



8th Grade English Language Arts (ELA)
Miss Christine Urio: christine.uriowcsdny.org

Dear Students, and Parents and/or Guardians,

Welcome back! I hope that you had an enjoyable and restful summer.

And welcome to 8th Grade English—I'm so excited to be your teacher this school year! All of the hard work and dedication you have put into your schoolwork throughout the years has helped get you to this point. I am proud to have you in my class and know that you will do well here.

This year promises to be a challenging adventure as you continue to grow and learn as a reader, better express yourself as a writer, and develop communication skills that will help you in future endeavors. Your success in 8th grade will depend on your hard work, effort, and dedication. You will be expected to complete homework and class assignments, read a variety of materials, and learn more about the world around you.

As your teacher, I look towards your future as I help you prepare for high school and beyond. It is my wish that you succeed in this class and are prepared to face the challenges of your academic career; however, it is your commitment to learning that is the most important ingredient to your success.

Now is the time to set goals, and to work hard today in order to succeed tomorrow. I look forward to working with each of you throughout the year!

In order to work together to help each child prepare for success, I would like to make you aware of our coursework and classroom policies, which I have outlined in the syllabus on the following pages, so there are no misunderstandings. Please review the syllabus with your child, and acknowledge your review with your signature.

If you have any questions, I'm only an email away! I anticipate a wonderful school year and can't wait to work with all of you!

Warm Regards,
Christine Urio



Syllabus for 8th Grade English Language Arts (ELA)

Miss Urio

Today matters. It is the first stop of your journey toward the future. Outlined below are the criteria for English class. It is essential that you understand what is required of you during our time together.

1. **Expectations:** Everything stems from **respect**, and it is therefore the most prominent element that must be established for a successful classroom environment. This is why we will all speak and act respectfully to each and every individual. Every day, students will be expected to show this respect to the teacher, themselves, and others in the classroom.
 - Be mindful of your words and how they affect others
 - Do not be rude, hurtful, or belittle anyone's thoughts or opinions
 - Show respect for property (mine and others)
 - Be on time to class
 - Hand in assignments on time
 - Be prepared and have all materials ready for class
 - Take responsibility of yourself and your actions
 - Maintain strong grades and outstanding character
 - Be autonomous—come talk to me if you have any questions or concerns! It is important to foster independence and encourage student ownership
 - **Participate!** You're an important part of your class and I want to hear your voice!
 - Listen to instructions and follow directions as they are given
 - Use time wisely
 - Bring a positive attitude to class!
2. **Materials:** Students must come to class **each day** with the following materials. YOU are responsible for bringing these materials to class each and every day; I only have a limited supply of additional materials.
 - An English binder—you will use this to take notes and keep handouts in
 - Loose-leaf (to put in your English binder)
 - A hole puncher (preferably one that you can keep in your binder so you can store papers in it immediately)
 - A notebook (this will be our writer's notebook—spiral or marble are both fine!)
 - **Black/blue** ink pens (no fun colors, please!)
 - A highlighter (for annotating and note taking)
 - A planner (to write down assignments/due dates, and stay organized)
 - Book/reading material we are currently studying
 - Independent Reading Book
 - *Optional* Tissues (to be donated to class)
 - *Optional* Package of Pencils (to be donated to class)
3. **Procedures:** Routines promote familiarity and stability! Therefore, each day:

- Students will enter the classroom and take their assigned seat
 - Place their English materials on their desk
 - Put all distractions (phone, headphones, tablets, etc.) away in their lockers or out of sight
 - Keep bathroom and locker trips to a minimum (when you leave the classroom, you miss important instructions)
 - However, if you do need to leave the classroom, you must sign out in the notebook. Please note there should never be more than ONE student out of the room at a time (unless a student is called to guidance or an office where they will be gone more than a few minutes)
 - DO NOT begin packing up before the bell rings; the bell does not dismiss students, I will.
4. **Phone Policy:** There will be **NO** cell phone use allowed in the classroom unless it involves instruction. Ear buds will also **NOT** be allowed unless otherwise directed by myself. Students have two options:
- Leave them in their locker
 - Keep them turned off and out of view.

If these items are seen within the classroom environment, they will be collected and returned at the end of the class. If this rule is not followed in a respectful manner, the item will be turned into administration where it can be retrieved at the end of the school day.

The reasoning for this is that classroom time should be focused on learning, not texting or social media. Of course if there is an emergency, students may come speak to me about keeping their device out during class. Please have a chat with your child about this, as this policy is important and necessary for a safe classroom environment. I appreciate all of your support with regard to this classroom management direction.

5. **Curriculum:** This year, we will be studying a plethora of subjects, including:
- Short stories
 - Poetry
 - Nonfiction/essays
 - Drama
 - Literary Terms and Devices (characterization, point of view, conflict, imagery, irony, figurative language, setting, plot, theme, symbolism, flashback, dialogue, idiom, moral, dynamic characters, static characters)
 - Analysis of informational text
 - Reading Skills and Strategies/Close Reading (predicting, making inferences, cause and effect, compare and contrast, sequencing, drawing conclusions, using context clues, discovering the main idea, making generalizations, making connections, foreshadowing, summarizing, paraphrasing, author's purpose)
 - Critical Thinking Skills (making judgments, analyzing, speculating, expressing opinions, interpreting)
 - Writing (essay writing, responding to literature, personal narratives, expository/descriptive, argumentative writing/research)
 - Listening, Speaking, and Viewing
 - Grammar, Vocabulary and Spelling

6. **Grading:** The overall percentage weighting of grades is as follows:

Writing/Tests/Project = **50% of grade**

Class work/Homework/Quizzes = **40% of grade**

Classroom Participation = **10% of grade**

7. **Assignments:** All assignments will be checked **on the due date**. Reading assignments must be completed on time in preparation for discussions, journal writes, or quizzes. Class work/homework is your responsibility and is extremely important. Missing assignments are detrimental to your grade and affect how well you understand the material being covered. Some assignments in English are assigned over the course of several days due to the length (ex. research paper). These assignments require the student to do a portion each night, not to save it all until the last minute. **Plan ahead and stay organized!**

Late Assignments: Typically, late assignments will not be accepted.

If assignments that are reviewed in class are not turned in on time, points will be deducted since the answers to the assignment will be given. Please note the weight value of assignments as they are assigned.

For writing assignments (final drafts), projects, or long term assignments, 5 points will be taken off every day an assignment is late.

Absence Policy: You are responsible for making up missed work. That includes: notes, homework assignments, classroom tasks, and tests/quizzes. Any previously assigned work is due the day you return to school. Write ABSENT on the top of the previously assigned assignment, and the currently assigned assignment, and submit the work to me.

If you are absent 1 day, it is your responsibility to make up the work within 1 day of returning to class. If you are absent 2 days, it is your responsibility to make up the work within 2 days of returning to class, etc. Work not made up in the allotted time will result in point deduction.

When you are absent, you **MUST** check the absent folder for missed handouts

Also, be sure to check our Google Classroom—all materials (assignments, Powerpoints, etc.) will be posted there—so you **ALWAYS** have access to information and are accountable for what is missed.

I must ask for your continued support of your child, and their work at school. We must all work together to support students to ensure their success here at Wappingers Junior High, and the years beyond!

Please sign the slip on the following page and return it to me by **Monday, September 10, 2018**

Miss Urio ELA 8 Syllabus Slip

Please sign and return this slip (please keep the syllabus to refer to throughout the year!) by **Monday, September 10, 2018** to receive a 100 on your first homework assignment!

I understand the criteria for English 8 as outlined in the syllabus and I agree to abide by the information provided.

Student Signature (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian email/contact information: _____