

Eighth Grade English  
2011-2012

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

-Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

Instructor: Ginger Lewis  
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Course Description:

Theme- A Nation in Turmoil: How Community Has Shaped Our Nation

One of the best ways to learn about how individuals, cultures, and communities evolve is to consider the human experience through literature. This year you will read novels that will help you better understand how Americans and America -from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Era- have changed over time and how that, in turn, has altered our collective sense of community and our nation.

In addition to reading some of the most celebrated literature ever published, you will develop writing skills through a variety of writing assignments. Grammar and vocabulary are treated both holistically and via mini-lessons. You will continue to work on your critical reading skills in order to uncover multiple levels of meaning. Your writing will consist of personal, descriptive, expository (informative), and creative writing with emphases on idea development, organization, and voice.

Learning Objectives and Benchmarks:

Students will...

read and annotate actively and with proficiency.

write with effective idea development, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

comprehend the essay formula and accurately apply it to one's own writing.

develop critical thinking skills of comprehension, synthesis, and application of new information and also connect ideas across disciplines.

recognize and understand literary devices and incorporates them appropriately into writing.

Preparation for Class/Course Materials:

For this course, you will need to purchase the following (please reference the Holland Hall web site under Middle School, Curriculum, and Book List for the correct edition):

Course Materials:

*Ender's Game* - Scott Orson Card

*March Toward the Thunder* - Joseph Bruchac

*To Kill a Mockingbird* - Harper Lee

*Night* - Elie Wiesel

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* - John Boyne

*Warriors Don't Cry* - Melba Beals

*The Rattle Bag: An Anthology of Poetry* - Ted Hughes & Seamus Heaney

*The Writer's Reference with 2009 MLA Update* - Diana Hacker

For each class period, please bring:  
any homework assignment  
the appropriate novel  
agenda  
three-ring binder with section tabs (with folders)  
a writing utensil

Methods of Instruction:  
Depending on the day, you will engage in:  
whole class discussion  
small group discussion  
one-on-one conferences with Ms. Lewis  
paired/collaborative work  
individual endeavors

#### Assessments

Below, please read the official Middle School Late Work/Absence policy found in the Handbook:

Due dates for homework, projects, and tests are determined at the teachers' discretion. When students are in regular attendance, it is their responsibility to make sure they meet the deadlines.

#### Projected Course Schedule:

The below is a projected course schedule based on the novels and corresponding time periods:

Unit I- *Ender's Game* (August to early/mid September)

Time Period: Futuristic

Unit II- *March Toward the Thunder* (early/mid September to the second week of October)

Time Period: Civil War (1860s)

Unit III- *To Kill A Mockingbird* (mid-October to December break)

Time Period: The Great Depression (1920s-30s)

Unit IV- *Night & The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (January to mid-March)

Time Period: World War II (late 1930s-40s)

Unit V- *Warriors Don't Cry* (post-Spring Break to May)

Time Period: Civil Rights (1950s-60s)