Essential Question	What is the power of storytelling?			
Core Texts and Art	<i>The Crossover</i>, Kwame Alexander: Through the rich language, multiple poetic forms, and the dynamic storytelling of a novel-in-verse, Alexander tells the story of a young boy who develops understanding of himself and his world. <i>Children's Games</i>, Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Bruegel's painting of a village captures a scene of ordinary people with vivid imagery and imagination and provides viewers a chance to consider the effects of line, color, and perspective. <i>The Block</i>, Romare Bearden: Bearden's mixed-media painting uses color, texture, and line to create a lively African American neighborhood. This painting allows viewers the opportunity to explore the relationship between form and content.			
End-of-Module Task	Writing Type: Narrative Students write three poems that demonstrate the effect of descriptive language and show the relationship between content and form.			
Learning Overview	Knowledge: Students explore the power of storytelling as a way of making sense of personal experiences, the complex emotional and social lives of others, and the world. They explore complex articles about storytelling's effect on individuals and culture. Reading: Students examine the roles of content, form, and expression in creating a powerful story. They analyze the effects of figurative language and poetic types in literary texts. Writing: Students write narrative pieces by using descriptive, sensory, and figurative language to appeal to readers' senses, convey abstract ideas, and deepen readers' understanding. They experiment with narrative structure and sequence. They incorporate evidence in creative and logical ways in their informative writing. Speaking and Listening: Students consider the role of expression in reading aloud and the effect of an audience on a speaker's delivery.			
Focus Standards	Reading: RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, RI.8.2	Writing: W.8.3, W.8.4, W.S.5	Speaking and Listening: SL.8.4, SL.8.5, SL.8.6	Language: L.8.1.c, L.8.2.a, L.8.5.a

Grade 8 Module 2 The Great War				
Summary	Students experience World War I through the eyes of Paul Bäumer, the narrator of the novel <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> . Informational articles, poetry, and film build students' understanding of the effects of war on individuals and communities. Students examine how literature and art represent those effects.			
Essential Question	How do literature and art illuminate the effects of World War I?			
Core Texts and Art	<i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>, Erich Maria Remarque: This fictional first-person narrative account of World War I offers devastating insight into the experience and effects of war. <i>Gassed</i>, John Singer Sargent: This landscape painting vividly conveys the physical, and even psychological, experience of war. <i>Soldiers Playing Cards</i>, Fernand Léger: This Cubist painting responds to the complex effect of war.			
End-of-Module Task	Writing Type: Informative Students organize their ideas thematically to write an essay explaining a psychological effect of war on Paul.			
Learning Overview	Knowledge: Students cultivate a deep understanding of the ways in which literature and art express the psychological and emotional trauma of those who experienced World War I. Reading: Students examine character development and psychological effects of war in a complex novel, while analyzing how specific incidents develop complex themes. They study informational texts, poetry, painting, and film, analyzing the effect of medium on meaning. Writing: Focusing on well-chosen evidence, students incorporate different types of evidence to develop a specific purpose. Students then experiment with different organizing structures and write conclusions that state the larger significance of a piece of writing. Speaking and Listening: Students elaborate on and respond to others' thinking by listening from a speaker's perspective.			
Focus Standards	Reading: RL.8.3, RL.8.7, RI.8.1, RI.8.3	Writing: W.8.2, W.8.4	Speaking and Listening: SL.8.1.b, SL.8.1.d	Language: L.8.1.b, L.8.1.d, L.8.2.b, L.8.5.b, L.8.5.c

Grade 8 Module 3: What Is Love?				
Summary	Students examine a question that has vexed humans for centuries: What is love? The module introduces conflicting perspectives on the power of love. This examination explores love as an emotional and personal experience rooted in societal norms and scientific theories.			
Essential Question	What is love?			
Core Texts and Art	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>, William Shakespeare: This eternally popular comedy and love story is rich with figurative language and dramatic irony. <i>The Arnolfini Portrait</i>, Jan van Eyck: This iconic portrait uses line and structured poses to represent a distinct, formal understanding of love. <i>Birthday</i>, Marc Chagall: Through primary colors, curved lines, and floating figures, this painting represents the lightness of love.			
End-of-Module Task	Writing Type: Argument Students argue whether agency or fate directs the outcome of a romantic relationship for one of the play's characters.			
Learning Overview	Knowledge': Students examine personal agency, contemplating questions about fate, individual choice, and love. They explore how love can undermine or empower one's sense of self, and how, because of factors outside one's control, one cannot always act on love. Reading: Students analyze the figurative language, dramatic irony, and sophisticated themes of Shakespearean drama. Students analyze claims about love to evaluate arguments. Writing: Students explain and evaluate the claims, logic, and validity of arguments and demonstrate their ability to construct arguments that include clear and persuasive claims, logical reasoning, relevant evidence, elaboration, transitional language, and a conclusion. Speaking and Listening: Students listen for a speaker's logic and pose questions that connect ideas from multiple speakers.			
Focus Standards	Reading: RL. 2, RL 8 4, RL.8 , RL.8.9, RI.S.4, RI.8.S	Writing: W.8 1, W.s 4, W s 5	Speaking and Listening: SL.8.2.a, SL.8.1.c, SL.8.3	Language: L.8.1.c, L.8.1.d, L.8.2a, L.8.2.c, L.8.4.b, L.8.4.c, L.8.4.d, L.8.5.a, L.8.5.c

Grade 8: Module 4: Teens as Change Agents				
Summary	Students immerse themselves in the life of Claudette Colvin, a teen fighting for social change during the civil rights movement. The module engages students in conversations about social justice, as they explore how the actions of one teen, and a whole community, can effect real, lasting change.			
Essential Question	How do people effect social change?			
Core Texts and Art	<i>Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice</i>, Phillip Hoose: Hoose blends third-person narrative with Claudette's first-person accounts to create a nuanced picture of the Montgomery bus boycott and the civil rights movement. <i>Ladder for Booker T. Washington</i>, Martin Puryear: Puryear's compelling sculpture offers students insights into the importance of perspective and form in shaping our experience of art.			
End-of-Module Task	Writing Type: Informative—Research Students write a research essay about a teen change agent of their choosing and then translate that essay into a multimedia presentation.			
Learning Overview	Knowledge: Students explore the events of the Montgomery bus boycott and consider how individual and collective actions challenged segregation. They examine the power of language and action to effect social change. Reading: Studying a book-length text, students consider the author's purpose. They examine speeches, interactive web media, videos, and advertisements to build understanding of injustice and social change during the civil rights movement. Students analyze two articles that disagree on the topic of social media as a strategy for social change. Writing: Students research a social issue and teen change agent of their choice. They assess relevance and credibility of sources, synthesize evidence from multiple sources, and write a research essay. Speaking and Listening: Students share research findings in a multimedia presentation, making strategic choices about presenting summative information that develops audience understanding of the topic and adds interest.			
Focus Standards	Reading: RI.S.S, RI.8.G, RI.S.7, RL8.9	Writing W.8.2, W.8.4, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.h.8	Speaking and Listening: SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5	Language: L.8.1.a, L.8.3.a, L.8.4.a. L.8.4.d, L.8.5.b