

English/Language Arts for 6th-8th

2020-2021 Session 2, Mondays/Wednesdays

Instructor: Melanie Ware

Contact: melanie@onesparkacademy.com

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 with online access and/or hard copies). The reading for session 1 will include mostly expository articles, although **students must have an independent novel**. Over the course of the year, reading for more advanced groupings will include some material at a 7th-9th 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. By the end of the year, students will have completed 2-3 final draft essays. **Writing focus in Session 2 will be persuasive writing. Independent work is expected** (on average, two hours per week with nightly independent reading expected).

Course Expectations:

- Attend all classes or let me know before class if you know you will be absent.
- Arrive on time and prepared to provide your best effort daily.
- Keep up with **independent reading** of 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, highlighter, and pencil/pen.

Syllabus:

*Sharing, poem and story discussion, peer review, and collaboration will be ongoing. Grammar, vocabulary and spelling will be practiced weekly. **The following syllabus is a GENERAL framework only**; class focus will adjust per students' needs, interests, and depth of articles.*

Week #1, 1/11 and 1/13

Lesson on news and media literacy to encourage students to actively search out reputable resources. Read articles that present two sides and analyse the difference between objective and opinion pieces.

Week #2, 1/20

No school on Monday. Discuss rhetorical devices and persuasion techniques, such as pathos, logos and ethos.

Week #3, 1/25 and 1/27

Introduce opinion pieces and petitions. Students will practice research-reading skills, including the use of annotating text while reading and analyze key ideas from articles. Students will learn how to define and support a thesis for persuasive writing. We will begin exploring topics for formal essays, ranging from environmental, political or social issues.

Week #4, 2/1 and 2/3

Students will decide on a topic for their formal argument essay and summarize a key article. Evidence-based (cited) responses will be practiced, as well as reading- comprehension strategies. Students will outline main ideas, and continue to develop paraphrasing skills and clarify their thesis. Petitions due.

Week #5, 2/8 and 2/10

Review of formal essay format. Introduce counter arguments and rebuttals. Work on completing outlines that include reputable sources. Grammar and vocabulary activity.

Week #6, 2/17

No school on Monday. Students will edit and revise argument essays through peer collaboration and evaluation. Rough draft of final essay due.

Week #7, 2/22 and 2/24

Interactive in-class activity that correlates to what we have learned this year. Book Talk #3. Final draft of essay due.

Week #8, 3/1 and 3/3

Start ideas and outlines for persuasive argument presentation. Students will learn how to fine tune their arguments. Students will practice preparing for their oral arguments and how to create an effective slideshow (with Power Point, Google Slides, Keynote, or Prezi).

Week #9, 3/8 and 3/10

We will watch videos of teens delivering argument-based presentations. Students will deliver their presentation for their argument essay.