

8th Grade ELA (English Language Arts) at West Middle School

1. What do we want Middle School ELA students to know and do?

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become critical consumers of information 2. Write clearly in a variety of forms to communicate a message 3. Transfer and apply learning across content and grade levels 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Use reading to develop an understanding of and empathy for other cultures and perspectives 5. Learn from mistakes and persevere to re-adjust, revise, and improve.
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2. What do we teach in 8th grade ELA?

When?	Reading Units	Writing Units	Language Units
August - September	Becoming a Lifelong Reader: Setting Goals and Analyzing my Reading	Becoming a Lifelong Writer: Personal Narrative (Memoir)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proofreading and Mechanics 2. Phrases/Clauses 3. Compound Sentences 4. Complex Sentences 5. Compound-Complex Sentences
October	Reading Narrative Nonfiction	Writing Narrative Nonfiction	
November - December	Dystopian Book Clubs	Literary Comparative Essay	
January - February	Nonfiction Reading and Evaluating Research	Position Papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commas Review 2. Pronoun Agreement 3. Verb Mood 4. Active/Passive Voice 5. Participles and Gerunds
March	Drama: "Twelve Angry Men"	Argument Writing	
April - May	Critical Study of the Classics: TBD	Literary Analysis Writing	
YEAR LONG	Independent Reading	W.G.O. - What's Going On (bi-weekly current event articles) WHY? Awareness → Empathy → Action	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build background knowledge • Improve vocabulary • Consider and confront international, national, and local problems • Foster cooperative learning • Apply and transfer learning to new situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create curiosity/inquiry about the issues of our time • Elevate rigor • Connect to the learning in other classes • Practice reading, writing, speaking, listening

3. How do we grade for learning using a Growth Mindset? What are our grading philosophy and practices?

Philosophy	Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades reflect learning. • Grades are not a reward, nor are they a punishment. • Students are not penalized for late work. Student responsibility will be reflected in Academic Responsibility grade this year. • Every student is expected to do every assignment. • Students receive an "I" until they complete the assignment. • Students revise for learning and improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each assignment is an assessment of the child's work (practice vs. performance). • Each assignment focuses on learning targets (i.e. theme). • Each learning target is recorded separately. • Each assignment is assessed using a proficiency scale. • Overall grade is made up of "current status" grades in each of the district appointed standards--Reading, Writing, Language, and Speaking/Listening.

Student work is assessed on a specific learning target derived from the standard using a proficiency scale.

This is where the learning target is "unpacked" into a checklist. For example:

THEME PROFICIENCY SCALE			
Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Theme statement meets the proficiency criteria and includes complex sentence structure and depth of thought .	Theme statement accurately includes: _____ "Big idea" Word _____ Universal Truth _____ "So What?"	Theme statement is inaccurate. -OR- Theme statement is oversimplified. -OR- Theme statement includes 2 out of the 3 proficient criteria.	Theme statement is not plausible. -OR- Theme statement includes only 1 out of the 3 proficient criteria.

Levels of Understanding are used to assess learning:

Advanced- 100%	Proficient- 90%	Developing- 75%	Beginning- 60%
<p>Student meets proficiency as well as demonstrates deep understanding by extending, applying, synthesizing, and transferring the learning targets in new ways.</p> <p><i>Students work independently- no support is needed.</i></p>	<p>Student consistently and independently demonstrates clear understanding of the learning targets.</p> <p><i>Little support is required from teachers.</i></p>	<p>Student demonstrates inconsistent understanding, and/or student is progressing toward proficiency of the learning targets.</p> <p><i>Moderate support from teachers, parents, and/or peers is needed.</i></p>	<p>Student demonstrates gaps in proficient understanding of the learning targets.</p> <p><i>Additional intervention from teachers and parents is needed.</i></p>
<p>Improving – 82.5%</p> <p>Student is moving toward proficiency. He/she may have revised work or received adaptations to reach the learning targets.</p> <p><i>Teacher is providing support to help student reach proficiency.</i></p>			

