

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Course Syllabus (Regular & Pre-AP/GT)**  
**Mr. Sheffield – Room 308**  
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**Conference Period: 7th period (3:05-3:55)**  
**Tutorial Periods: Tuesday & Thursday (8:10-8:40 am)**

**Textbooks:**

Literature: Holt McDougal Literature, Grade 8 (Class set only)

Grammar/Writing: The Write Source, Grade 8 (Class set only)

The textbooks can be accessed online at <http://my.hrww.com>. Student passwords are needed.

**Overview:**

English Language Arts (ELA) is a course designed to effectively integrate all of the English language arts: reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, representing, and thinking. The goal of the class is to refine and master previously learned language arts skills in increasingly complex presentations, classical and contemporary reading selections, research, and writing in all genres to prepare students for academic success in all subjects.

**Rules & Expectations:**

1. Students are expected to arrive to class on time with all supplies (**ELA binder, tabs, pens and pencils, loose leaf paper, colored index cards and a traditional or electronic book to read**). Students should be in their seats and ready to begin the as soon as the tardy bell rings. **These items are non-negotiable.**
2. **A uniform heading is required on all papers.** This includes your full name, class period, and the date. You should include the assignment title on every paper as well.
3. **Blue or black ink should be used for all final drafts and assignments.** Pencil is okay for drafting and daily assignments. All major grades must be in ink or typed unless otherwise directed. **We will use Turnitin.com for submitting papers electronically.**
4. **Class begins when the bell rings.** You should begin working on the “Do Now” assignment or activity first or reading as soon as class begins. **I will dismiss you from class, not the bell!**
5. **It is your responsibility to maintain your ELA binder** and keep it neat and organized. This means keeping up with both graded assignments and those in progress. **Throw away any and all trash on your way out of the room only.**
6. Take care of all personal needs (restroom and water) before coming to class. **Asking to go to the restroom or to your locker habitually will not be tolerated.** In the event it becomes necessary to leave the room, you must wait until direct instruction is completed.
7. Electronic devices (cell phones) will be used for reading or instructional purposes only as directed by the teacher. **Electronic devices can and will be confiscated if they are used inappropriately, and all FBISD policies and procedures regarding the misuse of electronic devices will be followed.**

**Retesting/Reassessment Policy:**

You have the opportunity to be reassessed for major grades on which you make below 70%. It is your responsibility to attend a tutorial before reassessment and to let the teacher know that you want to be reassessed. Re-testing should also be completed during tutorial periods. **The highest grade you can receive for retesting is a 75.**

### **Late Work Policy**

Assignments are due at the beginning of the period on the due date. **If I do not receive an assignment when it is collected, it will be considered LATE. Ten (10) points will be deducted from the grade earned each day it is late up to three days. Thereafter a failing grade ranging from 0 to 60 may be issued.**

### **Make-up Work Policy**

If you are absent from class, it is YOUR responsibility to find out what you missed. All make-up assignments will be placed in the file for your class period at the front of the room. Locate the assignment with your name and see me for further instructions. You have one day to make up an assignment for each day that you miss class. When you are absent on a test day or when an assignment is due, you are responsible for turning in the assignment or taking the test the next day you are in class.

### **Cheating/Copying/Plagiarizing:**

If a student is found cheating, copying, or plagiarizing, the student will receive an **automatic “zero”** for that assignment as well as any other student(s) that are found facilitating this activity. If you choose to cheat, you will receive a “0” on the assignment, your parents will be contacted, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Independent Reading Requirement:**

Each grading term (Terms 1-4) you must select and read one novel from the classroom, the library or from another source. This is in addition to other reading we do in class including novel studies. You are required to get teacher and possibly parental approval for the book you choose to read each nine weeks. While the book you choose is up to you, the parameters below must be followed:

Pre-AP: two (2) 2014 Lone Star books, one (1) Classic, one (1) non-fiction

Regular: one (1) 2014 Lone Star book, one (1) non-fiction, two (2) free choice from any genre

### **Novel Studies:**

We will read and annotate several novels over the course of the school year. **Do not wait** until the last minute to buy your copy of the novel, or you are likely to have difficulty locating a copy. **You are not required to purchase the novels; however, it is highly recommended!**

Novels: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Pre-AP), *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (ELA)  
*My Brother Sam is Dead* by Collier, and *Night* by Elie Wiesel

### **Grading System:**

**Daily Grades (50%)** – class work, homework, quizzes, vocabulary, and class participation.

**Major Grades (50%)** – unit tests, skills tests, timed writings, essays, process papers, dialectical journals, etc.

### **Vocabulary Workshop: (Pre-AP/GT only)**

We will use the National Math & Science Initiative “Laying the Foundations” Vocabulary for Pre-AP classes. Vocabulary lists and assignments will be given out in class for completion by students independently with assessments to follow during class. This vocabulary must be incorporated (used) in your writing throughout the year.