

MACOPIN SCHOOL

SYLLABUS

I. COURSE TITLE:

Language and Literature Enriched - Grade 8

II. TEXTBOOK:

Junior Great Books Reading and Discussion Program, Series 8 (Volume 2), Series 9 (Volumes 1 and 2). Great Books Foundation, Chicago, IL, 1984.

English Writing and Language Skills. 3rd course. W. Ross Winterowd and Patricia Y. Murray, Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, New York, 1983.

Selected novels and short stories (see bibliography)

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to be an advanced whole language approach to reading and writing. It will offer a comprehensive study of types of literature, focusing on interpretation, critical thinking, drawing conclusions, and supporting opinions. Students will be taught to read literature interpretively and to think reflectively through shared inquiry. The course will also offer a wide variety of writing experiences, including essays, compositions, creative writing, and a research project, reinforcement of basic grammar, mechanics, and editing skills will be included, as well as preparation for the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of the requirements of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate a proficiency in the skills and areas listed below:

- A. Students will master the state-mandated Core Curriculum Content Standards.
- B. Write clear, concise sentences, paragraphs, and compositions as they relate to selections in literature.
- C. Use the mechanics of capitalization and punctuation, as well as appropriate word usage to produce effective written communication.
- D. Understand and employ kinds of writing: expository, persuasive, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, narrative, descriptive, essay.
- E. Recognize careers related to language arts.
- F. Participate in group and individual decision-making activities.
- G. Develop skills to increase efficiency in note-taking.
- H. Understand and appreciate fiction, drama, nonfiction, poetry, and legends as literary forms and be aware of the range of subjects and themes reflected in each.
- I. Recognize and appreciate differences in style and use of various literary techniques.
- J. Recognize and apply literary terms.

- K. Utilize a larger vocabulary developed through the study of context clues, etymology, word structure, and dictionary skills.
- L. Express ideas both orally and in writing in a variety of forms.
- M. Use reading and writing more effectively to express critical and analytical thinking which is process-oriented, including prewriting, drafting, and revising.
- N. Use the expression skills of composition and speech.
- O. Be thoroughly familiar with and prepared for the scope and format of the reading and writing portions of the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment.
- P. Read more fluently.
- Q. Use higher level thinking skills and be able to apply them to literature and real-life situations.
- R. Establish an ongoing relationship between literature and language arts.
- S. Use personal experiences and values to grasp an author's meaning.
- T. Think about what the author intended rather than just what is stated.
- U. Try out explanations of meaning with a group.
- V. Become aware that a story or a poem may have multiple meanings.
- W. Trust and value interpretation of literary selections and respect the interpretations of others.

V. COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE:

Units in this course will include a variety of types of literature and related skill development activities. Frequent writing assignments will be given as an extension of, and in response to, literary selections. Instruction in grammar, structure, and usage will be given throughout the year as the need arises. Critical, analytical, and interpretive thinking skills will be stressed in all aspects of this program.

- A. Read selected fiction, novels, drama, poetry, and nonfiction from a variety of texts.
- B. Develop skills to enable greater comprehension of literature.
  - 1. Analyzing literature - understanding elements of literature: genre, plot, characters, POV, setting, conflict, mood, theme, and diction.
  - 2. Critical thinking and reading
  - 3. Understanding language/speaking and listening
  - 4. Thinking and writing
  - 5. Grammar in Action
- C. Prepare for standardized tests

VI. STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

During the school year, the students will develop skills in writing, thinking, problem-solving, and reading for interpretation, as well as develop an awareness of personal values through a variety of activities such as composition, creating a short story, journal writing, poetry, interpretive reading, cooperative learning activities, drama, maintaining an organized notebook, and note-taking.

## VII. EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING:

### A. Evaluation Activities

1. Students will be required to complete a prescribed number of assignments outside of class. They will be expected to complete all assignments satisfactorily and on time. Emphasis will also be placed on active participation in classroom activities. It is expected that students will arrive in class fully prepared each day.
2. Students will be evaluated on a regular basis using the following criteria:
  - a. Completion of reading/writing assignments
  - b. Quality of reading/writing assignments
  - c. Class participation
  - d. Tests
  - e. Quizzes
  - f. Daily homework
  - g. Participation in formal interpretative discussions

### B. Grade Development

1. Writing - 50%
  - a. Homework
  - b. Composition
  - c. Mechanics
2. Reading - 50%
  - a. Participation in interpretive discussions
  - b. Writing in response to literature
  - c. Quizzes/tests

## IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

The following is a suggested reading list. Books on this list have been found to be of interest to students of this age and reading level. Students are encouraged to select books from the list to widen their interests and knowledge and to supplement the course work. All books are available in the Macopin School library or reading center. Teachers are also encouraged to select books from the list to use in their classrooms. All books listed here are available in class-size sets.

Adams, Richard. Watership Down.  
 Borland, Hal. When the Legends Die.  
 Bradbury, Ray. The Martian Chronicles.  
 Burch, Robert. Queenie Peavy.  
 Collier, Christopher. My Brother Sam is Dead.  
 Cormier, Robert. The Chocolate War.  
 Cormier, Robert. I Am the Cheese.  
 Childress, Alice. A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich.  
 Clavell, James. The Children's Story.  
 Freedman, Benedict, and Nancy Freedman. Mrs. Mike.  
 Frank, Ann. Ann Frank: Diary of a Young Girl.

Flynn. Mister God, This is Anna.  
Hardwicke, Michael. The Man Who Would Be King.  
Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils.  
Hunt, Irene. No Promises on the Wind.  
Keyes, Daniel. Flowers for Algernon.  
Knebel, Fletcher, and Charles Bailey. Seven Days in May.  
Knowles, John. A Separate Peace.  
Klein, Norma. Sunshine.  
L'Engle, Madeline. Meet the Austins.  
L'Engle, Madeline. A Wind in the Door.  
L'Engle, Madeline. A Swiftly Tilting Planet.  
Lipsyte, Robert. The Contender.  
Lord, Walter. A Night to Remember.  
Marshall, Catherine. Christy.  
Mowat, Farley. Never Cry Wolf.  
O'Brien, Robert C. Z for Zachariah.  
O'Dell, Scott. The Hawk That Dare Not Hunt By Day.  
Orwell, George. Animal Farm.  
Orwell, George. 1984.  
Peck, Richard. Pictures That Storm Inside My Head.  
Platt, Kin. The Boy Who Could Make Himself Disappear.  
Rand, Ayn. Anthem.  
Read, Piers Paul. Alive.  
Sleator, William. House of Stairs.  
Sleator, William. Run.  
Steinbeck, John. In Dubious Battle.  
Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men.  
Steinbeck, John. The Pearl.  
Sullivan, Tom. If You Could See What I Hear.  
Taylor, Mildred. Roll of Thunder; Hear My Cry.  
ten Boom, Corrie. The Hiding Place.  
Vidal, Gore. Best Television Plays.  
Zindel, Paul. The Pigman.