



*Sharpville Elementary School*

*Ms. Lisa Oliver*

*Grade Five Language Arts and Social Studies*

September 3, 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The fifth grade language arts program consists of reading, English, spelling, and process writing. During the week, the students will be engaged in a variety of activities such as journal writing, sustained silent reading, cooperative group work, and independent work. By applying reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and creativity skills, we hope to make your child an enthusiastic independent reader.

Students are expected to be attentive, courteous, and respectful to the teacher and to their peers. It is extremely important that your child be prepared for class. All necessary materials and assignments should be brought to class each day.

Please be aware that all tests, quizzes, homework assignments, class participation, and projects will be the basis for their language arts grade. Because all learning styles are addressed, every child has a chance to succeed within the parameters of the language arts curriculum.

Please encourage your child to read. Fifteen minutes of additional reading should be practiced in the home every night. This reading is separate from homework and should be something that appeals to your child's interests. Each student is required to read three (3) books each nine-week grading period for sustained silent reading and to turn in story maps based on their books.

All work must be submitted by the due date. If a student is absent, he/she will have one day for each day absent to make up any work, including tests and quizzes (Please See Student Handbook). If work is not made up within the time allotted, the student will receive a zero. Formal projects and writing assignments that are late will be lowered five (5) points for each day late.

Students must bring all materials with them to class each day. They are not permitted to go to their lockers for books, etc. Assigned locker times will be given the first week of school. The following materials are required for class:

1. Textbooks (**school** provides)
2. Journal (**school** provides)
3. Binder (**student provides**)- No Trapper Keepers
4. Pencil/pen (**student provides**)
5. Book for SSR time (**student/school** provides)
6. \*\*\*\*\* A flash drive for the computer would be great to have, but this is not necessary.\*\*\*\*\*

## Introduction

My name is Lisa Oliver, and I will be teaching students in grade five at Sharpsville Area Elementary School. I have lived in the Shenango Valley all my life and feel privileged and honored to remain here to teach your children. I graduated from Westminster College in 1991 with degrees in elementary education and English. I received my secondary education certification in English in 1992. In 1997, I returned to Westminster to receive my master's degree in education as a reading specialist. I am currently working on a second master's degree in counseling at Westminster. Before coming to the Sharpsville Area School District, I was an English/reading teacher at Farrell Area Upper Middle School. I enjoy sports, reading, writing, and spending time with my family. In 1995, I married Thomas Lapikas. In 2000, we had our daughter, Olivia, and in 2005, we had our son, Nolan. I live in the Sharpsville community, and I am dedicated to making our District, one of the best districts in the State.

I am a firm believer in "Parents as Partners" in education, so please do not hesitate to call me regarding your child's academic and social progress. Please contact me via e-mail at: [loliver@sharpsville.k12.pa.us](mailto:loliver@sharpsville.k12.pa.us) or by telephone at 724-962-7863 (Extension 3404). The best time to reach me would be from 3:30-4:00. I am looking forward to a wonderful year with your child.

## Course Description

The language arts program for grade five is designed to expand each student's ability to communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. A thematic approach using a variety of literature based strategies enables the student to incorporate these necessary skills in all areas of the curriculum, i.e., social studies, science, and mathematics. There is a strong emphasis to develop a high level of proficiency in each of these fundamental areas, as each contributes to the academic growth and achievement of the individual student.

## Major Concepts Covered This School Year

Language Arts concepts are presented using a number of sources. They include literary and informational texts (core, extended, and recreational literature), non-fiction novels, short story, poetry, and research using the library and Internet. The selected reading material focuses on five themes - exploration, survival, challenges, changes, and dreams across different cultures, environments, places, and self. This approach enriches the content of all subjects across the curriculum. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are four focus points from which concepts will be taught.

**Literature** – This includes the reading of five/six literature books that may be integrated with other subject curriculum. The investigation of the human condition as it relates to relationships and the interaction with one's own environment will be emphasized.

**Composition** – This includes an introduction to the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revision, editing, final copy) and the major components involved in composing various forms of writing. Writing exercises include expository, persuasive, compare and contrast, evaluation, biography, autobiography, letters and other pieces. Structure and grammar are also emphasized in this course.

**Oral Presentation** – This includes communicating in small groups and presenting to large class audiences. The basic elements of good communication skills will be covered in this course, as well as the encouragement of trust and mutual respect between the speaker and their audience.

**Listening Skills** – This course includes strategies to enhance listening skills in the classroom. Key elements involved in this process will be good note-taking, immediate feedback (written and oral), and generating, developing, and evaluating ideas. Trust and mutual respect are emphasized.

## **Methodology**

The student will demonstrate increasing proficiency in reading comprehension and the ability to interpret, analyze, apply, and evaluate a wide variety of literary and informational materials. In acquiring these skills, the student will develop and use decoding skills, spelling and grammar rules, increased vocabulary, the writing process (revision and editing of drafts), and skills associated with effective speaking and listening. A variety of instructional methods/meaning-based strategies are used such as guided reading in the classroom to emphasize the following outcomes. Throughout the year, I address the multiple intelligences (linguistic, logical, spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal) through a wide variety of genres, student-centered activities, and assessment methods.

## **Goals/Objectives**

By the end of this year, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of:

- reading strategies/skills from comprehension to critical thinking.
- a variety of genres read throughout the course of the year.
- evaluating and drawing conclusions of reading material/literature.
- key elements of literature as it relates to life.
- an increased vocabulary and the proper usage in the writing process.
- word analysis as it relates to proper spelling and definitions.
- Comprehend vocabulary using context clues and support informed opinions with specific textual evidence

2. Apply and use writing skills such as:

- journal writing that address questions related to reading material.
- Venn Diagrams and Story Mapping tools.
- organizing supporting details and employing transition words
- graphic organizers to evaluate, interpret and understand content.
- learning the writing process to produce final products.
- pre-writing exercises: webbing, clusters, and outlines.
- peer and self-revision and editing practices on rough drafts.
- multiple forms of writing such as letters, persuasive, narrative, informative, expository, and poetry
- notetaking for all purposes

3. Demonstrate the personal skills of cooperation, perseverance, independence and responsibility appropriate for effective reading, writing, speaking and listening.
4. Demonstrate the skills necessary to complete extended projects/tasks.
5. Learn and apply grammar skills such as the Eight Parts of Speech as well as linking and helping verbs, sentence patterns, reviewing simple sentences (subject, predicate), introducing complements (direct object, predicate adjective, predicate nominative), and punctuation when used in quotations, commas in a series, dates, numbers, and sentences end marks.
6. Employ the elements of fiction in passage analyses –Character (inner/behavioral and outer/physical traits), Setting (atmosphere), Plot (exposition, internal and external conflicts, climax, resolution), Theme (moral), Tone (mood), Figurative Language (simile, metaphor, personification, exaggeration, dialect, and imagery)

### **Textbooks Used**

We will be using Pearson-Scott Foresman, Reading Street and various novel units.

### **Assessment**

Students are assessed using a variety of methods. Reading is assessed using teacher observation, evaluation, student/teacher conferencing, response journal entries, and performance outcomes. Writing is evaluated using a variety of developmental continuing rubrics and indicators of convention. Oral reading and presentation assessment is accomplished through the use of scoring guides measuring fluency and expression of content material. Spelling and grammar are assessed through the use of daily exercises, tests, and the application of these skills in writing performances. Daily homework and effort, short and long term projects, quizzes, and tests all comprise the quarter/semester ending academic marks.

### **Grading Policy**

Throughout the course of each semester, I grade using the following perimeters: **tests and quizzes, compositions/writing assignments, projects, homework, and class participation.** Your child will have access to his/her exact grade on a weekly basis. Progress reports are also sent home midway through each grading period.

**ONCE YOU HAVE READ THE SYLLABUS, PLEASE RETURN THIS  
PAPER TO ME BY SEPTEMBER 10, 2013. THANK YOU.**

I have discussed the syllabus with my son/daughter and understand the requirements for language arts.

Student's Name\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian E-Mail Address\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

September 3, 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to fifth grade! Your child will embark upon new adventures in the world of learning. I instill a love of learning that will last throughout the remainder of your child's years of schooling.

To begin, your child will have a double period of language arts each day. The fifth grade language arts curriculum consists of reading, spelling, vocabulary, listening skills, oral presentations, English and several types of writing. Students will be required to read three SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) books each nine week grading period. These books are the choice of the students. They can obtain their SSR book from home, the school library, or the classroom. Please encourage your child to read at least fifteen minutes each night at home. SSR time is also sometimes given during class.

Next, tests, quizzes, homework, writing samples, projects, SSR requirements, and class participation will be the basis for the language arts grade. Your child will have access to his/her exact grade on a weekly basis. Progress reports are also sent home midway through each grading period.

Consequently, parents will also have internet access to their child's grade. This on-line program enables you to check your child's grade, tests, assignments, or projects on a daily basis. Another computer program that will be utilized in fifth grade is *Study Island*. You will receive more details concerning this program once school starts.

All assignments must be submitted by the due date. If absent, a student will have one day for each day absent to make up any work, including quizzes, tests, or projects. Otherwise, a zero will be given.

Last, three textbooks along with various novels will be used in class during the course of the year. The following materials on the next page are needed daily for language arts:

1. A 1 inch binder with dividers provided by the **student**.
2. Pencils and pens provided by the **student**.
3. Textbooks and novels provided by the **teacher**.
4. SSR book provided by either the **student** or the **teacher**.
5. A flash drive for the computer is **not optional** but is suggested.\*\*\*\*\*
  - Please contact me if you are unable to purchase any of items 1-4.
  - **All of the above items are due by September 10, 2013.**

*For a more detailed syllabus of my class, please read the following pages.* I am also requesting that you and your child review the information together and return the last page of this packet.

I am looking forward to a great school year. We both want success for your child, so please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions or concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to teach your child.

Sincerely,

Lisa Oliver, Language Arts Teacher

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