

**English/Language Arts for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>**  
2019-2020 Session 1, Mondays/Wednesdays  
**Instructor: Melanie Ware**

**Course Objective:**

This course will provide learners a solid overview and practice of effective reading, writing, and communication skills. Although varied levels are expected, students should be adept at basic mechanics and read proficiently at or above a 6th grade level. (Or, plan to reread/review all reading assignments weekly). *Scholastic SCOPE* and/or *Junior Scholastic* magazines will be used (provided). The reading will include mostly expository articles, although **students must have an independent novel**. Reading for more advanced groupings will include some material at a 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> level for social studies, science and literature. A study of various types of writing will be explored and discussed; students will share and constructively critique each other's writing. **Writing focus in Session 1 will be summary** (Session 2: argument writing and presentation; Session 3: Response to Literature; Session 4: Narrative/poetry). Activities may also include group presentations, skits and readers-theatre. Students should expect to complete 2-3 final drafts essays. **Independent work is expected** (on average, two hours per week with nightly independent reading expected).

**Course Expectations:**

- Attend all classes or follow up if absent. No make-ups will occur.
- Arrive on time and prepared to provide your best effort daily. Bring any assigned reading to class each time.
- Keep up with **independent reading**: you will need to have a novel of choice; reading check-ins weekly.
- Be willing to discuss/share your work and assess your own progress.
- Complete your reading and writing assignments. **Check in on Edmodo regularly.**
- Materials needed: Spiral notebook, folder, assignment notebook, and pencil/pen.

**Syllabus:**

*Sharing, article discussion, peer review, and collaboration will be ongoing. Mini lessons in grammar, vocabulary and spelling will be weekly. The following syllabus is a GENERAL framework only; class focus will adjust per students' needs, interests, and depth of articles.*

**Week #1, 8/26 and 8/28**

Focus will be an introduction to the course (defining components of ELA, such as fluency, mechanics, varied genre, etc.) and an informal assessment of skills, combined with "getting to know you" communication and team building activities. Students will review various 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> level grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary skills, participate in collaborative activities, and share personal interests via journaling and dialogue. Independent reading.

**Week #2, 9/4**

Focus on summary strategies, recognizing inferred and concrete details, as well as learn the difference between objective and subjective writing. Students will edit paragraphs and learn editing symbols/strategies. Independent reading and check in.

**Week #3, 9/9 and 9/11**

Focus on word choice and strengthening/clarifying ideas. Summary will be assigned for an expository article (from Scholastic Scope, issues provided). Students will discuss and analyze key ideas from articles. Evidence-based (cited) responses will be practiced, as well as reading- comprehension strategies. Rough draft of summary #1 is due. Independent reading and check in.



**Week #4, 9/16 and 9/18**

Students will edit and revise a summary through peer collaboration and evaluation, as well as select an article of interest, and draft brief summaries of main ideas. Classic or contemporary fiction will be reviewed, with a focus on analyzing tone, setting, plot and character. Major and minor characters, protagonist/antagonist, and theme will be introduced/reviewed. Students will outline main idea, and continue to develop paraphrasing skills. Final draft of summary #1 due and rough draft of summary #2 (narrative) assigned. Independent reading and check in.

**Week #5, 9/23 and 9/25**

Students will analyze, discuss, and evaluate various types of writing, and share their rough draft summaries. They will read an expository article or narrative short story and write short summaries in class. Students will discuss their perspectives on the purpose and power of various writing, and articulate what influences them and why. Second draft of summary #2 is due. Independent reading and check in.

**Week #6, 9/30 and 10/2**

Review of summary skills. Students may prepare for Session 2 by practicing research-reading skills, including the use of annotating text while reading, and footnoting, quoting, citations when writing. Students will understand the purpose of defining a thesis (more practice in Session 2). Final draft of summary #2 is due, and a summary of researched content or similar activity will be assigned. Independent reading and check in. Book Talk #1.

**Week #7, 10/7 and 10/9**

Students will review editing skills, sharing of research notes (including the article they researched), and evaluation of writing/reading progress from start of session. The final class of the session will culminate with a reader's theatre or similar activity.









