

Middle School English and Language Arts

Language Arts 5 (1.0 Credit)

The 5th grade Language Arts curriculum integrates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and the study of vocabulary and grammar in a way that engages today's learners and supports them in building a broad and diverse set of literacy skills. Students study classic literature as well as more contemporary forms, including media and multimedia products. Writing assignments in semester A focus on narrative and persuasive modes and emphasize the use of reasoning and details to support opinions. Each writing assignment spans several lessons and guides students through a writing process that begins with prewriting and ends by emphasizing one or more aspects of conventions of standard written English. Students also learn how to participate in collaborative discussion and peer review sessions. In each lesson, engaging and relevant models and step-by-step instruction guide students toward mastery and appreciation of 21st century communication in all its forms and functions. The second half of the class focuses on skills needed to literary text, the course focuses on skills for reading and analyzing informational text. Students learn how informational text differs from literary text and how different forms of information text differ from each other. Writing assignments emphasize expository writing and guide students through research projects. Students will also learn how to present information orally and using multimedia.

Semester A:

- *Because of Winn Dixie*
by Kate Dicamillo
- *Number the Stars*
by Lois Lowry
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*
by Christopher Paul Curtis

Semester B:

- *Maniac Magee*
by Jerry Spinelli
- *Out of the Dust*
by Karen Hesse
- *Island of the Blue Dolphin*
by Scott O'Del

Language Arts 6 (1.0 Credits)

English 6 starts off with two main categories: Storytelling and Heroes. Assignments include writing a narrative essay and completing a book report. English 6 continues by covering the main topics of Myth and Poetry. Student assignments include writing an original fairy tale and composing a poem.

Required Novels:

- *Watsons Go To Birmingham*
- *The Giver*

Optional Novels (Choose 2):

- *The House of Dies Drear*
- *Walk Two Moons*
- *The Westing Game*
- *Freak the Mighty*
- *Seedfolks*
- *True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*

Language Arts 7 (1.0 Credits)

Through analysis of written, spoken, and multimedia texts, students will become more critical consumers of information and of various forms of media. They will also synthesize and organize ideas to prepare structured essays in several different modes, including narrative, persuasive, and expository. Each lesson will guide students in learning and applying specific strategies for reading and writing different types of texts. A review of basic English mechanics is included in many of the writing lessons, along with a discussion of levels of formality required for different purposes and audiences. This course provides instruction in many modalities, including audiovisual presentations and videos, interactive activities, projects, and discussions. The second semester of Language Arts 7 builds on the skills and concepts introduced in the first semester. Students tackle more difficult texts and themes, and the level of analysis demonstrated and required is more in-depth. In this part of the course, students study the English language closely—both its history and evolution, and the less obvious ways it can be used to convey meaning. The reading assignments are selected to guide students in understanding how language can be used to convey broader themes in poetry, drama, and humorous or satirical texts. Students continue to develop their writing skills through multi-draft assignments and projects. Emphasis in this semester is on recognizing the multiple levels of meaning that any word or phrase might convey, and in writing one's own texts with these concepts in mind.

Required Anthology:

- *Poetry Speaks Who I Am*
ISBN-10: 1402210744
ISBN-13: 978-1402210747

Required Novels:

- *Julie of the Wolves*
- *The Outsiders*

Optional Novels (Choose 2):

- *Where the Red Fern Grows*
- *Nothing But the Truth*
- *The Cay*
- *A Christmas Carol*
- *A Day No Pigs Would Die*

Language Arts 8 (1.0 Credit)

In this exciting course, students will master the subtle and complex art of the Standard American English writing style, allowing them to express their ideas more clearly and effectively than ever before. As students become experts on sentence structure, verb tenses and punctuation, they'll learn not only what the grammar rules are, but the logic behind them. Alongside this rigorous language instruction, students will analyze the poetry of legendary writers such as Seamus Heaney, Robert Frost, and Jane Kenyon. In addition, they will practice effective research techniques and prepare complete and polished reports and essays. Their work will also cover formal letter writing, biographical essays, and creating a bibliography. Students will use strategies such as the Sign and Design Mind and Clustering to help form their ideas and develop stories and arguments. Entertaining videos and diverse reading selections provide a wealth of information. Peer discussions and teacher feedback also contribute to help students learn the processes needed to become more effective writers. The course continues to enhance the focus and style of academic writing. Students continue to develop advanced traits of formal language through challenging activities and exercises that get at the heart of precise communication. Through careful study of parts of speech, verb forms, and sentence clauses, students will be prepared to write at the High School level without distracting errors that get in the way of self expression. Besides grammar instruction, each unit encourages a love of literature with captivating and age-appropriate novels and stories. Detailed Novel Study Guides challenge students to go beyond basics like plot and setting to really analyze and engage with literature. In addition, the student will outline, draft and revise a polished research paper, while learning the importance of avoiding plagiarism, citing sources, and organizing arguments. This ability to craft a strong thesis and prove it with evidence will equip students for creative and logical writing in high school and beyond.

Required Novels:

- *Roll of Thunder Hear, My Cry*
- *Diary of a Young Girl*

Optional Novels (Choose 2):

- *My Brother Sam is Dead*
- *Across Five Aprils*
- *The Ox-Bow Incident*
- *That was Then, This is Now*
- *The Pearl*