

Middle School English

A few things related to English class:

My goal is to prepare students as much as possible for their educational journey beyond St Paul. I use as my guide ACT skills, MAP test skills, and writing skills that I feel will be the most helpful in the students' future.

I will focus heavily on grammar/mechanics, writing academically (paragraph responses and essays), and incorporating MLA style in preparation for high school and beyond.

The “**curriculum**” is similarly structured for each grade level. Typically, each grade will be working on the same topic at the same time. However, each grade will be taught at a different level and speed. I will naturally expect more and get into a deeper understanding of the material with an 8th grader as opposed to a 6th grader. Having said that, if there are students of any grade who need to be pushed or accelerated, I will work that into the lessons as well.

Grammar/Mechanics-

Sentence structure (using it in a variety of ways in writing), punctuation (commas, colons, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.), parallel structure, modifier issues, and correct word usage are all items that will be covered.

Academic Writing-

Students will learn how to respond to academic questions via paragraphs and essays. Students will learn how to develop these writings and incorporate MLA style into many of them.

MLA-

I will try to get as much taught about MLA format as possible. I know it can be a complicated concept to understand. My goal is to simply give the students a solid foundation for when they get to high school. We will work on in-text citations, works cited pages, and the proper format of MLA.

Reading-

Students will read for a few specific purposes in my class. I use Scholastic Scope magazine and the articles it entails as the basis for many of the writing topics we will cover in class. There will be handouts for the articles in Scope that will emphasize reading for context, reading for details, and developing skills in MLA format.

Homework-

Students will have homework (often not in the traditional sense of what they deem as homework). There will be nights where students will have a worksheet or written assignment to complete. The nights they do not, I still want them going over the material we discussed or completed in class that day. The idea is...if they get a pop quiz the next day on what we covered in class, will they ace it?

Grading-

I go by a point system. The bigger/more important the assignment, the more point value it will have. Tests/quizzes will have a higher point value than a homework worksheet. Likewise, an essay will be worth more points than a single response paragraph.

If I ask students to take time and complete an assignment, the assignment will be scored. If the assignment is a check on skills or mastery, it will be graded for correctness. If, however, I am introducing something new and I want to give the students an assignment to gauge a beginning level understanding, that assignment likely will be graded for completion.

Class Rules-

I have one rule that the students will hear time and time again:
Give your best effort.

If this rule is followed, success will be the end result.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

David Ravenscraft
dravenscraft@stpaulnky.org