

8th Grade Language and Literature Syllabus
Pacific Beach Middle School
International Baccalaureate World School
Ms. Paula Kerby - Room 117
pkerby@sandi.net

Class Website: www.sites.google.com/view/mskerby

Here you will find important links, weekly updates, daily agendas, and other class information. This is a great way for parents to stay updated on what we are doing in class!

Course Description: This course is a balanced literacy course required of all grade 8 middle school students. The course content focuses on teaching students skills and strategies for independent reading and writing of grade-level appropriate text. Instruction in each unit of study interrelates reading, writing, oral communication, and language study. Students are provided with multiple opportunities to engage in academic discourse as they question, interpret, extend, and evaluate others' ideas. The goal of instruction is to support students in becoming independent, strategic, critical readers, writers, listeners, and speakers who communicate effectively in various forms, for various purposes, and for various audiences. Students engage in standards-based lessons that are scaffolded to support a range of reading/writing levels. Additionally, students' reading, writing, and speaking activities involve in-depth and critical thinking and reasoning.

When developing specific curriculum we consider the following:

- the Areas of Interaction
- holistic and global perspectives
- intercultural awareness - to guarantee the choice of relevant topics and literature
- appropriate materials selected from a wide range of literary and non-literary sources
- the balance of the five skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and viewing
- learning outcomes matching the MYP objectives and assessment criteria
- final assessment criteria modification for use at each preceding level
- opportunities for student application of global themes
- local and state standards

Grading Procedures: Grades are comprised of written and oral presentations, projects, tests and quizzes, writing, and independent reading work. Completing all assignments is essential.

Missing work will earn a zero and lower your grade in the class. Unless you are absent, late work will be accepted up until the end of the grading period (unless otherwise stated), however the maximum grade you can earn is a D. Each day that the assignment is late, your grade for the assignment will be lowered one letter grade. This is a policy intended to encourage you to manage your time effectively in the classroom and at home. Mastery learning will be available for IB assignments, and more information will be given in class. If you are absent, please first check the website, then the absent bin in class, then visit me when you return. All work needs to be completed on your own. Cheating will result in a zero grade.

Percentage Breakdown of Work:

IB Criteria (Analyzing, Organizing, Producing Text, Using Language)	75%
ATL - Approaches to Learning (Communication Skills, Social Skills, Self-Management Skills, Research Skills, Thinking Skills)	25%

The highest score you can achieve on an IB rubric is 8. Your achievement level on a given task will then be used to determine an A-F letter grade using the following scale.

- 8-7 = A (Advanced)
- 6-5 = B (Proficient)
- 4-3 = C (Basic)
- 2-1 = D (Below Basic)
- 0 = F (Far Below Basic)

IB Criteria:

Criterion A - Analyzing: identify and explain the structure of text while justifying opinions and explanations.

Criterion B - Organizing: organize the structure of written work for a particular intention and uses appropriate referencing tools to document sources.

Criterion C- Producing Text: produce text using imagination while selecting relevant information.

Criterion D - Using Language: use grade appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation. Students will practice speaking in a tone and style appropriate for their audience.

Projects: Throughout the year, you will have projects that require time and work outside of class. The planners given to you at the beginning of the school year are to be used as a tool to help you plan your time wisely. All major projects are assigned with a project information sheet outlining the requirements of the project. These sheets should be followed closely to achieve maximum credit for the project. Larger projects typically involve the use of a computer for word processing or other software access. Although we will be using our classroom laptops, continuing to work at home will be necessary at times.

Homework:

Formal graded homework assignments are typically not given on a daily or weekly basis, but **work not completed in class will become homework as needed.** Occasional homework assignments will be written in your planner. Each semester will include a design project, which may require work to be completed at home.

Assistance: I am happy to help with homework if needed. You can schedule a time with me before or after school, or during lunch on Wednesdays.

Behavior/Discipline: You are expected to adhere to all school and classroom rules. Should there be a problem, I may call home and/or send you out of class for a short amount of time to an assigned Buddy Room.

Class Expectations:

1. I will treat others as I would like to be treated.
2. I will respect other people and their property.
3. I will practice acts of kindness.
4. I will not disturb those who are working.
5. I will laugh with anyone, but laugh at no one.

Consequences:

1. Verbal warning.
2. Buddy Room pass.
3. Parent / Guardian phone call.

Rewards for following rules:

1. Positive phone call home.
2. Cooperative behavior raffle tickets.
3. Table group points reward.

Citizenship Grades:

Citizenship grades are based on participation and behavior in class. Points will be lost when a student is not prepared, disruptive, does not have completed work, is out of their seat without permission, tardy, or is off task.

E (Excellent)

G (Good)

S (Satisfactory)

N (Needs Improvement)

U (Unsatisfactory)

Supplies:

While I have a class set of art supplies, you are welcome to bring your own to class. We will often work with:

- Colored pencils
- Highlighter
- Glue sticks

Every student will be using a notebook (provided by teacher) in class every day, as well as a pencil and an eraser.

I look forward to working with all of you and helping you become lifelong learners. Education is a TEAM EFFORT! Together we can learn something new every day and have fun doing it! I encourage all of you to participate, ask questions, share experiences, and take pride in your work. Our classroom is a place for you to feel comfortable learning, growing, and being yourself. So, let's have a productive year!

Sincerely,

Ms. Paula Kerby

Signature Page
Please return with your student

By signing this, you agree that you understand the class syllabus and will uphold all class expectations.

Student name: _____

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian name (printed): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Relationship to student: _____

Email: _____ Phone number: _____

Would you rather be contacted via phone or email?

☐ Email ☐ Phone ☐ Either is fine

Is there anything else you would like me to know about your student? How can I help them be successful in my class?
