

7th Grade Pre-AP English Language Arts Syllabus

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Course Overview:

Seventh grade English Language Arts is a fully integrated course incorporating the elements of language and writing skills, reading comprehension, and college readiness standards. The course is designed to help students attain mastery of the seventh grade TEKS or state mandated objectives and to prepare students for success in high school and beyond.

Students enrolled in Pre-AP classes will examine a variety of literature with a more analytical and critical eye, and are expected to be highly motivated and independent in order to complete more rigorous reading requirements. While some of the literature and activities in all levels of 7th grade Language Arts may be the same, the focus, depth, and complexity involved in Pre-AP studies will be different.

“Because AP courses should be the equivalent of courses taught in colleges and universities, it is important that a student be prepared for such rigor” (College Board); therefore, it is the goal of the course to begin to prepare students for the increased rigor they will experience in high school. By course completion, students will be able to:

- Read from a variety of historical periods
- Identify audience, purpose, and strategies in texts
- Analyze the types of arguments writers use
- Write formally and informally for a variety of audiences
- Write expository, analytical, and argumentative essays
- Understand their own writing process and importance of revision
- Synthesize ideas and information from various sources
- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating

Reading / Writing Requirements:

REQUIRED SELF-SELECTED TEXTS:

Students enrolled in Pre-AP classes will be REQUIRED to read at least 3 books each quarter. Two of these books may be a self-selected book of any genre. The other book will be selected from a recommended list. The books on the quarterly recommend reading list will supplement overall understandings, connections, discussions, and assignments that will take place in class during that particular quarter.

QUARTERLY ESSAYS:

Students enrolled in Pre-AP classes will be required to write an analytical essay over the book chosen from the recommended list. This essay will be done electronically in the form of a blog post on the student’s classroom/school blog. More information and directions about this major assignment will be posted on the class website.

REQUIRED CLASS NOVELS:

Students enrolled in all 7th grade ELA classes will be required to purchase the following novels:

Early Fall Semester: Beowulf: A New Telling by Robert Nye

Late Fall Semester: A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens (Bantom Classic)

Spring Semester: One book will need to be purchased for literature circles. Titles will be announced in the spring semester once literature circles have been formed.

Course Planner:

The 7th grade Pre-AP Language Arts curriculum emphasizes a well-balanced program that promotes higher-level thinking strategies, problem solving techniques, independent study, individual and group projects, grammar studies, proper writing techniques, and vocabulary studies. Preparation for the Reading STAAR test and College Board Pre-AP strategies will also be a part of the class.

1st Quarter:

Reading Focus: Greek Mythology and The Hero's Journey

Writing Focus: Fictional adventure story, digital writing, blogging

2nd Quarter:

Reading Focus: Fiction (A Christmas Carol)

Writing Focus: Poetry

3rd Quarter:

Reading Focus: Drama

Writing Focus: Expository

4th Quarter:

Reading Focus: Literature Circles (various genres)

Writing Focus: Persuasive

Grading:

Retesting is intended for the occasional difficulty with content mastery. When students retest regularly, parents will be contacted and a study plan will be developed if needed. Students in Pre-AP, GT, and IPC classes will only be afforded one retest option per nine weeks.

Major Grades – 60%

Semester Exams, Quarterly Essays, Major Projects

Daily Work – 40%

Classwork, Quizzes, Vocabulary Tests

Homework / Practice – 0%

- It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete missing assignments when absent.
- Refer to the student handbook for absent work policies.
- Students who receive a 79% or below on MAJOR grades will have an opportunity to redo the assignment. Students who receive a 69% or below on daily work must complete the campus contract as per the teacher to redo the assignment.
- Late Work:

Instructor requires that students complete the assignment for the benefit of learning; therefore, all assignments past the 5th day will result in a brief student conference to determine an appropriate course of action.

Supplies:

All students are responsible for having the following on a daily basis: pens and/or pencils, composition book, **fully charged iPad, HEADPHONES OR EARBUDS, iPad chargers**, a library book, and all other necessary supplies to succeed in class on a daily basis such as highlighters or notebook paper.

The following supplies on the 2016-2017 school supply list will go to your Language Arts classroom:

- 2 Wide-ruled, Lined, 100 page composition notebooks
**You may want to consider purchasing notebooks with the cardstock/cardboard covers instead of the vinyl/plastic covers to make decorating the cover easier.
- Colored pens – red, purple, green (one of each is fine)
- 100 Count 3x5 index cards
- Wide-ruled notebook paper

Assignments:

It is recommended that students keep an assignment calendar and subscribe to the teacher's Google calendar online. Assignments will also be posted on the teacher website and/or Google Classroom. The instructor also sends a weekly message detailing class and campus events for the upcoming week.

Computers and printers are available in the library and campus computer labs for completing projects and printing assignments when necessary. Students are encouraged to plan appropriately in order to meet deadlines. Any technological problems related to printing or producing an assignment that result in late work will be handled on a case by case basis. Because our campus has a wide variety of technology available, keep in mind that if you are having problems with completing any assignment, immediate communication with your teacher is the best course of action.

Cell Phones / iPad Policy:

Students may not use personal cell phones during class unless specifically directed by the teacher. Students experiencing a need to text or call immediate family members will be asked to do so from the front office.

Students are prohibited from playing “games” on iPads at any time during class. If students finish work “early” they will be encouraged to read or work on any number of classroom assignments.

Food / Beverages / Snacks:

Students may not chew gum or any other type of “candy” in class. Students are welcomed to bring a water bottle (water only) that must be kept in the backpack or under the desk (to avoid spills on books or devices). Any snacks that are brought into the class must be mess and distraction free (nothing sticky or extremely loud to open).

Academic Integrity:

All Seventh Grade English Language Arts instructors adhere to the student handbook policies on cheating and academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism is the representation of the work or ideas of others as your own. Charges of plagiarism can result from failing to cite a source, giving insufficient credit to the original authors, closely paraphrasing without attribution, and direct copying. The instructor will work closely with students to ensure that plagiarism is not taking place, and have asked faculty to remind students that they have a “. . . responsibility to promote academic honesty by opposing cheating and plagiarism and reporting dishonest work.” All forms of plagiarism after proper instruction will result in severe academic penalties.

