

7th Grade Language Arts: The Power of the Word, the Power of the Individual

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In this class, we will be learning how to use the written and spoken word (the arts of language) to express the power of the individual. To do this, we must learn how to read, write, and speak well. As individuals, we are powerful, but only as powerful as we know how to express our ideas and make others listen to us. This class is meant to empower you to become stronger individuals ready to change the world around you. However, this can only happen with a mixture of hard work, determination, collaboration with others, and a sense of humor.

Although we will be reading many different texts in this class, there are two essential questions to which we will be returning all year:

- 1. How do conflict and challenges help people to become strong individuals?**
- 2. How can we use language to empower ourselves and others to create change?**

Besides these essential questions, this class will focus upon important skills to help students become life-long learners. Those skills are:

- 1. Critical reading**
- 2. Critical thinking**
- 3. Writing**
- 4. Grammar**
- 5. Vocabulary development**
- 6. Organization**

Materials:

For this class, students will need to bring the following to class **everyday**:

- Current text/ novel that we are reading
- Accelerated Reader (AR) book
- Three-ring binder with the following dividers (5): Vocabulary/ Spelling, Handouts, Classwork/ Homework, Tests/ Quizzes, and Writing/ Projects
- 2 pens (blue or black—NO GEL PENS!!)
- 2 pencils
- 3 highlighters (1 blue, 1 yellow, 1 pink)
- Binder Paper
- Grammar Notebook (everyday)
- Grammar and Spelling Workbooks* (Students will only bring these on Tuesdays and Thursdays, unless otherwise noted)

Grammar Notebooks

In addition to doing work in their grammar workbooks, students will keep a grammar notebook all year long. This notebook will contain grammar rules and exercises for the entire year and serve as a personal grammar reference book for students.

Spelling and Vocabulary

Students will practice their spelling all year long. Using their spelling workbooks, students will master the spelling and definitions of about 20 words a week. Students will be quizzed on these words at the end of each week. In addition to their spelling workbooks, periodically students will receive vocabulary words for different literature units (novels, short stories, etc.) Students will be quizzed on these words as well.

Make-up Quizzes and Tests:

The make-up for a quiz will always be held the following Monday after school. **Students are responsible for scheduling a make-up with me; if they do not take the make up within a week of the absence, they will receive a zero on their quizzes.** Make-up tests will be all-essay tests that differ from the original. Make-up tests also will be offered on Mondays following the original test.

Accelerated Reader

Reading is vital to a student’s growth in Language Arts. Students will bring an Accelerated Reader (AR) book everyday to class for 10-15 minutes of SSR. Students must also read for 20 minutes a day at home. Students will be using the AR program to track their progress. Meeting their AR goals is a substantial part of their grade.

Grading:

I believe grades should be a reflection of both a student’s practice and final product. I also believe that the classroom is a community of learners and as such students have a responsibility to contribute respectfully to class discussion and group work. The grading percentages are the following:

- 10% Participation (this includes behavior)**
- 15% Accelerated Reader**
- 25% Homework and Classwork**

- 25% Tests and Quizzes**
- 25% Writing and Projects**

*There will be no extra credit opportunities offered to students currently earning D or F grades beyond the normal opportunities and timelines.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism will NOT be tolerated in this classroom. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic F on their work. Other consequences including detention and parent conferences may result from repeat offenses.

Late Work:

All assignments must be completed by the assigned due date. Late work for a unit will be accepted for half credit until the last day of the unit. In other words, I will not accept late work from a unit that we have already completed.

If Absent:

It is the **student’s responsibility** to find out what he/she has missed (class notes, handouts, homework, quizzes, etc.) Students should consult the Homework/ Agenda folder, the Class Grammar Notebook, the class website at www.geocities.com/mrshartig, and speak to a classmate. For each day absent, students have one day to make-up the work. However, being absent prior to the date of a major project, essay, test, or quiz will **not** excuse students from the work due that day.

Rules of Conduct:

Respect: This means we must all respect each other and ourselves. Respect means being polite, kind, and considerate at all times and to all people. Respect also means listening attentively, being on task, coming prepared to class, contributing positively to the classroom and groups, and respecting everyone’s right to learn.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

