** Language Arts 8**

**2012-2013**

**Teacher:** Mr. M Patterson

**Course Grade:** Grade 8

**Rationale:** Language development is central to students’ intellectual, social, and emotional growth, and must be seen as a key element of the curriculum. When students learn to use language in the elementary grades, they do more than master the basic skills. They learn to value the power of language and to use it responsibly. They learn to express feelings and opinions and, as they mature, to support their opinions with sound arguments and research. They become aware of the many purposes for which language is used and the diverse forms it can take to appropriately serve particular purposes and audiences. They learn to use the formal language appropriate for debates and essays, the narrative language of stories, the figurative language of poetry, the technical language of instructions and manuals. They develop an awareness of how language is used in different formal and informal situations. In sum, they come to appreciate language both as an important medium for communicating ideas and information and as a source of enjoyment.

**Aim:** The expectations in the language curriculum are organized into four strands: Oral Communication, Reading, Writing, and Media Literacy. The program in grade 8 is designed to develop a range of essential skills in these four interrelated areas, built on a solid foundation of knowledge of the conventions of standard English and incorporating the use of analytical, critical, and metacognitive thinking skills. Students learn best when they are encouraged to consciously monitor their thinking as they learn, and each strand includes expectations that call for such reflection.

**Skills:**

* *Knowledge and Understanding* – Knowledge of the content taught and the comprehension of its meaning and significance;
* *Thinking* – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes as follows:
	+ *Planning Skills* – focusing, research, gathering information, organizing an inquiry;
	+ *Processing Skills* – analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing;
	+ *Critical/Creative Thinking Processes* – inquiry, problem solving, decision making, research.
* *Communication* – The conveying of meaning through various forms as follows:
	+ *Oral* – story, role play, debate;
	+ *Written* – reports, essays, letters;
	+ *Visual* – model, map, chart, movement, video.
* *Application* – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts.

**Course Overview:**

* Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;
* Read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning;
* Recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning;
* Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience;
* Use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively;
* Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques.

**Major Themes:**

1. Unit 1: Narration
* Myth, Legend, Biography, Historical Narration.
1. Unit 2: Exposition
* Instruction, Comparison, Definition, Hard New Story.
1. Unit 3: Persuasion
* Review, Letter to the Editor, Editorial, Resume and Covering Letter.
1. Unit 4: Description
* Travelogue, Lyric Poetry, Character Sketch, Place Description.
1. Unit 5: Recount
* Journal, Fact vs. Fiction, Memoir, Autobiography.

**Evaluations:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Assessment** | **Quantity** | **Grade** |
| 1 | Writing | 10 essays of various categories. | 30% |
| 2 | Reading | 5 novels: 1 for each unit. | 30% |
| 3 | Journal | 35 journal entries throughout the year. | 20% |
| 4 | Media Literacy | 5 media projects (Hurricanes Book of Records) | 10% |
| 5 | Model UN | 30 debates throughout the year. | 10% |
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**Schedule:** A long-range plan has been posted on the wall in the classroom with a complete breakdown of every lesson throughout the school year. Located below is a breakdown of each theme throughout the months of the academic year.

*Sept*: Narration

*Oct*: Narration

*Nov*: Exposition

*Dec*: Exposition

*Jan*: Persuasion

*Feb*: Persuasion

*Mar*: Description

*Apr*: Description

*May*: Recount

*Jun*: Recount

**Student Attendance:**

 Student attendance is vital to the success of this course. Should a student miss a class due to any circumstance, all possible efforts will be made to ensure the material covered will be available to that student.

**Class Rules and Regulations**

 Every member of this class is expected to come prepared and on time. Students must bring their textbook, notebook, all other materials that have been specified, and homework to each and every class.

 Classroom participation is mandatory and will be evaluated through a variety of methods including: activities, classroom discussion, and homework. Students who struggle with classroom participation may substitute work to compensate for their lack of participation. Furthermore, every opinion and discussion will be received respectfully in class, although some opinions may be challenged.

 Homework will be assigned throughout the course to ensure your personal growth. Readings and homework are assigned to stimulate interest in the subject being taught.

 A homework or project, which is not completed on the due date, will be accepted late, but may receive a penalty. Exceptional circumstances will be considered and a deadline extension may be granted with no penalty.

 Be prepared to work hard and think hard. I look forward to learning with you.

 I have read the syllabus for ***Grade 8 Language Arts*** and am in agreement with the working methods, general philosophy, and topics that it proposes.

 Student name Date

 Student signature Parent signature