

**Course Outline: Language Arts**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Laura Shingleton**  
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Welcome to Language Arts! This class creates readers and writers. Here you will learn the skills you need to communicate with others through the written word.

### **Course Overview:**

This course includes instruction in reading, writing, and literature. You will learn the following in accordance with Common Core State Standards:

- Grammar and usage
- Vocabulary
- Writing in multiple genres
- Skills for effective reading
- Roots of language
- Interpreting various types of literature and informative text, independently and as a class
- Critical thinking and discussion skills
- Good citizenship and academic confidence

### **Materials you should bring daily:**

- A section in your binder for Language Arts
- LOTS of notebook paper. We will use paper to make Interactive Notebooks. You do not need a spiral.
- Writing tools: pencils, blue or black pens, one colored editing pen, one highlighter and a HAND-HELD PENCIL SHARPENER.
- Post-it notes
- Art supplies—optional, but we do use them.
- **READING BOOK.** You are expected to be engaged in a book at all times. You may bring books from home or check them out from the school or classroom library.
- Your glasses if you need them.

**Classwork/Homework:** Our class is run on the workshop model. Each day you will read and write. Homework will consist of independent reading and writing, as well as various projects and writing assignments related to the literature we study.

**Grading:** Your final grade for the course is based on how well you meet the eighth grade reading, writing, and literature standards as evidenced through various formative and cumulative assessments. Classwork and homework will be worth 20% of a student's overall grade. This work is considered reading/writing practice, and it is essential to developing skills.

Assessments will be worth 80% of a student's overall grade.

- Each standard will be assessed multiple times at different levels of complexity to show retention and depth of knowledge of that standard. Later assessments may be weighted more heavily than earlier assessments.
- If a student needs more than the given to show mastery of a skill, they can set up a time to reassess with the teacher only after they have increased their knowledge of that skill through some type of intervention such as study hall, additional practice, etc.
- There may be a summative assessment that covers multiple standards at the end of a unit of study and/or at the end of the semester. The summative assessments may only be taken once and scores cannot be replaced.

- Semester grades will be cumulative and will not start over each six weeks.

The grading scale for standards based assessments is as follows (partial points may be assigned):

- 4: Advanced proficiency of standard
- 3: Proficiency of standard
- 2: Basic proficiency of standard
- 1: Below Basic proficiency of standard

Another way to think of it that I find helpful:

- 4: Could teach it
- 3: Gets it
- 2: Learning it
- 1: New to it

**A note to parents:** Even high-achievers will encounter new material and may initially receive lower scores as they work through the learning curve. Please try to think of your student's ongoing grade as a helpful progress report while they continue to learn. Their final grade in the class will be an accurate reflection of their mastery of the standards, but that takes time to reach. If their grade seems low, the most important question to ask is, "What don't you understand yet?" rather than "What can you do to get your grade up?" Then either you or the student can communicate to me the point of confusion, and I can reteach to clear it up, then reassess. It is common for students' grades to drop mid-unit as we engage in more challenging work. Students who engage will rise to meet this challenge.

Letter Grade	Assessment Grade (4-pt scale)	Levels of Proficiency	Percentages
A	3.50-4.00	Advanced	87.5% - 100%
B	2.76-3.49	Proficient	69.0% - 87.4%
C	2.01-2.75	Basic	50.1% - 68.9%
D	1.51-2.00		37.7% - 50.0%
F	0-1.50	Below Basic	0% - 37.6%

**IEP/TAG:** These student groups have their own unique needs and I will work very hard to meet them where they are in their learning. I will be reviewing IEP files the first couple weeks of school and will be in close contact with the LRC staff to ensure I am providing ways for students to learn. TAG students may work in small groups, have individual assignments, or go at an accelerated pace. If a TAG student does not feel challenged, please let me know as soon as possible so we can work out a new plan.

**Absences:** Students: If you are absent, contact the teacher before or after school to get your missing work. E-mail is a great way to do this. It is YOUR responsibility to make up missed assignments quickly so you do not fall behind, even if your absence was excused. You have two class days for each missed day to make up an assignment before it is considered late, *if your absence was excused*. Suspension is considered an unexcused absence. If you are gone for a school activity, you must still make up what you miss.

**Tardies:** We will follow the school's policy regarding tardies, as outlined in the student handbook. If you come to class without ALL of the required materials you will be sent to get them after ten minutes, and that will use one of your hall passes. Please be on time and in your seat when the bell rings. Being late is disruptive to the class and will cause you to miss valuable information.

**Behavioral Expectations:** I expect that *you will* . . .

- Arrive at class on time, materials in hand, ready to work to the best of your ability.
- Treat yourself and others with kindness, thoughtfulness and respect. This includes keeping hands, feet, and objects to yourself and not interfering with anyone else's learning by interrupting or distracting.
- Show care and consideration for the personal and public property within the classroom. This means respecting privacy, touching only what belongs to you, and taking responsibility for damages.
- Use only positive and encouraging language.
- Follow instructions and classroom procedures at all times; if you choose not to behave in accordance with these, you are also choosing the consequences of your actions. Everyone will be fully aware of our procedures, expectations and consequences.
- **Understand that grit and determination are greater factors in your success than talent. Learning rarely comes easily. You will struggle, and struggling is how we become strong.**
- Develop integrity, empathy, and wisdom through conscientious decision-making and meaningful thinking. Every person in this classroom is talented, insightful, and important. I expect every one of you to succeed in Language Arts this year!

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***Students, please have this form signed and return to the Turn-In Shelf.***

I have read and understand this course outline. I know that assignments and make-up work are my responsibility. I will follow the expectations for this class.

**Student's name (print):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: I have read and understand this course outline. I look forward to supporting my student. I know that Mrs. Shingleton is available to discuss my child's progress and how to contact her.

**Parent's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT!** Please indicate how you prefer to be contacted: phone e-mail letter

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to ask you to help me become a partner in your child's education. I will be spending an hour a day with your child, and I know that is a position of responsibility and trust. To be good at my job, I need to know your child well as soon as possible. To help me with that, I am asking you for your input regarding who your child is. Would you please take a moment to write to me about your child? What are the things that you, as a parent, know that would be important for me to know? What are his or her interests, learning style, and goals? Feel free to handwrite your letter on this page and send it back with your child or e-mail me your response.

Thank you! Mrs. Shingleton

**Secondary Talented and Gifted (TAG) Course Plan**  
Grades 6-12

The following assessments will be used to determine level and monitor rate:

1. Writing work samples
2. Reading tests/essay questions
3. Student portfolio

**Step II: Differentiated Instructional Strategies**

Show what differentiation will take place in this course (check all that may apply).

- Acceleration – materials and instruction at a quicker pace or at a deeper level than standard instruction and materials.
- Independent Study/Project – Designed to allow a student to proceed independently and at his/her own rate.
- Assignment Modification – The regular assignment may be modified to meet the needs of the student.
- Cluster/Small Grouping – Grouping students with similar needs, interests, and/or abilities in the same classroom.
- Enrichment – Activities that add or go beyond the existing curriculum.
- Compacting – Student demonstrates what he/she knows then spends the time participating in enrichment activities.
- Tiered Assignments – Providing assignments that reflect the individual level of the student's knowledge content.
- Flexible Grouping – Student are grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction.
- Contracting – Student pursues an area of special interest.
- Multiple Intelligences – Incorporation of strategies into instruction that allow students to use areas of strength.
- Learning Styles – Different approaches or ways of thinking, i.e., auditory, tactile kinesthetic, and visual.
- Higher Level/Critical Thinking – Higher order thinking skills to gain understanding of complex problems or ideas.