

ENGLISH 8 COURSE SYLLABUS

MRS. SHERMAN, MS. NEVILLE, AND MS. EMORY

Course of Study

Welcome to eighth grade! We are excited and looking forward to helping all our students experience success. Just like the sixth and seventh grade English classes, the eighth grade English curriculum follows a thematic approach using the following topics: **Journeys, Community, Responsibility, and Discoveries**. For each quarter, students will be reading literature that includes a variety of novels, short stories, and poems that connect and interact with these themes. Listed by each quarter are possible novels that the class will study.

<i>Quarter</i>	<i>Novel(s)</i>
First	<i>Canyons (Gary Paulsen)</i>
Second	<i>The Giver (Lois Lowry)</i>
Third	<i>Harriet Tubman (Anne Petry)</i>
Fourth	<i>As You Like It (William Shakespeare)</i>

In addition, we will be concentrating on improving students' writing skills by using the seven traits of good writing: word choice, sentence fluency, organization, voice, conventions, ideas, and presentation. Grammar and vocabulary building also will be important parts of class lessons.

In eighth grade, students will have an independent reading requirement. Students will select a book from the school media center that they read at least 20 minutes every night. Students will have assignments to complete based on their reading. Students must carry their independent reading books with them at all times.

Contacting Your English Teacher: (301)840-4660.

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Grading Policy

In English 8, there will be three kinds of assignments: formative, summative, and homework for practice. Homework for practice will count for ten percent of students' overall grade. Summative assessments complete a unit of study such as an end-of-unit test, project, or writing assignment. They are an evaluation of all skills, concepts, and materials in that unit. Formative assessments are all the assignments along the way that help to monitor students' progress. They include, for example, quizzes, initial paragraphs, and class work.

Grades will be a fair and reasonable reflection of students' achievement. To earn an A on the report card, a student must consistently **exceed** what is considered standard for the course. A C means a student has consistently met the course standard.

Teachers will calculate students' marking period grades based on the following percentages:

- Formative Assessments 60%
- Summative Assessments 30%
- Homework for Practice/Preparation 10%

MVMS uses the "raw score conversion to percentage" method to calculate grades. Therefore, the number of points a particular assignment is worth does not impact its weight within a category (18/20 carries the same weight as 36/40); however, teachers may still weight assignments within categories.

Late Work

All work assignments will have both a **due date** and a **deadline**. The due date is the day that work is expected to be turned in; work turned in after this date will lose one letter grade. On the other hand, work not turned in by the deadline will not be accepted and will receive an E.

If students are having trouble getting a major project or essay completed on time, they must let their teacher know **before** the due date. Students should not wait until the last minute.

Absences

Much of what is important in English takes place during class. Students and parents should try to avoid absences as much as possible. When students are absent, they should call another student to find out what they missed. After the absence, they should talk to their teacher about make-up work. Work that was due on the date of the absence will be due immediately upon your return.

Class Expectations

The MVMS slogan of PRIDE summarizes expectations for students: Positive, Responsible, Individuals, Disciplined for Excellence. Students should consistently be resourceful, respectful, responsible, and ready to learn. MVMS has adopted a system called Positive Behavior Interventions and Support to reward students for good behavior and encourage good behavior throughout the school.

Students' behavior that interferes with the learning of themselves or others is unacceptable. Consequences for misbehavior will vary based upon the nature of the offense and might include: warning, student conference, phone call home, lunch or after school detention, or office referral.

Homework

Teachers will assign homework most school days. Students should record homework in their student data notebooks. One of the most useful ways we have to communicate is the student's data notebook. Please check this daily for information. Teachers can also be reached by email (fastest) or by calling the school (301-840-4660). In addition, parents and students should please check Edline regularly to know if students are missing work.

MCPS Reassessment Policy

Re-teaching occurs when the teacher determines that a student is not meeting learning goals. The teacher identifies an opportunity for a reassessment before the original task, and reassessment will occur within the instructional unit. Only one reassessment opportunity is available per task. The teacher may decide to reassess an assignment partially, entirely, or in a different format. A reassessment grade replaces the original grade.

Summative assessments, which are tasks that indicate a final measure of learning and may not be reassessed, include end of course or semester exams, assessments that end an instructional unit or period of study, final research papers, reports, or essays, and culminating projects or performances.

When reassessment is offered, all students may be reassessed, regardless of the grade on the original task if they meet the following requirements: complete the original task, complete required assignments, and complete reteaching/relearning activities as determined by the teacher.

Grade Updates

Grades entered in a teacher's electronic gradebook are automatically uploaded to Edline on a nightly basis. Both students and parents should log into Edline regularly to check grades and missing assignments. Students are expected to know their grades, and what, if any, work is missing at all times. There should be no surprises about grades; if so, parents and students should please make sure to contact your teacher. If parents need an Edline activation code, they should please contact our school's Edline Superuser, Alice Marable at alice_marable@mcpsmd.org. In addition, it would be extremely helpful to enter an active email address in both student and parent Edline accounts; teachers use this to provide class updates as well as other communication throughout the year.