

Montford Middle School
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7th Grade Language Arts Course Syllabus
 2021-2022

Teacher Name: Mr. Daniel Stitt

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Link to 7th Grade Language Arts Florida Standards: <https://tinyurl.com/yddzx4fx>

Course Description

Students in the M/J Language Arts 2 course will acquire the reading, writing, language, and speaking/listening skills necessary for success in college, career, and beyond. Students will become critical readers and thinkers as they delve into fiction and informational texts within the course. They will also learn to effectively write informational and argumentative pieces and present their ideas clearly and cohesively through various projects and speaking activities.

Content Outline:

QUARTER 1	7th Grade CommonLit Unit 1: In or Out: Our Struggle to Belong
	<p>Essential Question: What does it mean to be an outsider? How does our need to belong affect our actions?</p> <p>In every group or community there are insiders and outsiders. What makes some of us insiders? How does it feel to be on the outside? In this 360 Unit, students will learn about and discuss the role outsiders play and the behaviors that create inclusive or exclusive environments. They'll read about the struggle to belong and learn about individuals who have embraced their outsider status. Students will explore these important concepts by engaging with several different types of texts: short story, memoir, speech, and informational text. As they explore each text, they'll build upon their own understanding about outsiders and the need to belong.</p>
QUARTER 2	7th Grade CommonLit Unit 2: Adolescence
	<p>Essential Question: What makes adolescence challenging?</p> <p>How can one of the most important times in our lives also be one of the most challenging? Adolescence is a pivotal time full of change and new experiences, yet it can also be painful. In this 360 Unit, students will explore the unique, complicated, and even comical experiences and lessons of adolescence. They'll read stories and poems about teens navigating the uncertain waters of adolescence. They'll learn about two kinds of popularity and consider how social status motivates teen behavior and decisions. While students weigh in on these important concepts, they'll also learn new reading, writing, discussion, and grammar skills.</p>
QUARTER 3	7th Grade CommonLit Unit 5: New Perspectives
	<p>Essential Questions: What happens when something challenges our point of view?</p> <p>How do we respond when the world is not what we envisioned? The short stories in this unit will explore how different characters react to their changing worlds.</p>
QUARTER 4	7th Grade CommonLit Unit 4: Social Media: Risks & Rewards
	<p>Essential Question: Is social media more beneficial or more risky for teens? How can we promote the benefits of social media over the drawbacks?</p> <p>Using a smartphone and connecting to others via social media are almost synonymous with being a teen. But are these things beneficial? Or are they risky? In this 360 Unit, students explore the risks and rewards of social media and ultimately argue whether they believe that using social media is risky or beneficial for teens. They'll read statistics from research, interviews with experts, and personal examples from teens about the impact of using social media. They'll read about the importance of status updates, social media as a creative outlet, and teens who are taking a more mindful approach to social media. While students grapple with these important concepts, they will practice key reading, annotating, writing, research, discussion, and grammar skills. The unit also includes an optional student-led final project, which asks students to create and present sample social media posts that promote positive use of social media.</p>

Summer Reading Choices:

Upcoming 7th graders:

- Bouncing Back by Scott Ostler
- Charlie Thorne and the Last Equation by Stuart Gibbs
- Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA by Brenda Woods
- The Unteachables by Gordon Korman
- Wildfire: A Novel by Rodman Philbrick

Supplies/Materials:

All students should maintain an organized set of supplies. Class supplies needed for this school year are as follows:

- Reliable **computer** device used for online coursework through Canvas
- Reliable **wired** headphones for listening to digital video, podcasts, and other educational audio
- Reliable daily **writing instrument** (pen/pencil)
- Reliable wired or bluetooth **computer mouse** for easier navigation of online platforms.

Grading Scale

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

Grade Breakdown

Regular & Advanced Classes

- 70%-Assessments (Tests, Projects, Presentations, Final Drafts of Essays or Other Major Writing Assignments)
- 30% Assignments (Classwork, Homework, Discussions, Quick Checks for Understanding)

Gifted Classes

- 80%-Assessments (Tests, Projects, Presentations, Final Drafts of Essays or Other Major Writing Assignments)
- 20% Assignments (Classwork, Homework, Discussions, Quick Checks for Understanding)

Late Assignments

Students are expected to turn in every assignment on time. Mr. Stitt will not accept late work, without reasonable personal or medical reasoning provided by a student's parent/guardian. Any assignment turned in late will be counted as 0 in the gradebook; which is valued at zero credit.

The only occasion in which late work will be accepted is with a valid and reasonable written personal, medical, or emergency excuse from a parent/guardian. After receiving this excuse, the following make-up policy will be in effect: (1 week of grace will be extended to the student to complete the assignment for every week missed). Extra credit opportunities will occasionally and at Mr. Stitt's discretion be given, but only once per quarter, and extra credit assignment must be turned in to Mr. Stitt before the last week of the quarter.

Make-Up Work Policy:

Leon County School Board Policy allows students to make up work within a reasonable amount of time after returning to school following an excused absence. The allotted time will be determined by district policy and communicated by the teacher to both parent(s) and the student. Make up work is the student's responsibility. On the day of the student's return, the student should check with me to find out what assignments were missed. Weekly assignments will also be posted on the class website. I expect students to take pre-planned assessment(s) and/or quick check(s) upon return. Students should schedule a time to take these assessments. This does not include final drafts. For every day of an excused absence, you have two (2) days to make-up assignments; this does not include pre-planned assessments.

Homework

Each homework assignment will be given an allotted amount of time to complete. Homework will generally be given 2-4 nights a week but may increase or decrease depending on the homework requirements. Homework will fluctuate in frequency depending on adequate study time, the writing process, and major projects. Homework will be minor, but will help student's reinforce what was learned in class, as well as practice skills gained in that day's lesson.

Academic Honesty

Your student will be expected to think and write independently. Plagiarism will **not** be tolerated. If a student plagiarizes his/her work, the student will receive a 0 for that assignment.

Rules

1. Be on **time** with all your **materials** and ready to learn everyday
2. Respond to the "**Quiet Signal**" immediately by being silent, stopping work, and facing Mr. Stitt with your full attention.
3. Show **kindness** and **appreciation** to your teacher and fellow students at all times.
4. Keep your **hands, feet, and all objects** to yourself at all times.
5. **No food or drink (besides water)** will be allowed to be taken out of backpacks and consumed during class.
6. Only use **technology** (phones, tablets, headphones, smartwatches, computers, etc.) with teacher permission.

Discipline Policy

It is important that all students exude positive mindsets and behaviors to create a productive learning environment. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions.

- 1) Warning (possible documentation), Time-out, teacher conversation, student redirect, or behavioral coaching in class
- 2) On the Phone, Parent contact via phone or email
- 3) Lunch Detention (possible parent contact)
- 4) Front Office Disciplinary Referral (Parental Contact)

**I reserve the right to amend steps depending on the severity of the behavior/situation.*

**I reserve the right to amend the syllabus as needed to meet the course standards.*

Apps & Other Technologies Used in the Classroom

The following apps will be utilized in class on a regular basis to enhance the learning and communication process:

- Remind 101, Kahoot, Quizizz, Google Drive, CommonLit, Canvas (FLVS content)

**I reserve the right to amend this list as the need arises, but parents will be notified if this list changes, and before the app or technology is used in the classroom.*

2021-2022 - Nondiscrimination Statement for Letterheads

"The Leon County School District does not discriminate against any person on the basis of sex (including transgender status, gender nonconforming, and gender identity), marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, color, pregnancy, disability, military status, or genetic information."

2021-2022 Syllabus Acknowledgement Form

Mr. Stitt

7th grade Language Arts

The parent/student signatures below verify AND acknowledge the teacher expectations presented in this syllabus. Please read the above syllabus, sign below, and return to teacher by the 2nd week of school:

Print student's name

Student signature

Print parent's name

Parent's signature

Date

MOVIE PERMISSION FORM

My child has permission to view rated PG movies throughout the school year that are relevant to the academic standards listed in this syllabus. Any movies with a more intense rating will have a separate permission slip.

Print student's name

Print parent's name

Parent's signature

Date