

[Somali](#) / [Spanish](#)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

We are excited that your daughter/son is enrolled in 7th grade Enriched English Language Arts for the 2026-27 school year. We are confident that this course will be an exciting and challenging experience for all students. Students in Enriched Language Arts 7 will be asked to read extensively and analyze more difficult and complex literature. Students will also be asked to complete more in-depth assignments, participate regularly in class discussions, and have an increased homework load. Students will be expected to apply and use their knowledge in a wide variety of ways and work more independently, at a much faster pace than regular classes. In addition, the literature they read may be more abstract with tougher vocabulary.

In keeping with these rigorous standards, we are requiring students to read two books this summer that will allow for earlier immersion in coursework once school begins. We have chosen *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer and *Nothing But the Truth* by Avi. Students need to either purchase the books or get them from a library. If you cannot secure a book, please contact the Valley View main office at 952-848-3500.

Students do NOT need the book itself once the school year starts. A thorough reading of the books and completing the assignment at the bottom of this letter will be adequate to prepare for class. **On the first day of class, there will be a test on the two books. Additionally, in the first weeks of class, we write an essay using the notes described at the end of this document.**

Naturally, students should not consult websites or outside materials to assist them in their notes; their notes should be reflections of their own ideas about both books. If students choose not to read the summer reading books but remain enrolled in the course, the natural consequence of doing poorly on the test and essay will result; **extra time to complete the test and essay will only be granted to students who were enrolled in our district after August 15, 2026, and did not have access to the assignment information.**

Thank you for your commitment to your child's education. Please review with your student the list of characteristics (below) that will enable each child to have a successful experience in Enriched Language Arts 7. The summer assignment is on the last page. We look forward to working with you and your student in the fall.

Sincerely,

Ms. Geere and Mrs. Andrews

Your 7th Grade Language Arts Teachers

Characteristics for Success

Students in Enriched Language Arts 7 cover most of the same topics as the traditional classes, though often on an accelerated timeline. The enriched classes will work with the material in a more rigorous, in-depth, and abstract manner. Tests on the topic will reflect this rigor, and more will be expected of projects and other assignments. There are also one or two additional units of study covered in the enriched sections, which are not part of the traditional syllabus. Overall a higher level of maturity and the ability to function independently is expected at the enriched level.

Another way to think of an enriched class is as a "challenge" class. The course is designed for those students whose learning needs and desires require that they be stretched to a higher level of performance. It does not mean that enriched students are better than other students; their learning needs are more accelerated.

Enriched students should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- 1. A passion for language arts.** This should be the first consideration when deciding on enriched language arts. If a student does not enjoy extensive reading and writing, this course is not a good fit.
- 2. Strong reading and writing skills.** Enriched students must be proficient, skilled readers who can achieve a high level of comprehension independently. Students must also enjoy writing and be able to articulate their thoughts in many different writing modes.
- 3. An ability to think beyond concrete levels and to process information quickly** are also characteristics of students for whom the enriched classes are designed. Students should be able to make leaps of abstract thought to connect and further ideas.
- 4. A willingness to participate positively in both large and small group discussions and activities.** The enriched student should not be waiting around for others to give the answer or do the work for him/her. Students are expected to participate in class on a daily basis and to offer thoughtful, serious opinions.
- 5. A strong work ethic.** An enriched language arts student will have a greater workload and will be asked to go more in depth into the work. In addition, an enriched student may be asked to do more work outside of the classroom, including a summer assignment.

Students who match these characteristics will feel successful in this class.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Obtain copies of *The House of the Scorpion*, by Nancy Farmer, and *Nothing But the Truth*, by Avi. As you read each novel, complete the notes described below. Review your notes for the test we will have on the first day of class. Also be sure that your completed notes are typed and in your Google Drive for the first day of school. **Copies of the books are not required for class.**

Plot: In a Google doc, write a brief summary (less than 300 words) of **each** book. This will not be graded. It is to help you remember the books for the test. This is not the type of assignment that you need to labor over—the goal is not perfection; rather, it is a chance to show your teachers your ability to work and think independently and articulate your thoughts in informal writing. These notes will prepare you for the assessments at the start of the year.

Character analysis: From *The House of the Scorpion*, you will need to describe each of the following characters: **Matt, Tam Lin, Rosa, and Maria**. First pick 3 character trait adjectives that describe the **personality** of each character. Then, choose 2-3 passages of what the character says or does (textual evidence) that support EACH of your personality adjective choices. **You need to have the exact words from the text and the page number for each passage.** **This completed chart is critical to being able to write the essay the first week of school.**

Set up your chart for *The House of the Scorpion* in a Google Doc like this:

Character	Personality Adjective	pg# and Passage #1	pg# and Passage #2
Matt	Adj 1	p # "text text text text text"	p # "text text text text text"
	Adj 2		
	Adj 3		
Continue with the other characters			