

## **Middle School English**

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### **English 7 Grammar:**

Reinforcing the fundamental ideas learned in sixth grade, English 7 Grammar examines more advanced grammatical concepts like clauses as nouns and modifiers and verbals including gerunds, participles, and infinitives. Students who are in Grade 7 Literature then apply what they've learned in Grade 7 Grammar to their writing.

**Text:** *Voyages in English* (Purple)

**Workbook:** *Exercises in English* (Level G)

### **English 6 Grammar:**

Introducing students to the basic components of their language, English 6 Grammar explores how nouns, verbs, and modifiers work in constructing simple, compound, and complex sentences. The goal is to give students in English 6 Literature the means to differentiate their sentence structures and write in a more fluid, engaging way.

**Text:** *Voyages in English* (Blue)

**Workbook:** *Exercises in English* (Level F)

### **English 6 Literature:**

The goal of the middle school literature program is to produce autonomous thinkers. To accomplish this aim, units are constructed around essential questions that require students to examine literature through their personal experiences.

Students first free-write on the essential question and then further examine the question through critical responses, supplemental text comparison, and eventually a culminating assessment.

### **The units for this class include the following:**

**Unit 1:** How do we understand and respect differences?

**Text:** *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick

**Supplemental texts:** Current events from major news publications

**Culminating assessment:** Critical response comparing a theme from *Freak the Mighty* to a relevant current event; student must also create a presentation on his/her findings (PowerPoint or posterboard).

**Unit 2:** How do we make sense of that which is unfamiliar to us?

**Text:** *Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin

**Supplemental texts:** Aesop's fables; current events

**Culminating assessment:** Students examine a prevalent theme in Greek mythology through their study of current events and present their findings. This is an extension of the previous unit where each student works to improve not only his/her presentation skills but also his/her critical thinking skills.

**Unit 3:** How do we evaluate someone's character?

**Texts:** *Adventures for Readers: An Introduction*, Holt, Rinehart, Winston – Athena Edition

- "Dragon, Dragon" by John Gardner
- "President Cleveland, Where Are You?" by Robert Cormier
- "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury
- "Nancy" by Elizabeth Enright

**Culminating Assessment:** Students outline, draft, and finalize a character sketch, or character analysis, essay.

For the remainder of the Grade 6 Literature Units, see attached spreadsheet.

### **Grade 7 Literature:**

Grade 7 is a particularly crucial year for students as they are beginning to see the world differently than they did in sixth grade. The mantra of the Grade 7 Literature course is perceiving and evaluating to understand reality. Through this lens, students tackle essential questions and texts that implore them to examine who they are and what they believe in. This is in preparation for Grade 8 English, where students are expected to work more independently and complete more complex, task-based assignments.

### **The units for this class include the following:**

**Unit 1:** How do we distinguish between perception and reality?

**Text:** *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

**Culminating Assessment:** Students create a creative writing piece – the final chapter of *The Giver*.

**Unit 2:** How do our experiences influence who we are?

**Texts:** *Adventures for Readers: Book One*; Holt, Rinehart, Winston – Athena Edition

- "Seventh Grade" by Gary Soto
- "The Medicine Bag" by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve
- "The Cat and the Painkiller" by Mark Twain
- "Guinea Pig" by Ruth McKinney
- "The Bracelet" by Yoshiko Uchida

**Culminating Assessment:** Students draft, edit, and finalize a personal narrative essay.

For the remainder of the Grade 7 Literature Units, see attached spreadsheet.

### **Grade 8 English:**

Grade 8 English is the year students become autonomous thinkers; they complete more challenging essays and task-based assignments. They are asked for their opinion more in their free-writes and opinion-based essays, more so than Grade 6 and Grade 7 combined. By the conclusion of eighth grade, they will be able to substantiate an opinion with facts and argue their point in a class debate.

### **The units for this class include the following:**

**Unit 1:** How do prejudices exist and how do we dissolve them in present society?

**Text:** *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck

**Supplemental texts:** "Dreams" by Langston Hughes; "A Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes; historical context on *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and post-Reconstruction America.

**Unit 2:** How do we value and appreciate the uniqueness of every person?

**Text:** *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes

**Culminating Assessment:** Students write a persuasive essay where they argue for or against human testing.