

# **English Language Arts – 9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

2001-2002 School Year

Ms. Misty Maina

“We learn by coming up against what we do not already know.”

-Scott Russell Sanders-

## **The purposes of this course:**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts focuses on reading, researching, writing, analyzing, speaking and language skills. The emphasis in this course is to build on the essential academic skills for college readiness that will support students' success in high school and project pathways to higher education. Students are expected to actively engage in the learning process both collaboratively and independently. Students will practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening techniques targeted to learning acquisition and skills development. Students will hone skills in syntax, grammar, vocabulary, and practice the MLA research format. Students will practice critical reading strategies using a variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction. Class and group discussions, presentations, and cooperative learning activities will enhance students' abilities to speak effectively and become active listeners. Course content will connect students to a variety of issues historically and currently at large in society. Assessments will be evaluated using the Common Core State Standards in the academic areas of Reading, Writing, Language, and Speaking & Listening.

## **The desired outcome of the course:**

- By the end of the school year, students should have...
- read, discussed, written about, and (hopefully) enjoyed our literature selections
- developed a greater understanding of literature
- practiced active/critical/reflective reading and writing
- continued to develop and strengthen their writing ability
- developed the skills associated with critical thinking through active learning with an ability to shape, not merely absorb, knowledge (co-creators of knowledge)
- developed and practiced the skills associated with group-inquiry, collaborative and cooperative learning
- developed and practiced the skills associated with reading, discussing, and writing about other writers
- related course readings, ideas, and discussions to their own lives and thinking
- developed the willingness to ask questions and followed those questions to get answers
- monitored their academic progress
- developed time management skills that are practical for their own learning and life

**Text & Printed Materials:**

Students will read a variety of texts including poetry, many forms of non-fiction writing, Shakespearean sonnets, portions of U.S. historical documents, and the following novels: *The Lightning Thief*, *Sunrise over Fallujah*, *Eyes Wide Open*, and *The Red Badge of Courage*. Academic journals, critical reading resources for informational texts, instructional handouts templates, and rubrics will be provided. A school planner and the required course novels will be provided.

**Technology:**

Multimedia use is intentional and applied to academic purposes. Students will frequently interact with multimedia during learning and presentation modes. Students will have access to Google Classroom, Gmail, and my website (<https://mistyformichigan.wixsite.com/mysite>) to receive multimedia to help facilitate independent work or enhance their learning environment at school. Access to online resources will also be provided as needed at school, but it is recommended that students locate a computer with Internet access after school hours as well. Student email accounts will be used by students to save and transfer schoolwork and access document templates and instructions for assignments. ***Direct teacher email contact by students and parents is encouraged.***

**Required Materials:**

Students will be required to have the following with them every day in class:

- Student Planner (provided by school), to be updated daily with assignments and due dates.
- A dedicated English folder or binder for keeping paperwork organized.
- A composition book for journaling.
- A spiral notebook for notes and writing activities/assignments.
- Writing utensils: blue or black pens, pencils, and colored pencils.
- An independent reading book available for every day of class (see my website for a book recommendation list / Kindles or e-readers are allowable if not misused).

**Late Work Policy**

Students must turn in their work on the assigned due date in order to receive full credit. Any late work will receive a reduction in credit which will affect the overall grade for the assignment. If a student is unable to meet a deadline due to excused absence or extenuating circumstances, contacting me will be necessary to arrange make up of work for full credit. Late or Make-up work must be turned in at least one week prior to the end of a grading period.

## **Re-Do Policy**

I maintain the decision on the necessity for a re-do on any given assignment and appropriate credit for re-do work. Students are encouraged to contact me directly for re-learning and re-completion of assignments. Opportunities for relearning materials necessary to meet a course standard are to be arranged with me and completed at least one week prior to the end of a grading period.

## **Extra Help**

Extra help is available for one hour after school in the teacher's classroom or via email contact. Any student whose grade reaches a level below 70% should take the initiative to seek out extra help.

## **Electronic Devices in the Classroom**

All electronic devices shall not be seen, heard or used during class time in any classroom or on any school property. This includes hallways, bathrooms, during assemblies, etc. Students that use these devices inappropriately will have them confiscated and turned in to the main office.

## **Attendance/Tardiness**

Per school policy, a tardy of more than 5 minutes is considered an absence. Anyone coming late to class (for any reason) must have an admittance slip. The following is the system for assigning detentions for tardies: 2 tardies per semester – free warning, 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy – 30 minutes after school detention to be served in the teacher's room, 4<sup>th</sup> tardy (and any subsequent tardies) – 1 hour after school detention to be served with designated school administration. Any form of detention will be communicated via email to the student and the parents/guardians.

## **Course Grading Scale**

4.0 / A = 90 – 100%	1.5 / D+ = 65 – 69%
3.5 / B+ = 85 – 89%	1.0 / D = 60 – 64%
3.0 / B = 80 – 84%	0.0 / F = 0 – 59%
2.5 / C+ = 75 – 79%	
2.0 / C = 70 – 74%	

## **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Any student who knowingly submits work of others represented as his/her own shall be considered to have cheated. Cheating also includes the aiding and abetting of cheating by others. Students should not collaborate on assignments unless explicitly directed to by their teacher.

Academic Dishonesty is classified as Exceptional (very serious) misconduct. We believe students are responsible for their own work. Academic Dishonesty is defined as cheating, plagiarism, collusion, etc. and is contrary to the principles of personal responsibility and integrity. Students who have committed academic dishonesty will be subject to academic sanctions, which may include denial of credit, removal from the course with a failing grade, and school disciplinary actions.

Corrective Exceptional Misconduct Actions may include, but are not limited to:

- First Offense: Warning. Infraction will be documented on the student's record. Loss of credit on the assignment; the student must redo the assignment, achieving at least a basic performance level.
- Second Offense: First offense consequences and short- or long-term suspension.
- Repeated Offenses: First and second offense consequences and long-term suspension or expulsion.

## **Behavioral Consequences**

If a student chooses not to follow classroom expectations, the initial consequence will be for the student and I (Ms. Maina) to meet after school to consult and to problem solve. If a student chooses not to modify their behavior following the teacher/student meeting, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If these efforts have still not re-directed the student's behavior, a referral to the administration will be submitted. Basically, the first meeting with the teacher is to resolve conflict and to problem solve; the second contact with parents/guardians is to seek support from home, and the third contact is the natural consequence, if the above efforts have not succeeded in the correction of the student's behavior.

***My goal is to keep every student in class and actively engaged in their learning. If an issue arises, I will not hesitate to seek out support to ensure partnership for the benefit of the student.***

## General Behavior Contract

Our purpose for having a standard of behavior in class is to create a positive learning environment for all students, and to establish our compliance with school policies. These guidelines include the following items.

1. Students are expected to be on time and in class each day. School Attendance policies will be followed. Tardy or unexcused absences count against class work and result in referral for detention after 3 Tardies or 1 Unexcused absence.
2. Emphasis will be on communicating respect toward all individuals in class, teachers and students. This extends to the property in the classroom shared by other teachers and courses such as library, computer lab, and commons.
3. Students should remain in their seats and not leave the classroom during class time unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Bathroom breaks will be built into classroom routines as time permits to avoid interrupting instruction time.
4. Students are responsible for keeping desks and work areas clean. Water bottles are allowed, but eating or drinking is not allowed during class time. No throwing of books, pencils, garbage, etc. – use waste and recycle bins appropriately.
5. Cheating in any form (plagiarism included) will result in a failing grade on that assignment and parent/administration notification. Further problems with cheating will result in disciplinary action and removal from the class.
6. Phones, iPods/iPads and other electronics are to only be used in class at specific times under direct teacher permission each time used. Any other usage risks confiscation of the device and referral to administration (if usage continues).
7. School Discipline Policies will be followed per the Student Handbook. Small infractions will count toward Work Ethic grading for this course. The teacher will be in contact with the parent regarding repetitive or increased offenses. In the case of a serious problem, the student will be removed immediately from the class and sent to a School Administrator.

**Please sign the agreement below and return this syllabus to Ms. Maina for credit.**

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We have reviewed the course syllabus for 9th Grade English Language Arts and will be in contact with Ms. Maina regarding any questions or concerns about this course or the student's progress.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_