

Teacher: Ms. Ferguson
Email: zferguson@chicousd.net

Marsh Junior High School
English 8

Welcome to 8th Grade English Language Arts!

Over the course of this year you will:

- Read, analyze, interpret, and discuss various genres of literature: fiction, non-fiction, short stories, and poetry
 - Novels (novel list is subject to variation): *The Outsiders*, *The House on Mango Sreet*, *The Pearl*, *The Tempest*
 - Short Stories and Poems: Edgar Allan Poe, Ray Bradbury, other incredible writers!
- Learn how to intelligently discuss, write, and engage with complex texts and ideas
- Learn and understand the structures of effective writing
- Plan, write, revise, and edit various styles of essay: argumentative, narrative (personal and creative), research, and response to literature

Chromebook Policy

- Chromebooks are a vital part of this class and must be brought and charged *everyday*
 - If you are in need of a chromebook/charger, go to the library as soon as possible
- A vast majority of assignments, work, quizzes, etc... are completed on the chromebooks

Citizenship Points: Phone, Food, and Behavior

- Every day you will come to class with 5 daily points
- You will retain these points as long as you are following proper classroom behavior expectations
 - In your seat quietly beginning the starter by the bell
 - No phones used in class without permission
 - No food/drinks (besides water)
 - No airpods in (saying I forgot they were in is NOT an excuse)
 - In addition to a loss of points, these items will be confiscated as per school rules regarding electronics
 - Acting in a way that disrupts others' learning or my teaching
 - Missing daily materials (composition notebook, pencil, charged chromebook, BLUE English folder, AR Book)

This should not seem scary! This should be an easy 5 points every day for showing up ready to learn! The point of this is to make personal behavior and accountability an aspect of your class grade, since the two go hand in hand.

Academic Integrity

- Plagiarism, which is copying someone else's work and passing it off as your own, will result in a 0 and will be noted on your record

- Plagiarism occurs whether intentional or not!
 - Plagiarism is copying word for word, as well as copying the structure of someone's writing, meaning just changing a few words of a summary, definition, etc... is STILL plagiarism
- Copying off classmates/giving classmates answers, on homework assignments and on tests, will also result in a zero
 - **Important Note: Helping and discussing with classmates on homework assignments is absolutely fine! Copying, even if a few words are changed, is not!**
- During tests and quizzes, there is absolutely no talking or helping, even when finished!
- Any talking or attempts to look at other screens for answers will result in a zero
- **AI Plagiarism** and cheating will result in all standard plagiarism consequences and may result in a loss of digital privileges
- AI plagiarism can include
 - Taking writing/sentence structuring from an AI source
 - Using AI generated ideas and themes in your writing
 - Rewording, if the ideas are not your own, is still plagiarism—don't let AI think for you—I'd rather you struggle and think for yourself than to have AI think for you

Remember, cheating/lapses in academic integrity are noted on your academic record

Technological Literacy

- Technological literacy means being fluent in how to operate various computer-based programs
- The main programs that we will use for assignments will be google docs and google slides
- Other programs will include IXL, Canva, and others
- The expectation is that you will become very familiar with these programs and understand *how* to utilize all the nuances these programs have to offer to make your work meet standards for organization, creativity, and professionalism

Google Classroom

- Google classroom is the homebase for *everything* in this class
- All assignments, slideshows, materials, etc... will be posted on google classroom
- If you are absent, look at the unit agenda (under the topic *materials*) to see what we did that day
- Become familiar with google classroom and the different topics that will be there, as we will be using it frequently

Late Work Policy

- **Late work will receive up to 50% credit** until the end of the unit or grading period
 - Late assignments will be graded by the end of the grading period, but if you turn in late work, I am not on YOUR schedule to get it into the gradebook. If you want work graded efficiently, you must turn it in on time.
 - To ensure you have a strong, up-to-date grade, it is important that your assignments are submitted on time

- **IXL assignments are NOT accepted late. In order to receive credit, they must be completed every Sunday by midnight. No exceptions.**
- Nearly all assignments will be completed through google classroom--MAKE SURE YOU PRESS THE TURN IN BUTTON
 - "I forgot to press turn in" is not a valid excuse for it being late and WILL still result in late penalty

Classroom Rules & Procedures

- When you come into class, that means you are ready to begin working
- Immediately begin the Starter

Starter Digital Notebook

- Everyday, the first task will be to complete the starter posted on the board
 - Typically there will be a timer for when you should have the starter completed
- All starters will be completed in the **Starter Notebook** posted under the "starters" topic on google classroom
- Each starter notebook will be turned in *at the end of a unit*
 - A starter notebook will be graded as an assignment based on how many starter entries were in that unit

AR Reading

- Students are responsible for reading 3 AR books from the Marsh library a semester. We will have dedicated time on Wednesdays to read/test.
- They can also read when they finish early, or during free time. **However, they can ONLY test during our classroom scheduled AR time on Wednesdays.**

Be respectful

This is the most important rule in the class

- *Everyone* has the right to learn and everyone learns at a different pace. *Nobody* has the right to interrupt, disrupt, or jeopardize another's right to learn.
- Being respectful includes but is not limited to: not speaking while I or one of your peers are speaking, being considerate of your peers' opinions during class or individual discussion, and conducting yourself **maturely** and **appropriately**. *Respect and maturity is necessary in order to succeed in this class.*
- Act like a mature human being = get treated like a mature human being. Act like a child = get treated like a child. **Be mature!**

Be your best

Be prepared, be respectful, but of equal importance is to be your best. This is English Language **Arts**. That means we get to explore and discuss ideas, read great literature, be creative, and express ourselves through discussion and writing! **You will get out of this class what you put in.** If you sit back and don't participate or engage in the activities, you won't get much. Be engaged, be active, participate, and be your best! All I can ask for is your best, and that is something I will always recognize.

Grading Breakdown–Weighted Grading

*Weighted grading means that 1 point in a higher weighted category is worth more than 1 point in a lower weighted category

Categories

Tests/Essays/Quizzes: 40%

Homework/Classwork: 25%

IXL/AR): 20%

Citizenship Points: 15%

Grading

- Proper MLA formatting is a component of **all** assignment grades
- Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall structuring/formatting is a component of all assignment grades

Sign Below—by signing, you are stating that you understand the content in this syllabus. Have a parent review this syllabus with you and sign it as well.

It is up to YOU as a student to know your syllabus. Reference this syllabus throughout the year as needed.

Student Signature

Parent Signature
