

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8

Teacher: Ms. Grace Owens

Room 138

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**Flex Time:** 8:30 am – 9:15 am – come in, to work/and or receive extra help

**Alternative Tutorial Time:** By appointment

*Please read the following information carefully and **keep this course outline on hand to refer to throughout the semester.***

### INTRODUCTION

The curriculum for Grades 8 through 12 is grouped under three core competencies: *communication, thinking, and personal and social competency*. Throughout my course we will explore these competencies in numerous ways across many different units.

### BIG IDEAS

- Language and text can be a source of creativity and joy
- Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connection to other and to the world
- People understand text differently depending on their worldviews and perspectives
- Texts are socially, culturally, and historically constructed
- Questioning what we hear, read, and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens

Read more about BC's curriculum and the curricular competencies for this course at <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/english-language-arts/8/core>

### COURSE CONTENT

1. **Introduction to English** – *we will learn the basics of writing various forms such as paragraphs and emails, will focus on grammar, sentence structure, quotation integration and citations to prepare students for the upcoming semester of English*
2. **Short Story and Storytelling Unit** – *investigating orality, storytelling, and a wide variety of short stories.*
3. **Novel Study** – *The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton*
4. **Poetry** – *a mix of classic and contemporary works*
5. **Shakespeare** – *Julius Caesar*

Throughout all units we will continue to work on grammar, language usage, composition skills and editing skills in English 8.

I am very passionate about how education and our classroom looks within the realm of our current times, including media, real world applications and up-to-date information. Students can

expect throughout all of their work to be considering the question, “why does this matter today?” We will study a wide variety of voices, cultures, experiences, and stories.

### MATERIALS FOR CLASS

- A binder for English to keep materials in
- Pencil/pens for **every** class
- Lined paper
- A mobile phone or personal device is often very helpful in my class but not necessary
- A novel on Fridays
- Students **must** bring books we are studying and working with to **every** class
- A positive attitude 😊

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a systematic gathering of information about what students know, are able to do, and are working towards. Assessment will be varied, and students will have many different opportunities for success within my classroom. Assessments may include:

Creative writing	Reading Comprehension	In Class Assignments
Academic Writing	Daily Classwork	Gamified Learning
Personal Responses	Group Work	Class Participation
Quizzes and Tests	Creative Assignments	Worksheets and Packages

### EVALUATION

Every effort you put into the course is important. My evaluation of your work will be based on the following:

1. Summative and Formative quizzes and tests
2. Writing Assignments
3. Creative Projects
4. Presentations/in-class Sharing
5. Daily/in-Class work
6. Activities

In accordance with the new marking order in BC for students in Grade 8 and 9, I will be using the proficiency scale regularly for writing assignments and projects. Last year, Grade 8s receive a letter grade – with no percentage. This year, students in both grades 8 and 9 will be receiving one of the following assessment terms below. Your final course standing is a category based on your accumulated marks for all reporting periods. The important thing to note in our new reporting order, is that “Proficient” is the bullseye. Proficient is defined as the student understanding and showcasing knowledge at a level that is expected for their grade level. This should be where all students aim to achieve this semester. Please see below for a more in-depth

explanation of each category of the new reporting order. For further explanation, please head to the ministry website as listed above.

Extending (4)  
Proficient (3)  
Developing (2)  
Emerging (1)

**Emerging** = The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to learning.

**Developing** = The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

**Proficient** = The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

**Extending** = The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

“I” (Incomplete) Policy

If a student is experiencing difficulty with course material, or is getting a failing grade, or is not demonstrating sufficient learning to pass the term, they will receive an “I” (Incomplete) to indicate risk of failure in the course. One warning (“I” Report) will be given per student per year. Students will receive regular updates and will know their standings in the class.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSABILITIES**

### **ABSENCES**

Attendance is compulsory. No matter what the reason for missing class, students are responsible for obtaining and completing class assignments and meeting course learning objectives, content, and curricular competencies. It is the student’s responsibility to find out about and make arrangements for any work missed due to absence. Contact a reliable classmate to determine the classwork and to obtain missed notes. Parents/guardians and the administration will be notified of any and all unexcused absences from class. Teams will be used regularly in the classroom; this is a great resource for students to check if they are away.

### **IF A STUDENT IS ABSENT FOR A TEST:**

The student must provide a legitimate reason for an absence (e.g., note from the parents/guardians). If such proof is not forthcoming, and it is proven that the student was skipping class, he or she may get a ZERO on that assessment at the teacher’s discretion. If the absence has been authorized, the student may write a make-up test or assessment (e.g., an alternate test/assignment designed to cover the same learning objectives).

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date. Extensions are at the discretion of the teacher. It is expected that students will submit all assignments and complete all tests in order to pass this course. At the beginning of every unit, I will provide students with a deadline sheet for all of the upcoming assignments, so there will be no excuse for late work. If students are proactive in reaching out for deadline extensions, with valid reasons, and an obvious attempt at completing assignments, they will be accommodated. I ask that students be respectful of my time, as I am of theirs (please see homework policy) and hand work in on time.

In this course, students will be asked to be proactive if a deadline is not achievable for whatever reason. I am happy to make accommodations based on valid reasons to be discussed at the time. To be proactive, students must email or communicate in person at least 3 days before a scheduled due date that the due date is not manageable. Then I will be happy to discuss a new date that meets both the students and my needs.

If students are not proactive, they must fill out a “Late Work Form.” This will be explained to students at the beginning of the course. After three Late Work Forms have been filled out for assignments that have been handed in past their due date without prior contact or knowledge, I will be reaching out to parents so that we can work together to combat any extenuating issues that may be contributing to the lateness of assignments.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

My philosophy, as a teacher, is that school is for schoolwork and not home. I will provide class time for all assignments. I do my best to provide enough time that I believe it will take to complete whatever the activity may be, however if students waste this time or do not use it wisely (e.g., showing up without materials requested, unprepared etc.) then the work will become homework. Hopefully students are successful in this time, stay up to date with their work, and have minimal work to do outside of the English 8 classroom.

## 24-HOUR DISCUSSION POLICY

I greatly value feedback and careful grading in my classroom, to help students improve their work and fully understand the grades they are receiving. In my classroom I have a 24-Hour rule before I will discuss graded work handed back with students. I ask that they take it home, review the comments, rubrics, and criteria, and then come in the following day to Flex Time to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns. This eliminates students not reading feedback, helps them gain insight into their grades, and teaches students how to process and effectively advocate for their work. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

## PLAGIARISM POLICY

According to our school policy, cheating, plagiarism, an academic dishonesty re serious concerns and are not acceptable at Argyle (Argyle Student Agenda, 24). Plagiarism is defined as the act of claiming another person or sources words and/or ideas as one's own. Some actions that are considered plagiarism include: copying or imitating the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author or student; turning in assignments, homework, or other material which was copied or acquired from another student as their own original work; knowingly sharing your work to be copied or used by another student; allowing another student to view one's test or exam; and failing to cite or document quoted or paraphrased material or ideas written by someone else, including the internet. For these and more examples refer to Argyle Student Agenda Book.

The accessibility of the Internet makes plagiarism very tempting, and unintentional plagiarism occurs from this as well. Any form of cheating, plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in **NO CREDIT FOR THE WORK OR ASSIGNMENT** at the teacher's discretion. All written work needs to be yours.

A new addition to our access to information in 2023 is AI generators such as ChatGBT. There is also a **ZERO** acceptance policy for any work generated using any sort of AI assistance. Though students may think it is original work that is hard to catch, it is extremely easy to spot AI generated work, and put it through platforms to check to AI composition. Any assignments or work created using AI will be given a 0 and you will receive **NO CREDIT FOR THE WORK OR ASSIGNMENT**.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mobile phones and personal devices are a product of our modern times and should be used as tools in the classroom. My classroom will frequently make use of personal devices and mobile phones in ways that support learning – which means that, I understand they will be in the classroom. Sometimes things come up and we need to reply quickly to a message, ask to take a quick phone call outside, or need to look something up – but I ask that students begin to learn how to do this respectfully and appropriately in the classroom setting and not abuse my understanding of this. That being said, I have zero-tolerance for mobile phone or personal device games in the classroom, and zero-tolerance for scrolling on social media because it takes away from their connection to the class, time management and work ethic. If students are caught abusing their ability to occasionally use their phone, such as playing games or scrolling, it could result in them losing this privilege, them needing to put their phone in a designated area at the start of class, or the confiscation of their device.

## RESPECT

Each student has the right to learn, and no one has the right to interfere with or disrupt this learning process. You are expected to show consideration for all of your classmates and respect divergent points of view that will arise in classroom discussions and activities. I value mutual respect in the classroom above all else, and expect my students to contribute to a positive, considerate, and respectful classroom culture.

## COMMUNICATION

We have many lines of communication in this day and age, so I encourage students to never be worried about reaching out regarding any questions, comments, or concerns – or even if they are just wanting to chat. I will do my best to get back to them in a timely manner if the communication is outside of school hours. Successful classrooms are built on connections and the more students are willing to share and engage, the more their learning will prosper. Please try your best to be proactive, remember to always be respectful in all forms of communication, and never be afraid to ask for extra help.

*I am always willing and available for extra help and clarifications. Let's have a fun year of learning and growing in English 8!*