

# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Literacy Course Syllabus

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## **Course Description:**

In 8th grade Literacy class, students will learn essential reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

## **Course Goals:**

The literacy curriculum is based upon the United States Common Core Standards for English Language Arts using Amplify ELA as the main curriculum.

## **Grade 8 Literacy Essential Standards:**

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1](#): Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1](#)

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2](#)

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.10](#)

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.4](#)

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4](#)

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

#### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.A](#)

Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

#### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.B](#)

Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).

#### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.C](#)

Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

#### [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.D](#)

Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5](#)

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.A](#)

Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.B](#)

Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.C](#)

Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1:](#)

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.A](#)

Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.B](#)

Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.C](#)

Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.D](#)

Establish and maintain a formal style.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.E](#)

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3](#)

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.A](#)

Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.B](#)

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.C](#)

Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.D](#)

Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.E](#)

Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4](#)

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

**Grade 8 Literacy Exit Outcomes:**

At the end of Grade 8, students will be able to use a given text\* from a variety of genres to:

1. Cite textual evidence (including inferences) to strongly support an analysis or evaluation. (RL.8.1, RI.8.1, RI.8.9, W.8.9)
2. Determine theme in relation to characters, setting and plot; summarize text to show this determination. (RL.8.2, RL.8.3)
3. Determine the meaning and demonstrate consistent use of words and phrases in specific sections of a particular text: Examples—figurative language, connotative meaning, allusion, technical meanings, word choice and tone. (RL.8.4, RI.8.4, L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6)
4. Compare, contrast and analyze structure and genre, as well as how it contributes to the overall meaning and/or style and the relationship as it relates to or draws from other texts. (RL.8.5, RL.8.9, RI.8.5, RI.8.8)
5. Formulate character, narrator, and/or event analysis and support with textual evidence. (RL.8.6, RI.8.2, RI.8.3)
6. Compare a written work to its other versions (play, film, performance); assess and evaluate upon the similarities and differences. (RL.8.7, RI.8.7)
7. Determine, analyze and respond to an author’s point of view and purpose, conflicting or otherwise. (RI.8.6)
8. Effectively and regularly construct, communicate, and share informative, strongly supported, effective texts (arguments, explanations, narratives, research) by using peer and adult support as well as available technology and available media sources appropriately. (W.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.8.8, W.8.9, W.8.10)
9. Engage in, analyze, support, adapt, and present collaborative discussion in a number of formats and purposes. (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, S.8.3, SL.8.4, SL.8.5, SL.8.6)
10. Demonstrate knowledge of and use conventions of standard English grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when speaking, writing, listening, or reading. (L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)
11. Create independent reading projects that reflect analysis of a given genre. (RL.8.10, RI.8.10)

These exit outcomes will lead students to improve in the following life skills:

- A. Becoming a stronger reader
- B. Becoming a stronger writer
- C. Becoming more competent in the use of technology
- D. Becoming a stronger public speaker
- E. Becoming a more responsible learner
- F. Becoming a better thinker: creatively, critically, analytically, and symbolically
- G. Becoming a better discussion participant

\*Note: A “given text” refers to any text such as a poem, a play, a video, a fictional novel, an article, a short story, informational writing, song lyrics, advertisements, verbal presentation, etc.

**Class Expectations:**

Please see attached slides shared during the first days of class describing the behavior expectations for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes.

**Grading/Standards:**

Otus will be used for communicating student grades and feedback. Grades will be reported based on the proficiency of English/Language Arts standards. For some assignments, you may see points earned. Please be sure to check Otus for missing assignments or work not submitted. Work in progress may be housed in Google Classroom or in our digital portal for Amplify ELA. Please check daily lesson tiles in Otus to note where your document can be found. Not everything completed in class is taken for a grade/assessment of standard in the gradebook. Talk to your teacher about redoing assignments in which you are not satisfied with your performance.

### The following grading scales are used at Westmont Junior High School:

- Meeting of Standards
  - Approaching Standards
  - Developing Foundational Skills
  - Did not turn in/complete
- Assignments - 30%
  - Quiz (Formative Assessments) - 30%
  - Test (Summative Assessments)- 40%

90-100% = A      80-89% = B      70-79% = C  
60-69% = D      0-59% = F

### **Extension Activities, Homework and Late Work Policies:**

Homework is expected to be high quality, scholarly work and completed on time. It provides important extension and practice of classroom learning and will regularly be used in class on the due date for classroom activities. Students who do not complete homework practice are not able to successfully complete follow up work in class. Not all work is specifically graded nor scored in Otus, but it is an important procedure in student learning.

### **Assessments:**

Student progress will be assessed both formally and informally throughout the school year. End of unit assessments hold significant value and weight. Students should prepare in advance with vocabulary practice, consistent completion of required reading, and clarifying questions they may have during instruction.

### **Absences:**

We expect students to maintain regular daily attendance. If you miss class for *any* reason (illness, spending time in office or with another teacher), you should check the agendas (Otus Lesson tiles and slideshow (in tile 1) and talk to a peer. **It is the student's responsibility** to seek notes, handouts, and information from a missed class. Please ask for help if you do not understand any of the assignments. Your teachers will not come looking for you to follow-up on what you missed. It is your responsibility to do so.

### **Parent Communication:**

We value parent communication. Ms. Walsh will often send messages home about progress in our units and final assessments. It is important for both students and parents to check Otus for grade updates. Projects and long-term assignments may take longer to be assessed. If you ever have a question with your score/grade, please talk to your teacher so we can discuss it and make sure it correctly reflects your work.

**Materials to be Viewed:** A permission slip will be sent home for parents/guardians approval before any full-length movie is shown. Additional short, teacher-approved video clips may be shown throughout the year to complement the curriculum.

I am available throughout the school day to answer any questions. PLEASE talk to your teacher to set up a time to meet. We look forward to a great school year!