**Grade 8 English Syllabus 2023-2024**

**Ms. Sechrist (Ms. S.) lsechrist1@helenaschools.org**

**Welcome to our English class! I am looking forward to a great year together. 🙂**

**Required Materials: Optional Materials:**

\*Chromebook/laptop and charger \*highlighters

\*1 subject notebook \*post-it notes

\*blue or black pens \*pencils

\*independent reading book (from home or library)

**Course Summary:**  This course is designed to provide students with learning tasks and opportunities to develop language and literacy skills that will prepare them for high school, and ultimately, college and career readiness through use of Montana state standards aligned curriculum steeped in the classics, modern literature, multi-media, and non-fiction genres. Refinement of analytical thinking, academic literacy, grammar, and vocabulary will be emphasized as well as collaborative learning and development of communication skills. Students will be expected to participate and demonstrate proficiency in multiple research projects and public speaking assignments which utilize technology.

**Resources / Texts:** commonlit.org, Teams, turnitin.com, noredink.com, various texts delivered digitally

**How will student learning be assessed?** A student’s learning is assessed using a variety of formative and summative assessments including traditional tests, projects, written papers, or verbal assessments. These assessments will comprise 70% of the semester’s grade and will be listed in PowerSchool as ASSESSMENTS (ASMNT) using the following scale:

Exceeds standard = 90-100% A

Meets standard = 80-90% B

Progressing = 70-80% C

Below standard = 60-70% D

No Evidence = 50-60% F

**Essential Skills Assessed in English 8**

● Students will be able to write effective arguments supported with evidence.

● Students will be able to write effective informative essays using supporting evidence.

● Students will be able to write effective narratives.

● Students will be able to use strong textual evidence to support inferences.

● Students will be able to determine and analyze theme/central idea of a text.

● Students will be able to analyze the impact and meaning of words/phrases in a text and the effect on the meaning of the text as a whole.

● Students will be able to determine author’s point of view/position and analyze its effectiveness.

● Students will be able to analyze the structure of a text and its effect on the meaning.

● Students will be able to speak in a public setting, both large and small groups to present information, opinion, and/or contribute to discussion.

● Students will develop a greater understanding of the English language grammar and syntax.

**What can students do to raise their grade in a standards-based class? Students will always have an opportunity to reassess should they score below standard.** The goal in a standards-based class is to ensure that students master the essential standards for the class, so any effort to raise a student’s grade will have the same goal. **The student should meet with the teacher to arrange for reassessment. Only items in the ASMNT category can be reassessed.** If the student demonstrates a higher level of mastery on the reassessment, then the newer score will replace the older score. Again, the focus is to improve the student’s mastery of the material.

● ***Reassessments may be done within 1 week of the grade being posted to PowerSchool.***

● ***Reassessments must be prearranged with Ms. S. and completed in my classroom during advisor or lunch. I will not accept a reassessment without prior knowledge/arrangements.***

● ***Additional practice/lessons will likely be required prior to reassessment to ensure success.***

**Gradebook Categories**

Classwork (activities, practice, preparation assignments, etc) 15%

Quizzes (weekly vocabulary, objective content multiple choice reading checks) 15%

Assessments (measure of student proficiency on any particular standard) 70%

**STUDENT HINTS FOR SUCCESS!**

● Check PowerSchool, TEAMS, and the whiteboard in my room every day, especially if you are absent.

● Attendance, participation, being on time, coming to class prepared and being ready to learn are essential for a great experience in this class.

● If you are gone, you are responsible for getting missed assignments and notes. You have until the Friday following your absence to turn in work for full credit.

● Reassess!!! Remember, you have the ability to show me that you have learned from your mistakes. Take advantage of this opportunity, meet with me, and reassess on items in the ASMNT category. You will be required to read your feedback/rubric on the original, meet with me for reteach, and only then be able to **rewrite during lunch or advisor within ONE week of the original grade posting to PowerSchool.**

**Classroom Rules:**

1. Be responsible for yourself, respect others, and do your best!
2. Be on time and bring materials to class every day: computer, notebook, highlighters, post-it notes, something to write with, paper, and an independent reading book.
3. Misuse of your computer will have natural consequences; stay on task.
4. No food (that includes candy) or beverages, other than water, should be brought into the classroom.
5. I have ZERO TOLERANCE for harassment. Be nice/respectful toward one another and open to other viewpoints.
6. I have a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for plagiarism.   Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of someone else’s ideas or writing/work as your own, regardless of length or importance of assignment. After one incident/warning, future incidents of plagiarism/AI writing will result in an automatic ZERO for the assignment/assessment.
   1. **The use of artificial intelligence (AI) generated writing is plagiarism. It is not your own writing. It will have the exact same consequences as plagiarism when detected.**
   2. **Giving your work to another student to copy, or enabling plagiarism, will have the same consequence.**
   3. **Again, this applies to all work in this course.  Your job is to THINK for yourself; LEARN for yourself; CONVEY that knowledge in your own words.**
   4. **All assessments will be submitted digitally and checked to help you avoid unintentional or intentional plagiarism.**
7. There is NO EXTRA CREDIT in a standards-based classroom – only reassessment (time limitations)

Student Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1: Figurative Language and Poetry

* Writing: Create and incorporate figurative language into original poetry in different styles including haiku, diamante, cinquain, and found poetry.
* Texts: “Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyon

Unit 2: Research and Informative Writing

* Writing: Create an original informative essay.
* Texts: various nonfiction articles on animal conservation efforts

Unit 3: Suspense and Literary Analysis

* Writing: Create an original literary analysis essay.
* Texts: “Button Button” by Richard Matheson

“Lamb to the Slaughter by Roald Dahl

“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe

Unit 4: Novel and Narrative

* Writing: Create an original fiction narrative.
* Texts: *Rain is not my Indian Name* by: Cynthia Leitich Smith

Unit 5: Theme and Literary Analysis

* Writing: Create an original literary analysis essay.
* Texts: “Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson

“Letter to Harriet Tubman” by Frederick Douglass

“Address to the United Nations” by Malala Yousafzai

“The Terror” by Junot Diaz

Unit 6: Argumentative Writing

* Writing: Create an original argumentative essay.