

Welcome to 8th grade Advanced Language Arts! If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please contact me. I can provide the fastest response through email. Please include the student's first and last name, so that I may respond as accurately as possible.

Thank you in advance for your support. Let's have a successful year *Leading the Way*!

Dr. Suitts

jsuitts@murrieta.k12.ca.us

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English Language Arts 8 provides students with opportunities and resources to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students read a variety of literature and informational texts as well as routinely write to examine a topic, convey ideas, and support claims. Focus is placed on developing analytical skills, where students cite textual evidence and provide elaboration to support that evidence. Speaking and listening skills, vocabulary development, and grammar instruction are integrated throughout reading and writing experiences.

Advanced middle school courses are intended to be a preparation for higher-level classes in high school. Students enrolled in advanced courses will be responsible for extended responsibilities and expectations, both inside and outside of class. It is vital for students to have strong work habits and be ready and willing to put forth the effort necessary to be successful.

SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- ✓ 3-ring binder (1 inch) with 5 tab dividers
- ✓ Lined paper and Pens
- ✓ Post-it Notes
- ✓ Highlighters (multiple colors)
- ✓ Dry erase markers (fine point work best)

The following are available for classroom use, but you may want to have your own: glue, scissors, colored pencils, ruler, and stapler. *Donations of facial tissue and college-ruled paper are greatly appreciated!*

GRADES

Students will be assessed on how well they demonstrate each standard. Therefore, there is no extra credit. Please refer to the grading criteria handout. Students may monitor their scores on Aeries.

<i>Standards Assessment Scale</i>			<i>1st Semester Scale</i>	<i>2nd Semester Scale</i>
4	Masters Standards	Students can independently extend learning with complex thinking and elaboration.	<i>In order to earn an A, students are expected to consistently meet standards and are approaching mastery.</i>	<i>In order to earn an A, students are expected to consistently master standards.</i>
3	Meets Standards	Students can independently demonstrate an understanding of subject matter concepts/skills.		
2	Approaches Standards	Students demonstrate a foundational understanding of subject matter concepts/skills and require some support.		
1	Attempts Standards	Students are beginning to understand subject matter concepts/skills and require significant support.		
			A 3.3 - 4.0 B 2.6 - 3.2 C 1.9 - 2.5 D 1.1 - 1.8 F 0 - 1.0	A 3.5 - 4.0 B 2.8 - 3.4 C 2.0 - 2.7 D 1.3 - 1.9 F 0 - 1.2

TECH INFORMATION

All students are assigned a Microsoft 365 account. Your login: 9-digit number@mvusd.org

All writing assignments, PowerPoints, etc. should be saved here so that they are easily accessible from both school and home. Directions on how to submit electronic assignments are posted on Haiku.

All information will be posted in a weekly agenda on Canvas. This includes copies of all class assignments, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations.

ABSENCES

It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete work missed due to any absence, for any reason. If something is due and you are absent, it must be submitted the day you return, or it will be considered late.

LATE WORK

Late work will be accepted without penalty to the academic grade during the 6-week grading period in which it is due. After the grading period ends, it will no longer be accepted and will be scored as a zero.

DO OVERS

Students may rewrite/retake any assessment through the semester. Students must demonstrate that 100% of the unit work has been completed and explain a clear study plan when making an appointment for a retake.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

I have two major expectations in my classroom: **Be Respectful** and **Be Responsible**. I expect all school rules to be followed. Disciplinary action will occur if a student is disruptive or acting with disrespect to the teacher or to other students. (Refer to student handbook)

Students will be given a grade for meeting expectations regarding respect and responsibility.

<u>WORK HABITS</u> ✓ Is prepared for class ✓ Uses class time effectively ✓ Submits assignments on time ✓ Participates in learning activities	<i>Outstanding</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
<u>CITIZENSHIP</u> ✓ Is respectful to others ✓ Arrives on time for class ✓ Exhibits a positive attitude ✓ Uses appropriate language	Consistently meets expectations; Serves as a model for peers "Leading the Way"	Usually meets expectations	Sometimes meets expectations; inconsistent	Seldom meets expectations

NON-CLASS MATERIALS

- Students may have water in class, but no other food or drink is permitted.
- All non-class materials must be kept in the student's backpack.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep track of any devices brought to school. Students taking cell phones out in class may have their device sent to the office, which may be picked up at the end of the school day.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any student who plagiarizes, lies, cheats, or otherwise misuses the academic environment will be referred to school administration. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Knowingly allowing another student to copy from your paper
- Copying from another student's paper or any other prohibited material
- Copying directly from the text, other printed material, or an internet source without citation

Academic Grading Criteria

Students will be measured and scored against grade-level standards. Scores are trended, not averaged. The most recent assignments carry the most weight when determining a student's overall grade. Aeries uses an equation to determine the trended scores, which are review for accuracy before assigning semester grades.

Level 4: Masters Standard

Students can independently demonstrate a transference of learning with complex thinking and elaboration related to the grade-level standard. For example, students may:

- Apply concepts in a new or complex situation
- Evaluate a concept from differing perspectives
- Make connections and create analogies, integrating areas of study
- Plan, construct, or create new situations that illustrate or use a concept

Level 3: Meets Standard

Students can independently demonstrate an understanding of subject matter vocabulary, concepts, and skills that relate to the standard. Students understand not just the *what*, but can correctly explain the *how* and *why*. For example, students may:

- Explain and justify a concept
- Apply concepts in familiar contexts
- Make inferences, conclusions, and predictions
- Compare, contrast, and distinguish a concept from related concepts

Level 2: Approaches Standard

Students demonstrate a foundational understanding of subject matter vocabulary, concepts, and skills that relate to the standard. Students understand the *what*, but may require support to explain the *how* and *why*. For example, students may:

- Complete simple processes
- Recall important information
- Define, list, and summarize a concept

Level 1: Attempts Standard

Students are beginning to understand subject matter vocabulary, concepts, and skills that relate to the standard. At level 1, students require significant support. For example, students may:

- Recall partial information
- Identify and list parts of a concept

Movie Release

Parents, please initial on the appropriate blanks and sign at the bottom.

The following films may be shown to enhance literature and concepts discussed in class. All are not rated unless otherwise specified. If you would like additional information about these movies, please refer to the movie's Parent Guide at <http://www.imdb.com/>

_____ I give permission to view all of the movies listed below.

_____ I do not give permission to view any of the movies listed below. I understand that an alternate assignment will be given in a separate classroom.

_____ I give permission to view all of the movies listed EXCEPT for the ones I have circled.

- Videos used for reinforcing events in history:
 - Crash Course U.S. History
 - *The Crossing*
 - *Race to Freedom: The Underground Railroad*
 - *Critical Choices: A Volunteer Military or a Draft*
 - National Geographic:
 - *America Before Columbus*
 - *Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West*
 - History Channel:
 - *The Revolution*
 - *America, Story of Us*
 - *The Men Who Built America*
 - *The Hunt for John Wilkes Booth*
 - *The Ultimate Guide to the Presidents*
- Language Arts movies viewed in conjunction with reading units:
 - *Flowers for Algernon* (PG)
 - *The Outsiders* (PG)
 - *The Holocaust: In Memory of Millions*
 - Ted Talks:
 - "To this Day: For the Bullied and the Beautiful"
 - "Danger of a Single Story"
- Fun movies for after semester exams:
 - *National Treasure* (PG)
 - *National Treasure: Book of Secrets* (PG)
 - *Night at the Museum* (PG)

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the guidelines received in the course syllabus. (The teacher reserves the right to alter policies if necessary. Changes will be discussed and posted on Canvas.)

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date