Virginia Fitzgerald 2017-2018

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    - under School Menus on Toolbar/Classroom News in drop down/ Mrs. Fitzgerald

Course Outline - 8th grade Language Arts

**Texts**

* Holt McDougall *Literature grade 8 -*  issued to students and available online (link on website)
* **Possibles novels include** - *Fever 1793, Touching Spirit Bear, Ender's Game, The Outsiders, Nothing But the Truth, The Outsiders,* and the novels of our author for Authors in April Jennifer Neilsen ( [http://jennielsen.com/](http://jennielsen.com/%20) )

**Topics of Study**

**Literary Analysis** - focusing on short stories, novels, poetry, and nonfiction essays

* Plot Structure - Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution
* Conflict
* Making inferences
* Character development
* Point of View and Reliability of Narrator
* Theme
* Setting
* Mood
* Imagery
* Suspense
* Symbolism
* Motif
* Nonfiction structures
* Poetic Techniques - stanza, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, stylistic devices

**Writing** - personal narrative, literary analysis, comparative essay, persuasive essay, research paper

* Structure
  + Effective introductions
  + Clear statement of topic/thesis statement
  + Clear and effective organization and flow of areas of support and the evidence and reasoning within those areas of support
  + effective conclusions
* Ideas - main ideas and areas of support developed by evidence and reasoning
  + Accurate
  + Powerful
  + Clear
  + Paraphrasing and use of quotations as evidence
  + Parenthetical citation - correct information provided in the correct form
* Style
  + Word choice - powerful, purposeful, correct connotation v. denotation
  + Sentence variety
  + Tone
* Awareness of Purpose and Audience

**Grammar**

* Parts of Speech
* Types of Sentences
* Avoiding Run-ons and Fragments
* Commas
* Semi-colons
* Colons
* Capitalization
* Homonyms
* Word Study - prefixes, roots, suffixes

**Grading**

* Grades will be divided into two types: checkpoints (10 points each) and final assessments, such as projects, tests, papers, and speeches (40 points each).
  + Checkpoints are designed to mark how a student is doing as we move toward a goal of achieving a skill.
  + Checkpoints may be redone before the final assessment on that skill. In order to redo a checkpoint, a student must make an appointment with me for at lunch or before or after school within a day of the work being returned and before the final assessment of that skill. The redo will be largely oral, even with writing, as the student will discuss with me what they have done to improve their writing and read me the parts of the writing they improved orally. The student must be timely and flexible with their availability.
  + Final grades will not be redone.
* Timeliness of work will be considered a given quality of all work, as a student who takes twice as long or more to complete what other students completed in the assigned time could obviously produce work of greater quality.
  + Late work will be accepted and assessed with the same consideration as work handed in on time but 10% will be deducted.
  + Work that is later than one day late must be accompanied by a parent signature.
  + Late work should be handed in directly to me only, and the student should watch me check their name off the list.
* Though grades are emailed home on Thursdays, students and parents with students who often struggle with getting work in on time should check daily by signing onto Synergy themselves.
* I collect work directly from each student individually standing right at the front of a short two or three person row. I add a student's name to a list of work not turned in right as I stand there if it is not passed forward. I keep a list posted on the board for students, including the names of students who were absent when something was collected. I use this list to ask students about missing work personally for 3 days after. An NHI (Not Handed In) is posted in a timely manner so students and parents can use Synergy to check for missing work.
* If a grade is blank in Synergy, it means the work was collected but not yet graded; an NHI will appear if work was not handed in.

**Suggested Supplies**

* ***ring-binder*** with pockets - The pockets help until the student can sort papers into the rings. There is a three-hole punch on the room and many handouts will be already punched. I will be supporting keeping materials in order as we go through a unit and doing a quick table of contents for materials as a way of keeping track of expected areas of developing knowledge and skill.
* ***lined loose-leaf paper***
* ***pencil***s - I have excellent hand-held sharpeners in the room. I get mine from the art store for $1.50. It makes a great point and is quiet. Students could also buy one and thus have to buy plastic, throw-away pencils and always have the ability to sharpen their own in the pencil pouch!
* ***red checking pens***
* **ultra-fine Sharpies**
* **a thick Sharpie**
* **double-stick tape or glue**
* **a good eraser that won’t smear**
* **colored pencils (NOT markers)**
* **index cards**
* **a paper grocery bag for covering their book**
* **Kleenex to donate to the class**

These are just suggested. Rochester Schools must supply all necessary supplies for curricular course work if a student is unable. This does not mean that a student should show up with nothing. Students should let me or a counselor know if they have any problem with supplies before supplies are needed. The necessary supplies will be provided based on the need shown, then the student will bring them to class daily as do the other students.

It is important for students to bring their supplies to class either way for three reasons:

* Bringing their supplies builds responsibility.
* Students who come to class without supplies disrupt our ability to move into work while we get them set up, either asking me to stop and get them the needed materials or taking them from other students.
* The district gives teachers a limited budget to stock the room with supplies for all the school hours of the year, so supplies taken by students take away from that budget or the budget of the teacher herself or the other students.