

Mrs. Cindy Faller
Eighth Grade English Language Arts
Powell Middle School
cindy.faller@knoxschools.org
School office phone: 865- 938-9008
Cell phone: Available Upon Request

Course Description:

Eighth Grade English/Language Arts (ELA) will focus on both reading and writing. Students will read a variety of texts including both fiction and nonfiction. The written component includes various forms of language including grammar, conventions, vocabulary, and spelling. Students will use a range of texts to enhance their understanding, develop writing conventions, and apply language skills in both speaking and listening.

State Revised Curriculum Standards:

The standards for ELA are divided into five strands:

- Reading: Literature (RL) and Informational Text (RI)
- Writing (W)
- Speaking and Listening (SL)
- Language (L)
- Foundation K-5 Literacy

To view the academic standards for 8th grade ELA, please visit:

<https://www.tn.gov/education/article/english-language-arts-standards>

Materials: Students are expected to have paper, pencil, high lighters (two different colors), loose leaf paper, 2- pocket, 3-prong folder (any color) every day in class.

Make-up/Late Work: Students are responsible for checking with Mrs. Faller to see what they missed when they were absent. Students can make arrangements to do make-up tutoring to re-take missed tests as needed.

ASPEN on Parent Portal Post Policy: To provide timely feedback, grades will be entered into ASPEN at least once a week except under extreme circumstances. If you would like to know how to set up ASPEN to give you alerts, you can e-mail me and I will send you the cheat sheet.

Student Expectations: My classroom management is based upon mutual respect. There are only three major classroom expectations: Be Respectful. Be Prepared. Always do your best.

Students will be provided reminders of the rules with explanation on how they relate to being a successful adult. I will point out when students are meeting expectations and praise them. I will encourage peers to give each other positive feedback. I will also be awarding points when I "catch" students meeting expectations consistently or showing improvement. Those points will result in the students earning a token reinforcer of their choice. 10 points = 1 reinforcer. They can ask for a point sweep too, if I haven't given points in a while. That's a written request by a student to me to check in on their points. I can get distracted and forget the point system and I want to give them a way to remind me that models making requests from an employer.

If students continue to struggle meeting the expectations they may bring home a teacher note to let you know what is going on. Please take a moment to read it, sign it and if the student returns it the matter will be settled. If not, the student will be referred to the minor log.

Religion in the Classroom: 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 nonbelief in compositions, art forms, music, speech and debate.

Communication: If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact me via the school office 938-9008, or email at cindy.faller@knoxschools.org.

Grading Scale:

Students will earn grades based on daily work, homework, quizzes, projects, and tests. The current grading scale is as follows:

- A 93-100
- B 85-92
- C 75-84
- D 70-74
- F 0-69

Texts and Resources:

Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition - Glencoe
Elements of Literature – Holt
Writer's Choice Literature – Glencoe
Prentice Hall Literature – Pearson

Current events articles to be used in class discussions and assignments may be pulled from, but not limited to the following: *commonlit.org*, *Time Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Knoxville News Sentinel*,

Novel Studies we may complete this year:

Jefferson's Sons

April Morning

The Count of Monte Cristo

Night

The Outsiders

Phantom of the Opera Teleplay

Warriors Don't Cry

The Boy Who Dared

Videos:

Some examples of videos that may be used to enhance lessons and engage students in classroom discussion and writing strategies are:

Life is Beautiful

On Native Soil

Clips from *commonlit.org*

Charley (Flowers for Algernon)

Clips from Teacher Tube

Clips from Discovery Education

Hidden Figures

Oprah's Interview of Elie Wiesel at Auschwitz

Phantom of the Opera

The Count of Monte Cristo

Writing Portfolio:

Throughout the year, students will work on various pieces of writing that provide the opportunity to demonstrate mastery with ALL modes of writing. Periodically, students will choose ONE writing piece to take through the entire writing process and submit it for evaluation/grading. This piece will be placed in your writing portfolio. Electronic portfolios may be used this year on Google Drive.

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.”

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 redoing 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.*

Please sign and return: I have received a copy of and read through Mrs. Faller's 2019-2020 English Language Arts syllabus, which includes the policy on plagiarism. Please add your contact information below. A copy of this syllabus will be posted on Aspen.

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Email/phone: _____