



8th Grade English Language Arts

COURSE OUTCOME:

Course Description

This year in English Language Arts, students will be engaging in a variety of writing modes, participating in in-depth inquiry and analysis of complex text, and experiencing rigorous classroom discussions led by both the teacher and their peers.

Throughout the year, students will be embracing critical thinking skills, collaboration with peers, communication with peers and adults, and creativity to master the State Standards.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/academic-standards/english-language-arts-standards.html>

INSTRUCTION:

Topics Covered

Students will progress through the year-long course in modules centered around a common theme/question that guides the reading, writing, and grammar content. We will be using a thematic Essential Question each quarter to guide our reading and writing. The TN ELA Standards are cyclical, so we will be working with our literature, informational text, language, and writing standards throughout each quarter of instruction.

General Pacing

- Unit 8A: Perspective and Narrative
 - This unit aims to teach students to *read like writers*: to pay attention to the craft of writing, to the moves a good writer makes to shape the way we see a scene or feel about a character—to stir us up, or surprise us, or leave us wondering what will happen next.
- Unit 8B: Liberty and Equality
 - The Declaration of Independence, the foundational document that expresses the ideals of a new nation, claimed that “all men are created equal.” Yet, even as this document was drafted, the nation was engaged in a fierce debate about the meaning of those words. This unit focuses on the writings of both famous and lesser-known Americans who were critically, intellectually, and physically engaged in that debate during the Civil War time period. The lessons allow students to dive into these important texts, with a clear focus on how each writer reflects on this question, and give them many opportunities to reflect on, discuss, write about, and debate ideas of equality, opportunity, justice, and freedom.
- Unit 8C: Science and Science Fiction
 - Amplify’s Science & Science Fiction unit stars two trailblazing women who charted new terrains in literature and computer science: Mary Shelley and Ada Lovelace. In the first 17 lessons of the unit, students read *Gris Grimly’s Frankenstein*, a graphic novel that adds captivating illustrations to an abridgment of the 1818 edition of Mary Shelley’s book. Grimly’s haunting portrayal of Mary Shelley’s original narrative pushes



students to wrestle with some of the book's central themes: a creator's responsibility for their creation, the role of society in shaping our presence in the world, and the promises and risks of scientific inquiry. In the Poetical Science sub-unit, students read two poems, a speech, and excerpts from Chapter 1 of Walter Isaacson's *The Innovators* to compare and contrast the ways in which William Wordsworth, Lord Byron, and Ada Lovelace viewed humanity's relationship with technology. Are we the masters of our machines, or are the machines our masters?

- Unit 8E: Holocaust: Memory and Meaning
 - How does society and its people become participants in such an atrocity? And what is the responsibility of those who experienced, witnessed, participated in, or who now learn about these events? Students will use an ELA lens and close reading to dig into these questions. The selected materials present events from several different perspectives—those of perpetrators, survivors, victims, bystanders, and witnesses—allowing students to develop a critical understanding of the strategies Nazis used to influence the mindset of a nation, and the human responses to the unfolding of genocide.
- Unit 8F: The Space Race Collection
 - In the lessons on information literacy that begin the unit, students learn how to tell the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources; determine if a source is reliable; and understand ethical uses of information. Having practiced these skills, students are ready to develop and sharpen their sourcing abilities in the next lessons in which they construct their own research questions and explore the internet for answers.

Materials Needed

See supply list on school webpage (<http://holstonms.knoxschools.org/>)

Resources:

- o **Online Resources:** [AmplifyELA website](#)
- o **Amplify ELA textbook (2021 Amplify Education)**
- o **Compliance with Instructional Materials Policy & Procedure I-211:**
 - *If you do not approve of a specific resource listed in this syllabus, please make your request to me in writing and an alternative assignment and/or materials will be provided. The request should include your name, the student's name, the specific activity/materials in which you do not want your child to participate or to which you do not want them exposed, and the nature of your objection.



Expectations: Students are expected to be prepared, study effectively, ask questions, be proactive in their learning and give their best effort on all assessments. Students will be assessed on their progress throughout the year in the following ways:

1st Semester

- 100% Formative Assignments (classwork, homework, writing, etc.), Summative Assignments (tests, quizzes) & Anchor Projects

2nd Semester

- 90% Formative Assignments (classwork, homework, writing, etc.), Summative Assignments (test, quizzes), & Anchor Projects
- 10% State End of Year Assessment (TCAP)

2. Grading will follow Knox County Schools Policy

A= 90-100 B= 80-89 C= 70-79 D= 60-69 F= 59 and below

3. Every student is expected to complete **every** assignment **on time**.

Parent Communication:

I will communicate with the student and parent through Canvas, Aspen and Parent Square. In order to give timely feedback, I will update grades at least once per week on Aspen.

Late work

1. Work will be considered late if the assignment is not turned in **on the date due**.
2. Work will ONLY be accepted in the current grading period (every 4 ½ weeks). Work will NOT be accepted after the grading period has closed.

Make-up work policy

1. Attendance plays a **vital** role in student success and achievement in school. Please make every effort to attend every day. I understand that things happen and that absences are sometimes inevitable. **Students are responsible** for getting make-up work immediately upon returning to school and completing it in a timely manner.

Students are responsible for communicating with their teacher in regards to being absent and checking on what is missed that day. Please check Canvas for assignments being missed.



Extra Credit Policy

Extra credit **will not be given**. Students are expected to do their best on every assignment as it is assigned. If work is completed on time, extra credit will not be necessary.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

Student Expectations

- Follow KCS grade-level expectations for digital citizenship. (<https://www.common sense.org/education/digital-citizenship/curriculum>)
- Students will be expected to adhere to all assessment policies for diagnostic, benchmark, and Standards Based Assessments.
- Students are expected to check Canvas or other teacher communication formats daily.
- Students are expected to be active participants in activities as directed by the teacher.
- Submit assignments as directed by the teacher. Assignments may be assigned with flexibility to submit weekly. (Example: Saturday by midnight)
- Advocate for personal needs and additional support when needed. Students are expected to meet the teacher policy regarding assignment submission, late work, and incomplete work. Students are expected to meet all deadlines.

BEST PRACTICES

- ❖ Be appropriate and respectful in your actions.
- ❖ Listen to the educator or individual speaking.
- ❖ Stay engaged throughout the lesson or activity.
- ❖ Ensure that all work is your own.
- ❖ Bring a charged laptop to class every day.

o Classroom Policy/Procedures

Student are expected to adhere to the Four Pillars of our Holston Community:

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Ready
- Be Responsible

● Device Use/Misuse:

Improper use of any computer or the network is prohibited. This includes the following:

- o Use of racist, profane, or obscene language or materials
- o Using the network for financial gain, political or commercial activity
- o Attempting to or harming equipment, materials or data
- o Attempting to or sending anonymous messages of any kind
- o Using the network to access inappropriate material
- o Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or the network



- o Using the network to provide addresses or other personal information that others may use inappropriately
- o Accessing of information resources, files, and documents of another user without permission
- o Vandalism, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy district equipment or materials, data of another user of the district's system, or any of the agencies or other networks to which the district has access is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district guidelines and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.
- o Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited. Forgery or attempted forgery of documents or currency is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to create, copy or modify official documents or currency using district technology resources may be viewed as a violation of district guidelines and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

Failure to comply with these standards may result in temporary or permanent removal of user access to KCS Virtual Instruction

- **Intervention Strategy:**

- Tutoring is available to all students after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

- **Please call the main office for more information.**

- **PLAGIARISM**

According to Harbrace Handbook, 15th edition:

Plagiarism is defined as “presenting someone else’s ideas, research, or opinion as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased.” It includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Copying verbatim all or part of another’s written work;
2. Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source;
3. Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source;
4. Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator.

Cheating is defined as representing any other person’s work or work from any source as your own.

CONSEQUENCES OF PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students who are found guilty of plagiarism will have the option of either re-doing the assignment within a specified time period and accepting a grade letter drop or taking a zero on the assignment. Parents should be involved in making the decision.



Per Tennessee State Board of Education Policy, the following MUST be posted on each syllabus:

**Board Policy 1-431
Issues 7/95 Revised 6/08**

The Board affirms that it is essential that the teaching about religion—and not of a religion be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following:

- Music, art, literature, or drama with a religious theme or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs, provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively;
 - The emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature, and history shall be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies shall never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs; and
 - Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech, and debate.
- o Additionally, if a course features religion within the curriculum and instructional materials, this information must be included within the syllabus, and the syllabus must be publicly posted.
 - o Within the syllabus, teachers must include specific religion-aligned selections that will be used throughout the year or semester.

How to contact Ms. Kim:

- o Email: amber.kim@knoxschools.org
- o Phone: 865-594-1300 between 2:25-3:15pm on Monday and Wednesday

How to contact Ms. Johnson:

- o Email: angel.johnson@knoxschools.org
- o Phone: 865-594-1300 between 2:25-3:15pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays

How to contact Ms. Pallesen:

- o Email: karen.pallesen@knoxschools.org
- o Phone: 865-594-1300 between 2:25-3:15pm on Monday and Wednesday



Please tear off and return to the teacher.

I have read this syllabus and understand the requirements and regulations.

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____