

## Seventh Grade Language Arts

This course is designed to help students excel in four major areas: literature comprehension, essay-writing skills, grammar understanding, and vocabulary development. Students study mainly novels and short stories.

### Literature

Students read novels as a class. The assigned reading varies but consists of these works:

<i>Animal Farm</i>	by George Orwell
<i>The City of Ember</i>	by Jeanne Duprau
<i>The Giver</i>	by Lois Lowry
<i>Gathering Blue</i>	by Lois Lowry
<i>Messenger</i>	by Lois Lowry
<i>Heat</i>	by Mike Lupica
<i>Homeless Bird</i>	by Gloria Whelan
<i>Kira-Kira</i>	by Cynthia Kadohata
<i>The Miracle Worker</i>	by William Gibson
<i>Rash</i>	by Pete Hautman
<i>Tuck Everlasting</i>	by Natalie Babbitt

Students apply, assess, and discuss the evaluative characteristics of literature: format, characterization, plot, setting, theme, and style.

In addition students discuss conflict, climax, resolution, metaphors, similes, and symbolism.

Students also complete a month-long Science Fact & Fiction unit.

Monthly book reports of varying genre and formats are required

### Writing

Students write in many different formats throughout the year—short answers, essays, observations, fiction, and poetry. Properly structured essays are the most common assignments, often taking the form of a Weekend Write, which are given every other weekend. In addition, students write a monthly book report and complete in-class reactions and essays. Students often present their essays at the front of the class.

### Grammar

Mastering grammar techniques is essential to becoming a good writer. Students refine their knowledge of the parts of speech during the first part of the year. The study of proper punctuation, particularly correct comma usage, is a focus of the class. Students are expected to demonstrate grammar concepts taught in class in their essay writing.

### Vocabulary/Spelling

Students work to achieve mastery on at least 10 words per week. The weekly list is taken from a variety of sources, including a list of frequently misspelled words, the book the class is reading, and the students' personal reading books.

### Thinking Skills

Students use a variety of higher level thinking skills when examining literature such as

- Explaining motivations
- Solving mysteries
- Inferring conclusions
- Predicting outcomes
- Debating choices