

7th Grade Accelerated Critics of Language (Reading) /GT Challenge (Writing) Course Syllabus

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Course Overview:

Your child will have an advanced and accelerated experience with both reading and writing in the magnet program. This class will develop student critical reading skills by giving students opportunity to engage with, discuss, and write about compelling novels, short stories, and poetry. It will also give students choice in their writing topics to hone skills such as purposeful thesis statements, strong organizational structure, providing thorough and convincing evidence for the writer's claim, and effective use of precise language and correct conventions.

<p>Essential Question: Why is it important to understand interactions?</p>	<p>Essential Question: Why does a writer choose a particular form of writing to communicate most effectively?</p>
<p><i>1st Quarter-Reading</i> Essential Question: How do hierarchies influence interactions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Epistolary Novel- <u>Flowers for Algernon</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reader's Workshop 2. Individual essay • Independent novel of choice <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Project 	<p><i>1st Quarter-Writing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Trait- thesis statements-narrative; organization; transitions; conventions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writer's notebooks introduced 2. Writer's workshop introduced 3. Portfolio essays: evaluate/judge-compare/contrast, book review
<p><i>2nd Quarter- Reading</i> Essential Question: How can interactions be transformative?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Historical Fiction Novel- <u>Chains</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reader's Workshop 2. Group project • <i>Independent</i> novel of choice <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Project 	<p><i>2nd Quarter-Writing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Trait- thesis statements- informational; voice; sentence fluency; conventions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writer's notebooks 2. Writer's workshop 3. Portfolio essays: Inform & explain; express/reflect
<p><i>3rd Quarter-Reading</i> Essential Question: How does exploration affect interaction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Non-Fiction - <u>Undaunted Courage</u> • Class Fiction- <u>Captain's Dog</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reader's workshop 2. Group project • Independent novel of choice <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Project 	<p><i>3rd Quarter- Writing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Trait-word choice; writing with clarity; conventions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writer's notebooks 2. Writer's workshop 3. Portfolio essays: analyze/interpret ; inquire/explore
<p><i>4th Quarter- Reading</i> Essential Question: How do interactions affect relationships?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Novel- Steinbeck book study (<u>The Pearl, The Red Pony, Of Mice and Men</u>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reader's Workshop 2. Individual Essay • Independent novel of choice -memoir <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Project 	<p><i>4th Quarter- Writing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Trait- elaboration of evidence; conventions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writer's notebooks 2. Writer's workshop 3. Portfolio essays: take a stand/propose a solution; argumentative

Class Reading:

Each quarter, students will explore various types of literature, fiction and non-fiction. The books were selected by Magnet English teachers to challenge traditionally strong readers through advanced text requiring greater complexity, depth of thinking and creativity. The assigned books are the books we will read together; I don't offer alternative titles.

I encourage parents to read the books along with their children to share in what the students are learning and discussing at school.

Individual Reading:

It is important for well-educated young adults to enjoy reading. To foster this ideal, each student will be responsible for independent reading while experiencing different genres and responding to books in different ways. Students will typically be responsible for one independent reading project per quarter.

- I have started a class library of books for our accelerated students. If you have some books that are age and level appropriate that are collecting dust at home, please consider donating to the class library so that others may enjoy the books. Thank you!

Writer’s Notebooks/ Writer’s Workshop:

Students will be writing in their writer’s notebooks on a daily basis. This is a place to generate new ideas about life, experiences, and wonderings. From these new ideas will come topics students can develop into poems, short stories, essays, etc. Students will be writing consistently in writer’s workshop each week, practicing the various purposes of real-world writing, analyzing exemplars, and pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing at least two papers per quarter. Students will sometimes choose which pieces they would like to publish and at other times I will require a paper requiring a specific skill. Students will have opportunities for peer response, meeting in writing groups and/or pairs. Self-evaluations will also be used for every published piece to help students acknowledge their hard work and growth, and to set goals for future writing pieces.

Students will also be using their writer’s notebooks to explore various writing skill activities.

Interdisciplinary Units:

Each quarter, students will engage in English/Language Arts projects that will feed into their PBLs. (PBL- Project Based Learning Units).

Required Materials:

- pencil
- 1 composition book (writer & reader’s notebook)
- blue or black pen (revision)

Reading Grading Policy		Writing Grading Policy	
Assessments/Projects	50%	Final Products	50%
Reading Participation	35%	Writing Process	35%
Vocabulary	15%	Grammar	15%

To be successful in this class, you must not only complete all of your work, but you must also engage in the process. Those that do their work and engage in the content will have earned a grade reflecting a job well done. My job is to help you be successful. I will be happy to help any student who needs extra help and/or time to finish all of his or her work. I can schedule mutually agreeable times to help you with whatever you need to be successful.

Late Work Policy: Late work is accepted for partial credit for approximately one week; acceptances of late work beyond that time is at the discretion of the teacher related to student/teacher communication.

Homework: Students will be expected to read independently at home for their class novel and independent novel; additionally, they may work on a portfolio essay though most students will finish all expected writing in class (rough or final draft); an average day of homework is approximately 30 minutes **every** night.