

6th Grade ELA AA/GT



Summary:

Hello, and welcome to ELA! There is always excitement and nerves when talking about entering a new grade – and your 6th grade year will be no different. We are hoping that this little peek into our ELA world at HMS will help answer some of your questions. We cannot wait to meet you!

-Mrs. McShane and Mrs. Sutton

In ELA, you will be reading a variety of texts – from whole novels, to short stories and poems, to non-fiction articles. We have 4 units which are outlined below. We also cover grammar/sentence structures, poetry, and writing throughout the year.

Typically, our only homework is to read the assigned novels. We give a reading schedule with each novel and have weekly/biweekly reading checks to assess your comprehension of the texts.

In class, be prepared for a mixture of assignments! We try to mix things up quite a bit, so you'll see small groups, independent work, class discussions, literature circles, Socratic seminars, research projects, scavenger hunts, Lego Art, presentations, speeches, debates, Peep dioramas, Pop-up museum artwork/displays, etc.

Key Topics:

Unit 1: Overcoming Adversity

Students will explore genres of literature such as dystopian, historical, and realistic fiction and how authors use genre to comment upon society through different treatments of theme. Students will be introduced to the psychological, sociological, and biographical approaches to literary criticism to works of literature across genres including novels, short stories, and poetry to compare how particular elements in the genres convey theme and act as windows, mirrors, and doors into society. Text options include The Giver and One Crazy Summer. At the end of the unit, students will write an explanatory essay on how literature can act as a mirror, window or door into society.

Unit 2: What Tales Tell: Discovering Literary Elements

Students will examine allusion, foreshadowing, archetypes, theme, and characterization in a variety of myths as well as read a self-selected novel based around mythology. Text options include Mythology and student-selected novel. At the end of the unit, students will develop their own crossover myth mash-up to present to an elementary school audience – an embedded service-learning project. By completing this project, as well as a reflection, students can earn up to 10 student-service learning hours.

Unit 3: Changes Over Time: Analyzing Character and Theme Development

Students will read extended works of fiction and non-fiction in order to analyze how experiences shape both fictional characters and real-life individuals, and to what degree people, both real and imaginary, have control over their destiny. Text options include The Call of the Wild, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, and Brown Girl

Dreaming. At the end of the unit, students will write and deliver a TED Talk from the point of view of an individual in one of the texts they have read. In the talk, they will convince the audience that a particular event was the most pivotal in the development of a theme/central idea.

Unit 4: Personal Achievements: Making Decisions that Matter

Students will be introduced to Shakespeare's work and its relevancy today. Students will analyze how connotation contributes to meaning and ultimately themes of universal relevance. Students will also apply the historical approach to literary criticism to compare the play productions, themes, performances, etc. between Elizabethan era and modern times. Text options include The Shakespeare Stealer, short, popular scenes from his most famous plays, and some of his well-known sonnets. At the end of the unit, students will select a Shakespearean scene and analyze its theme and relevance for a modern audience. They will compose a pitch for a modern staging of the scene that will argue the relevance and universality and why it would fit in their chosen modern-day setting. Students will rehearse and perform the scene as well.

Expectations:

This is a year-long course that meets every day for 50 minutes.

Minor Summative grades are made up of smaller classwork assignments and reading/grammar checks.

There are 2 Major Summative grades for each quarter. They include a Performance Based Assessment (PBA) – which would be a longer written assignment like an essay, speech, or narrative, and some kind of Unit Test (this might be an exam, research project, or presentation).

Homework is to read our assigned novel at home following the schedule provided with each quarter. Students should be also taking notes while reading using the strategies assigned for the novel (post-it notes, dialectical journals, Note and Notice, etc.) Occasionally, students will be asked to finish up a classroom activity, review for a quiz, etc. at home as well.

Photos:



