

2025-2026 8th Grade English Language Arts Syllabus

Teacher Contact Information

Shelby Roberts – sroberts@eanesisd.net

Katharine Kostelnik – kkostelnik@eanesisd.net

Christine Anderson– Canderson6@eanesisd.net

Katherine Freyermuth – kfreyermuth@eanesisd.net

Course Description

Students will read and write every day in class, using a writer’s notebook and participating in the full writing process. Reading will cover multiple genres and focus on literary analysis, vocabulary, and grammatical structures. Students will write inside and outside of class and are expected to have a novel with them at all times. They will complete reading tasks and participate in class discussions and written responses.

Units/Topics in Order

- Independent Reading
- Poetry & Literary Devices
- *The Outsiders* novel study
- Argumentative & Informational Writing
- Drama Study
- Honors: *Night* | ELA: *Prisoner B-3087*
- Short Stories & Final Reflection

Classroom Procedures

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and attentive manner. Our core values—honesty, respect, and pride—are essential to maintaining a productive learning environment. Classroom expectations align with the Eanes ISD Student Code of Conduct.

Grading Expectations

Grades are broken down as follows:

- Major Grades: 60%
- Skills/Daily Work: 40%

Redoing work is intended for occasional difficulty with content mastery. If a student frequently redoes work, parents and counselors will be contacted and a study plan may be developed. Extra credit is not offered.

Late Work Policy

Students are expected to foster a sense of responsibility by meeting assignment deadlines. For each class period that work is late, students will lose ten percent of the original possible score. All late work must be turned in before the unit assessment. A “1” in the grade book indicates work has not been turned in yet. Per the school handbook, students receive one day per absence to complete work for full credit.

Make-Up Work

To promote growth and self-advocacy, it is the student’s responsibility—not the parent’s—to email the teacher and complete all missed assignments after an absence. Students have one day per day absent to complete work for full credit.

Retest Procedures

Students earning below a 70% on a major grade may retest for a maximum score of 70%. The retest and remediation must be completed within a week of the original test. Students will earn the higher of the two grades. Honors students may retest only once per nine weeks. Writing process and independent reading grades are excluded from retesting.

AI Expectations (Acceptable Use)

Eanes ISD supports the thoughtful and responsible use of AI tools to enhance teaching and learning. In this class, approved AI tools may be used to support instruction, provide practice opportunities, and offer feedback. Students will be clearly informed when AI use is allowed on an assignment. All AI use must follow district policies, including protecting personal information and using only district-approved tools.

Supplies Needed

Students must bring the following supplies to class each day:

- Two Mead composition notebooks
- Pen or pencil and highlighter
- A novel of their choice
- A method to organize papers and work

Tutorials

Tutorials for ELA are available Tuesday and Thursdays from 8:10am - 8:30am. Please contact your ELA teacher if you plan to attend or need to arrange a different tutorial session.

Calendars

Please check your teacher's website for tutorial days and weekly calendars, which are updated by 8:00 AM each Monday. Parents will receive weekly emails with class updates. It is highly encouraged that parents subscribe to the teacher's Google Calendar and check Skyward to stay informed.

TEKS for 8th Grade Language Arts can be accessed at:

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110b.html>

HMCS Academic Integrity Policy

Academic honesty and integrity are basic to creating an effective learning community. The student who cheats is harmed because he or she is not learning the material. Other students are harmed when those who cheat gain unfair advantage in the classroom. Hill Country Middle School suffers when the climate of trust and mutual respect is undermined. Society pays the price when the taking of shortcuts becomes an accepted norm.

HCMS Honor Code

I understand the importance of academic integrity at Hill Country Middle School, and I vow to be honest and honorable in all dealings with fellow students, faculty and staff.

The most common forms of cheating or plagiarism occur when a student:

- Submits a paper written entirely or partly by another person or AI.
- Copies another student's homework (even with permission from peers).
- Copies from another student during an assessment.
- Obtains and submits a paper on the Internet or other electronic media.
- Takes a picture/screenshot of a quiz, test, or assignment and shares with others.
- Uses "Cut & Paste" instead of original production
- Copies a published author's words, phrases, sentences, or ideas (published authors, periodicals, encyclopedias, and internet sites) without citation.
- Obtains a copy of an assessment OR talks to another student before or during an assessment or about the assessment, thus providing an advantage to the student before taking the test.
- Changes an answer after the paper/assessment has already been graded.
- Uses technology or electronic devices to access information during an assessment.
- Creating a Google Education tool to impersonate any staff member or student via any avenue, social media, or other.
- Forging a signature that is not their own.

Violation of Academic Integrity Policy: Major Grades

If/When a student makes the mistake of academic dishonesty on a graded assignment or assessment, the following policy will be implemented in all grades and content disciplines:

1st Offense =The content discipline teacher will write an office referral, informing the administration of the incident and communicating the incident with the parent/guardian. The Student will be allowed to follow the department's re-test policy. The administration will assign appropriate consequences.

Subsequent Offenses =The content discipline teacher will write up an office referral, informing administration, who is now tracking the incidents so that a pattern is now created. The student

will be allowed to follow the department's re-test policy. In addition to contacting the parents/guardians, the administration will continue the progression of restorative practice and consequences.