

Grade 8 Honors English Language Arts Syllabus 2023-2024

Course Description:

Honors English focuses on the central themes of maturation, diversity, and the development of compassion, empathy, and respect for others. The curriculum teaches the skills of reading, writing, discussion, language use, and vocabulary development through the study of both literature and informational texts. Core readings include novels, plays, short stories, and poetry. Students will be asked to explore additional works of literature as well. The writing modes targeted are expository and fictional/personal narrative. Honors English serves as both an introduction to the high school English curriculum as well as an opportunity for students to critically explore their own maturation process through the lens of literature. The rigors of the course are intended to be commensurate with the preparation students need for success later in high school, in college, and in the working world. Students are being trained to be excellent critical thinkers, readers, textual analysts, writers, and creative producers of argument. The course will demand both high quantity and quality of effective writing for a range of audiences and purposes. By so writing, students will demonstrate their mastery of the conventions of the standard written language. Through the coursework, students will be expected to meet and exceed state standards for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language.

Book Choices:

Below are the topics we will cover over the school year. At Little Miami Middle School, we want our students to grow as readers and writers. In addition to teacher–selected resources, students in grades 6-8 will have the opportunity to select their own literature for both educational and entertainment purposes. We believe this blended approach will foster a life–long interest in literature, making it more meaningful for all students.

Throughout the year, students will grow as readers and writers by selecting books from our school library, the public library, teacher libraries, home, etc. Some books may address themes, situations, and language that contain mature content. As Language Arts teachers, we encourage parents and guardians to review the novels chosen by both the teachers and students, allowing for purposeful interaction and understanding. As a school, we respect all parental decisions, and alternate titles and assignments can be provided when necessary.

Pacing Guide: The students will read up to six books and write a minimum of two essays per quarter. Below you will find the pacing guide for Honors English. Several times throughout the year students will be able to read a book of their choice. These can be checked out at the public/school library, purchased, or they may choose to read a Board approved book provided by the teacher.

Quarter	Writing Focus	Reading Focus	Books
1	Writing About Reading/Narrative Writing	Dystopian Literature	<i>Divergent</i> by Veronica Roth/Dystopian Choice Novel
2	Position Papers/Informational Writing	Essential Research	Choice Novels (2). These two novels may be of any genre.
3	Literary Essays	Historical Fiction	<i>The Book Thief</i> by Markus Zuska/Historical Fiction Choice Novel
4	Memoirs	Literary Nonfiction	<i>Trevor Noah, Born a Crime</i> YA by Trevor Noah/Literary Nonfiction Choice Novel

General Policies

Due Dates: Assignments are due at the beginning of the period unless otherwise specified. Major/long-term assignments may be due online in advance of the class period in which associated presentations or hard copies are collected. Online submission deadlines are firm.

Cheating: Cheating, suspected cheating, or attempted cheating (including talking during a test) will result in a zero on the assignment and appropriate disciplinary action. Further, any written material or ideas that are borrowed, quoted, or otherwise included from an outside source must be cited, or its inclusion will be considered plagiarism. Plagiarism and other academic integrity violations will be dealt with in accordance with school policy as delineated in the student handbook.

Reading: Keeping up with reading assignments is crucial to your success in this class. If you have not read the assignment, you cannot thoughtfully participate in class discussions. If you fall behind in the reading, you will become overwhelmed and set yourself up for frustration when it comes time to write a paper. Bear in mind that some of the reading will be difficult and you may not understand it all the first time. That's OK; I want the assignment to stretch your thinking. Do the best you can to understand; meanwhile, write down questions that we can address in class.

Absences: If you know you will be absent, you must schedule a make-up time with me for tests or assignments you will miss. Work due during a planned absence should be turned in before the absence unless special arrangements are made. If you are absent for any reason, you have only the number of days you were gone to make up missed work (Example: Absent 3 days = 3 days to complete missed work) unless special arrangements are made. Students are responsible for consulting the website or teacher to find out what they missed as soon as they return. Please note: I know that special circumstances do exist. If you have a question about any of the above policies or need special accommodations, please speak to me – ahead of time, whenever possible.

Cell Phones: Cell phones should be in lockers, backpacks, or pockets at all times. Cell phones will be collected and returned at the end of the day if it becomes an issue. If cell phones become a distraction they will be collected and parents will need to pick them up at their convenience in the office.

Schoolology: Please make sure that you check the calendar and updates for assignments, announcements, and materials.

Extra Help: Students are encouraged to see their teacher during their ETEH if extra help is needed in reading or writing.

Grading Scale:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
60 or below	F

Supplies:

- 2 spiral notebooks
- 1-inch binder
- Pencils
- Highlighters
- 4 packs of Post-Its
- Pens
- 1 pack of 3x5 notecards
- Earbuds/headphones

