



Mrs. Whalen Language Arts

Grade 8 Syllabus

2011-2012

Dear Students,

Welcome to 8th grade. I anticipate that this will be a year of growth and learning. Throughout the year, you will be studying literature, language mechanics, and an assortment of writing styles, public speaking, listening skills and creative thinking.

Mission for the Class

Language Arts is an important part of your education. It is a demanding and fundamental subject which can be both challenging and fun. Through reading, writing, presentations, and interactive discussions it is my goal to provide you with the tools necessary to succeed academically at Saint James and in the future, as well as other areas of your life.

Expectations and Procedures

- Class begins when you enter the classroom.
- Students need to come to class prepared and ready to work! Showing up to class without the proper materials is like a carpenter showing up to build a house without a hammer. How much can you really accomplish without the proper tools? Students will not be permitted to return to their lockers for books, etc. once class has started.
- Your writing assignments must be typed. If you do not have a working computer/printer at home, you will need to make the necessary arrangements at school, or the local

library to complete your work. Saint James has many computers and printers; there are no excuses for not completing a typed assignment. You can also e-mail the assignment to mwhalen@sjsbr.org and print it out.

Homework

Homework is an important part of your learning and will be assigned when it is relevant and beneficial.

Absence

- If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain your work. You have 5 days to make up all work missed during your absence.
- If you are absent on the day an assignment is due, you must turn in the assignment on the day you return. Quizzes and tests must be made up within 5 days of your return to school. It is your responsibility to make up the work during class time, recess, or after school if necessary.

Classroom Behavior

In class you are responsible for:

- ✓ attend class regularly
- ✓ be on time to class
- ✓ be prepared for class
- ✓ use your time wisely
- ✓ have a positive attitude
- ✓ PAY ATTENTION, LISTEN, and do not disrupt your fellow students opportunity to learn
- ✓ adhere to school rules and the school dress code

TO SUCCEED IN CLASS, YOU MUST

- be actively involved as a member of our class
- Meet deadlines!
- present all work according to the standards for the assignment

YOUR COMMENTS AND THOUGHTS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE AND ENGAGE IN DISCUSSION EACH AND EVERY DAY. OURS IS A CLASSROOM WHERE ALL STUDENTS ARE ACCEPTED AND WELCOME. PLEASE SHOW YOUR CLASSMATES AND MYSELF RESPECT AND COURTESY, AND WE WILL DO THE SAME FOR YOU.

Literature

- *Old Man and the Sea*---Ernest Hemingway
- *And Then There Are None*--- Agatha Christie
- *Twelfth Night*--- William Shakespeare
- *To Kill A Mockingbird*---Harper Lee
- *Eyes of the Emperor*—Graham Salisbury

-Titles are subject to change

Book Club

Approximately every 3 to 4 weeks you will be assigned a book to read independently. It is required reading for the class. It is your responsibility to secure the book. You are responsible to complete this book by the given due date. On the due date there will be an in class discussion and a short written quiz.

Student/Parent Book Club

The student/parent book club meets about every 4 to 5 weeks, at a time determined by the group, either evenings or after school. The group discusses and makes selections for the group to read. Both the student and the parent must read and attend the meetings jointly. Last year's group selections were *The Traveler's Gift*, *Witch and Wizard*, *The Christmas Box*, *Sara's Key*, *Heaven is for Real* and *Fallen Angels*. All 8th graders and their parent(s) are encouraged to participate.