

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts, 2007-2008  
Mrs. Gannon's Classroom Guidelines and Expectations

**Course Introduction:** Eighth grade Language Arts is designed to further student excellence in reading, writing, critical analysis of literary passages, vocabulary, grammar checks, peer editing, short story and poetry units, novels, plays, essays, various writing assignments, and presentations.

**Textbooks**

Textbooks for the year are *Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes* (Silver Level), Prentice Hall *Writing and Grammar* (Silver Level). Novels will also be part of the curriculum and may include but are not limited to: *Animal Farm, Romeo and Juliet, To Kill a Mockingbird, Night, Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, etc. Short stories and vocabulary units will also be included in the curriculum when relevant. This list is provided for your information and in accordance with School Board policy 8.209 (16) (b). We will also be watching several movies that correspond with novels and short stories. This list may include but is not limited to: "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," "Life is Beautiful," "Animal Farm," "Romeo + Juliet," "Tristan + Isolde," "Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl," "One Survivor Remembers," etc. Some supplemental material may contain mature themes or language. If you have any questions or concerns about any material, please feel free to contact Mrs. Gannon.

**Absences**

Absent students are expected to keep up-to-date on class work and homework. It is the **student's responsibility** to retrieve his or her make-up assignments out of the appropriate bin and see me at the appropriate time (not during class) for help. In the case of extended illness, parents are encouraged to pick up books and assignments from the office as delineated in the student handbook. Absent students will be given the same number of days absent to make up the missed work **as long as the absence is excused**. (EX: 2 absences = 2 days to make up work). **Students are responsible for making up pre-assigned tests, quizzes, presentations, projects, and all other assignments on the day of return to class.**

**Homework and Long-Term Assignment Policy**

I have a very strict policy regarding turning in homework, classwork, and projects. Eighth grade students are at the end of their middle school careers and are getting ready for high school. The students need to learn to be responsible when it comes to completing and handing in assignments **BEFORE** they get to high school so the transition is less stressful and more successful. Keeping that in mind, I will not accept any excuses in any form (letters, emails, phone calls, etc...) from parents or students, regarding why an assignment is not done on the day it is due. Students are expected to use their agenda books to record assignments and due dates, and I generally go over upcoming assignments on a daily basis to keep them on track.

Completed homework will receive a 100% when turned in on time at the beginning of class. Incomplete homework will not be accepted. The student may turn in late

homework the following day for 10 points off. Late work will not be accepted after one day.

Group work presentations require student presence in the classroom. Students absent during a group presentation may affect the entire group's grade, but may also miss the opportunity to complete the assignment. Absent students will be responsible to give a solo presentation in class on the day they return to class.

Projects, papers, presentations, and any other long-term assignments are due by the assigned date. These assignments will be given out in due time to be completed by the due date. I **will not** accept any late long term projects and assignments as the students generally have weeks or months to complete them. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If absent from school on the due date, the student will need to turn in the project on the day he/she returns to school to get full credit. **Extensions WILL NOT be granted for technology failure** so plan ahead! For exceptional circumstances, please see Mrs. Gannon.

Students are expected to complete homework individually, unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Sharing, plagiarizing, copying, or downloading homework from the Internet and/or other students will be considered cheating and dealt with according to school policy.

### **Test Policy**

Due to the nature of this course, projects, papers, and presentations will generally be given as "test" grades. Students will also regularly take vocabulary quizzes and tests, as well as occasional unit tests for grammar and literature. **Students absent on the day of a test must make up the test within the same number of days he/she was absent. If the test was scheduled before the absence, the student MUST make up the test on the day he/she returns to class.** Students should see me to schedule a time to make-up tests and presentations.

Occasionally, reading quizzes, timed writings, and graded homework will be given in class. Absent students are responsible for making up these assignments and must see me to schedule a make-up time or to make other arrangements for completing the assignment.

Sharing test questions, test answers, or extra credit test questions with other classmates will be considered cheating and will be dealt with accordingly.

### **Grading**

Students will be graded according to the following point system:

- Tests and Projects = Formal writing, journal, tests, and projects (40%)
- Classwork = Vocabulary, quizzes, and completion assignments (40%)
- Homework and Effort (20%)

10% = Answering questions in class, productive input into class discussions, responding when called upon, ungraded in-class work, taking notes, listening carefully in class, coming to class prepared, being respectful and following all school rules and

guidelines, including dress code.

10% = Turning in all homework **completed** and **on time**.

### **Discipline Plan**

**Rules and Procedures:** These procedures are introduced by the teacher, and are not up for discussion. They are in effect to make the day run smoothly and to facilitate a safe learning environment for your children

#### **Daily Rules and Procedures:**

1. **Come to class on time and begin to work immediately.** Enter quietly. Read the board for instructions, copy down homework assignments and upcoming assignments into your agenda book, and get to work!

2. **Be prepared for class.** Please bring the following items to class everyday:

- One three subject divided spiral notebook
- Pencils and pens (only blue or black ink)
- Loose leaf paper
- Highlighters and colored pencils
- Agenda book

Please leave gum, candy, food, cell phones, i-pods, and all other prohibited articles at home. Bringing these items into the classroom will result in having them taken away.

3. **Participate respectfully:** get along with Mrs. Gannon and all of your classmates, respect other people's feelings, opinions, property, and bodies, be polite, and assume the best in others.

4. **Interruptions or inappropriate behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.**

Students must raise their hands and wait to be called upon to speak. Additionally, the student must participate in the "Give Me Five" rule.

5. **Follow all other rules as delineated in the student handbook.**

6. **Always do your best!** I have high expectations of you, and I am sure this will be a great year for both of us!

#### **Consequences for breaking any rule or procedure:**

This will result in disciplinary action, which includes any of the following: the Look or verbal warning, responsibility essay, a phone call or email home, teacher detention, removal from class, and a referral - which may lead to further disciplinary action.

#### **Rewards for good behavior:**

Compliments, stickers, certificates, Language Arts game days, movie and popcorn days, and other rewards at Mrs. Gannon's discretion.

#### **Outside Reading**

Students will be responsible for reading at least one outside novel per quarter and

completing the corresponding assignment. These assignments will be discussed thoroughly in class and will be counted as a “test” grade. Students will have the opportunity to check out books in the classroom on a daily basis, but students are responsible for returning them in a timely manner and in reasonable condition. The student will be expected to replace a lost or severely damaged book. Research has shown a strong correlation between reading ability and academic success; therefore, students and parents should set aside time each week to encourage reading comprehension.

### **Communication**

It is the *student's responsibility* to maintain an up-to-date agenda book, share his/her test and quiz averages, and maintain open communication with his/her parents regarding missing projects, homework, and text/quiz grades. Additionally, the class syllabus and calendar will be on the Edline website, and grades will be updated once a week. Occasionally I will require that major tests and projects be signed by parents for an employability grade. Additional grade inquiries should be addressed privately to Mrs. Gannon via email at [kyliegannon@ssas.org](mailto:kyliegannon@ssas.org). I will try to answer all emails and promptly as I can (within 24 hours), but please understand that my first priority is working with the students. Also, if emailing me over the weekend, please do not be alarmed that you may not receive a response until Monday.

You may also leave a message with the office. Please inform the front desk of your name, a contact number, your child's name, and the issue that needs to be addressed. I do not return phone calls on weekends or in the evenings, but I will get back to you in a timely manner.

### **Class Donations:**

I am always happy to accept class donations. Things that usually run in short supply include:

- Age appropriate novels
- Old magazines for collage projects
- Dry erase markers
- Tissues
- Hand sanitizer
- Any type of art supplies

I look forward to having a wonderful year with you. There will be a lot of work, but I am sure that we will have fun learning together!

Sincerely,

Kylie Gannon

Mrs. Gannon's Class Guidelines  
Contract and Information Sheet

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have thoroughly read and understand the expectations set forth by Mrs. Gannon for the successful completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts. My parent(s)/guardian(s) have also read, understood, and accepted the terms set forth.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date \_\_\_\_\_

These expectations are due by Friday, August 24, 2007. They are due at the beginning of class for a 20-point homework grade and must contain both a parent/guardian and student signature.

1<sup>st</sup> Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Kylie Gannon**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Syllabus**

**QUARTER 1 – (The American Frontier)**

- **Novel: *Nothing But the Truth* and summer reading books**
- **Novel: *Seedfolks***
- **Study of Short Stories and Parts of Short Stories (Literature book)**
- **Pioneer literature, Native American myths, and American folktales (Literature book)**
- **Review Parts of Speech (Nouns, Pronouns, and Adjectives)**
- **FCAT Writes: Analysis of Writing Skills**
- **Book Report Project #1: Historical Fiction (Newspaper)**

**QUARTER 2 – (The Immigration Era)**

- **Novel: *To Kill a Mockingbird***
- **Verbs, Adverbs, Prepositions, and Complements**
- **FCAT Writes: Persuasive Writing and Expository Writing**
- **Study of Immigration (Literature book)**
- **Book Report Project #2 Mystery (Case File)**

**QUARTER 3 – (The Roaring 20's/Jazz Age)**

- **Novel: *Animal Farm***
- **FCAT Writes: Persuasive Writing and Expository Writing**
- **Conjunctions and Interjections**
- **FCAT: Critical Reading Comprehension**
- **FCAT TESTING**

**QUARTER 4 – (The Holocaust and Diversity)**

- **Novel: *Night* and Holocaust literature/poetry**
- **Drama: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl***
- **Drama: *Romeo and Juliet* and Shakespearean times**
- **Review all Parts of Speech and Sentence Diagramming**
- **Autobiography Novel Project**