

Course Expectations
Mr. Schucker
ELA – 7th grade

I. COURSE SCOPE

A. Course Description

This one-year course for all seventh grade students reinforces the development of strategic English 7 and Reading 7 behaviors. This course emphasizes an interactive approach in which students construct meaning from the text and learn how to become effective writers. The course focus is on students utilizing vocabulary, thought processes, exemplary grammar tools, Writing Process and Trait tools, and strategies to become independent readers, learners, and writers, and really identifying how and why author's write the way they do and the message(s) behind the writing.

B. Textbooks and Materials

A variety of textbooks, novels, magazine articles, and handouts will be used in addition to supplementary materials (Scope magazine as an example). Students may be encouraged to purchase novels throughout the school year. The students will receive many spelling assignments; therefore, it is a good idea to have a dictionary and thesaurus at home in order to complete these assignments. Also, each student **may** receive an English textbook at the beginning of the year or when they enroll in school. The student is to keep this book at home, be responsible with it, and return the book in excellent condition at the end of the school year or at their withdraw time. If the book is damaged or lost, the student will be responsible for replacing the book by paying a fine of \$25.00 dollars.

C. Assessment Test Activity

Bi-weekly spelling examinations may be given throughout the year. Syllabus based pre-assessment writing tests may be administered during each quarter. These tests will not be used for grading purposes, but they will provide an overview of students' strengths and highlight areas in need of emphasis. A syllabus based post-assessment may also be given at the conclusion of each quarter and semester and will be averaged with tests taken during the final semester.

D. Unit of Study / Course Goals & Objectives

1. To utilize the writing process as a foundation for learning.
2. To know and use word analysis skills and strategies to strengthen vocabulary and increase comprehension.
3. To read and understand, interpret, and analyze text (fiction and historical fiction).
4. To read and understand, interpret, and analyze text (non-fiction).
5. To use multimedia to cite sources and complete research.
6. To apply effective information acquisition and research strategies.
7. To provide appropriate instruction for students who demonstrate weaknesses in the writing process and certain writing traits (ie: Narrative Focus, Organization, Elaboration of Narrative, Language & Vocabulary, Conventions, Statement of Purpose/Focus, & Elaboration of Evidence)
8. Practice writing Narrative, Expository/Informative, & Argumentative/Persuasive excerpts and papers.
9. Extract the meaning of new vocabulary from context clues in daily reading options.
10. Use a variety of reading sources in order to model and show students how to utilize writing and grammar rules.

E. Course Academic Schedule by Quarter

Quarter 1: Writing Process items, Writing Traits (Idea & Organization), citing, inferring, theme, central idea, story elements (ie: plot, subplot, mood, etc...), context clues, poetry (dealing with: figurative and connotative language, tone, mood, symbolism, & analogies), flashback, point of view(s) (first, third, third person omniscient), compare and contrast with using multimedia, historical fiction, Elaboration of Evidence trait, autobiographies, biographies, different author interpretations, Expository/Informative, Narrative (dialogue, characters, etc.), and Argumentative/Persuasive (thesis statements, citing reliable sources/Statement of Purpose/Focus) reading and writing, Organization writing trait (cause/effect, sequential transitions, conclusions), high level spelling and rules, sensory language, peer and teacher editing, research project(s) (book report(s)), historical fiction, close reads (class and group discussions), presenting with/to peers, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, prepositional phrases, verb phrases, commas, synonyms, antonyms, and learning new vocabulary by utilizing context clues in daily reading material(s).

Quarter 2: Everything from Quarter 1 (see above) as well as: see how author's develop and organize text, evaluate arguments and claims when reading and writing (argumentative items, bandwagon, testimonials, glittering generalities, snob appeal, stats/data), identify opinions disguised as facts in reading, see how authors writing about the same topic can have different interpretations, support claims in argumentative/persuasive writing, utilize credible sources, establish formal style, concluding statements in all types of writing (Narrative, Expository/Informative, Argumentative/Persuasive), use multimedia and technology to cite sources and gather research information while avoiding plagiarism, presentation skills and tools (multimedia), commas, how to avoid run-on sentences, Greek/Latin roots and affixes, and dictionary/glossary/thesaurus skills.

Quarter 3: Everything from Quarters 1 & 2 (see above) as well as: story elements (how setting shapes the characters and plot).

Quarter 4: Everything from Quarters 1, 2, & 3 (see above) as well as: correct dangling modifiers. Narrative Writing is covered here too.

F. Course Projects & Criterion Online Writing

Projects and book reports will be required of every student. Students will be notified as to the scope and requirements of the project at least one-two weeks in advance. Also, students may be going to the computer lab and utilizing the iPad's often to work research and on the district adopted writing program called **Criterion Online Writing**. This is a fantastic writing program that the students can access in school or at home (wherever they have internet connection) that will help boost their writing traits and abilities, not just for my class but for ALL their other classes. Please see the "Parent Letter" introducing the **Criterion Online Writing** program on page 6.

II. STUDENT ASSISTANCE/HOURS OF AVAILABILITY

- A. The 7th grade teachers will be available each morning from 8:35-9:00 A.M. and for about twenty minutes (3:21-3:40 P.M.) after school. Students are asked to make appointments in advance in order to insure ample time and attention. If a conflict occurs that alters our schedule, students will be notified.
- B. You may also find information about me or the school on the Leavitt website (<http://schools.ccsd.net/leavitt>).
- C. Parent contact, if need be, will be done through one or more of the following: 1) Infinite Campus Portal Information page (<http://www.ccsd.net/parents/infinite-campus.php>), 2) My CCSd.net website, 3) Remind 101 Text Message site (<http://remind.com/join/adaa2>) and the sign up phone number is (81010), and put the code: @ela72018 in the message

area and hit send (you will receive a confirmation text message, phone calls home, 6) messages in student agenda, or 4) via e-mail (**Google email:** schucrp@nv.ccsd.net). I also have a Google Classroom site as well and if you go to classroom.google.com and punch in your period's code, which is: **2nd / 3rd period = orfart & 4th / 5th period = e5zz2s**

- D. Informational reading may be assigned for homework/enrichment by utilizing the Review Journal FREE following website: <http://www.nieteacher.org/lvrjnie>

II. GRADING POLICY

A. Grading Scale

A = 90-100%	Excellent achievement
B = 80-89%	Above average achievement
C = 70-79%	Average achievement
D = 60-69%	Below average achievement
F = <60%	Failure to meet accepted minimal standard of achievement.

B. Grading Procedures

1. Grades will be based upon participation, attendance, and assignment completion.
2. Grades are weighted into two areas: **Formative Assessments** = This would be all classwork, homework, Reading Logs, Writing Logs, minor writing assignments, etc... **Formative work is worth (40%) forty percent of the quarter grade.** The other area is **Summative Assessments:** This will be all tests, quizzes, major writing assignments, cumulative presentations, book reports, projects, etc... **Summative work is worth (60%) sixty percent of the quarter grade.**
3. If you should see a "M" in a box for an assignment, this means that that particular assignment is missing. This could be due to an absence or just not completing the work. Only absences will erase the "mi" symbol when the work is turned in. **A "M" is has the same value as a "0" in the gradebook.**
4. Absenteeism can have a negative impact on the student's grade.
5. Students will be expected to participate in class discussions and collaborative learning activities.
6. Students will maintain an interactive notebook and section in a pre-existing notebook for this class. The notebook will contain material distributed or returned by the teacher, class notes, and other review material. It will be used as a study tool and as a resource. Notebook checks will be done to verify that each student is maintaining his/her notebook in an organized manner.
7. The purpose of homework is to extend/enrich a classroom activity and to help master the material being studied. Assignments are to be handed in on time, neatly, readable, and to the best of the students ability; no exceptions unless of emergency situations arise. If not handed in on time, a "M" symbol will be entered into the grade book and will result as a "0" until turned in. If you are absent, then we will follow the absent late work rule assigned by the CCSD policy (See section "E").

C. Basis for Semester Grades

Semester grades will include the mid-term and the final exam. Each of these exams will count as (20%) twenty percent of the final grade while the two quarters will count as (40%) forty percent of the final grade. Class work and writing logs will constitute the major portion of quarterly grades.

D. Standard of Preparation

1. Student work needs to be done completely, correctly, and neatly. Students must review work for correct spelling, grammar, and usage. Assignments will also be neatly organized and written or they will not be accepted.
2. A partial emphasis is placed on the allocation of time for journal prompts and writing on them Writing Logs during class time as well as reading and Reading Log completion during class time as well as at home. Students are expected to bring their teacher generated/bi-weekly journal and reading logs to class daily. The students will be focusing on developing good writing traits as well as good reading practices so they will be well prepared for the 8th grade rigor and the upcoming SBAC examination in the Spring. After writing daily, the students will keep their daily Writing Log and Reading Log in their notebook until it is due to be turned in. Their Writing Log and Reading Log are due every two weeks and is to be maintained even during an absence.

E. Partial Assignment Credit Information

1. If a student chooses not to finish their assignment given, only partial credit will be given for the work achieved. If the student then wants to finish his/her work for a better grade, he/she will be allowed **THREE (3)** extra days late for Quarter 1, **TWO (2)** days late for Quarter 2, and **ONE (1)** day late for Quarter 3 to turn in their completed work for partial (1 letter grade decrease) credit of the grade they receive on the item per day (1 day late = 10% off the grade earned, 2 days late = 20% off the grade earned, and 3 days late = 30% off the grade earned. These three days will be known as a type of grace period/amnesty day. If the student does not re-do the work and turn it in on the one-day-late grace period, the assignment(s) will not be taken the rest of the quarter, semester, or year. **For the 4th quarter, to get the students ready for the 8th grade rigor, NO LATE WORK will be excepted unless due to an absence.**

*****NO EXTRA CREDIT IS GIVEN.*****

F. Make-up Procedures (Regulation 5113.3)

It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete missed assignments. Make-up work will be available for **three days** upon an absence. Then the student has **three days** to work on and turn in their assignments from the pick-up date. Class time will not be used to review make-up work, however, students may make an after school appointment if extra instruction is required. Students have three days to complete make-up work unless other arrangements have been made. Also, students must present a pass to the line monitor for morning assistance in any teacher's classroom.

III. CLASSROOM BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

A. Explanation and Procedure

All Leavitt Middle School guidelines, rules, and regulations for behavior will be followed in the classroom.

1. Follow directions.
2. Be prepared and on time with all necessary materials.
3. Enter and leave the classroom in an orderly manner.
4. Respect the property and rights of others.
5. Restroom breaks are to be kept to an emergency need only and will only be signed out with the student's own agenda (not a friend's).
6. Internet access will be allowed only with the parent permission form signed and turned into the school.
7. Parent communication can be done by phone contact, e-mail, agenda messages, Remind 101, and/or Infinite Campus Portal access. Infinite Campus Portal is very much encouraged to see students' progress and there is an app for IOS7 and Android technology.

8. No food, gum, or nuisance items are allowed.
9. According to **Regulation 5136**, it states that “The use of cell phones, beepers, pagers, or any other electronic communication devices is prohibited on all district school campuses during the instructional day. As long as use is not disruptive, students may use these devices during scheduled lunch periods and while on the bus. These devices must **remain off** during instructional time including any time between classes.”

If students do not follow behavior expectations, it will result in one or all of the following: a decreased citizenship grade, a teacher/student conference, detention, parental notification (3 attempts), a teacher/student/parent conference, or referral to counselor or dean.

B. Daily Materials

The following items will be required on a daily basis:

1. Leavitt Middle School Agenda/Planner
2. Three ring notebook / binder (or a section in a bigger binder just for Explorations 8)
3. 5 notebook dividers (section dividers)
4. Composition notebook/”Interactive Notebook” (required) and loose leaf notebook paper.
5. Blue or black pens, pencils, yellow highlight marker, colored pencils or markers. **NO GEL PENS!!!**
6. Sustained silent reading book, magazine, newspaper or comic book
7. Daily Reading and Writing Logs
8. Red or green correction pen
9. Ruler & Calculator
10. iPads

C. Additional Information

1. Unexcused tardiness will result in a decreased citizenship grade and/or intervention by the dean. A half hour tardy is the equivalent of an absence.
2. Corridor and restroom passes will be issued only in emergency situations.
3. Food, drink, gum, and candy are not permitted in the classroom.
4. **Tardy Policy = 1st is a warning and parent contact, 2nd is a warning and parent contact, 3rd is Non-TRS RPC, 4th is After School Detention, 5th is In-House Suspension (HIS), 6th is Required Parent Conference (RPC), & 7th is IHS/parent and student meet with principal.**

IV. CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship grades are based on both conduct and academic effort. Behavior citations will be issued to students when behavior deviates from acceptable classroom expectations or when class work is not turned in on time.

Outstanding citizens are positive role models. They display leadership qualities and consistently maintain and respect behavior, classroom, and school guidelines. They consistently complete assigned work and participate in class. These students will receive an “O” in citizenship.

Satisfactory citizens accept most personal responsibilities. They generally exhibit behavior and attitudes within the guidelines. These students will receive an “S” in citizenship.

Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory citizens display attitudes and actions that have a negative effect on the learning environment and peer relationships. These students will receive an “N” or “U” in citizenship and may be excluded from participating in certain school sponsored clubs and activities.

The *Criterion*[®] Service, a New Tool for Writing Instruction

Parent Introduction Letter

As a part of my program to improve student writing, I have chosen to provide access to a new tool for writing instruction. The *Criterion*[®] **Online Writing Evaluation Service** is a web-based service developed by Educational Testing Service that evaluates a student's essays, provides instant score reporting and diagnostic feedback to both the instructor and student, and guides the process of planning, organizing, and revising which is essential to good writing.

The *Criterion*[®] service utilizes automated scoring technologies to provide students with instant score and writing analysis feedback on writing samples they submit. The *Criterion* user interface enables quick access to numerous features which are described below.

Students can access their own password-protected website, plan, and submit essays on topics assigned by their instructor. They will then immediately receive an overall score on the assignment, as well as extensive online diagnostic feedback to analyze traits of Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, Style, and Organization & Development. Errors and comments from these categories are identified within the essay itself, and targeted feedback is offered for each identified error which helps students focus on their errors as they revise their essays.

A revision capability allows students to make revisions on a split screen as they review each feedback category. They can ask their instructors for advice about an error, or comment by writing questions and messages for each assignment on a private message board. Instructors can also insert their own comments about the essay both as pop-up notes within the text and as more general comments on the private message board.

Students are also provided with online access to a comprehensive Writer's Handbook selected by the teacher for the individual student's needs, with reference materials on how to improve their writing. The feedback is designed so that the student can utilize it to revise and improve the initial draft of an essay as many times as the teacher allows. All of the student's essays, scores, annotated feedback, and instructor comments are saved to a secure virtual portfolio that both the instructor and student can access as needed. You will be happy to know that since the *Criterion* service is web-based and available from any computer, you can ask your student to share his or her *Criterion* work with you as well by sharing their unique username and password.

The *Criterion* Topics Library spans elementary school, middle school, high school, and college levels. Teachers can create and assign their own writing tasks utilizing a Scored Instructor Topic function. **This means that I can assign a topic(s) that a student may need to write upon for another subject area (Science, History, Math, P.E., etc...), he/she can then enter their essay, have the program check it and give helpful revision solutions, and then when the student feels their paper is perfect, he/she can print it out and submit it to their teacher!!!** Students can also use the Text Editor function to submit any writing sample, even if it is not an essay, and receive complete feedback for the categories of Grammar, Usage, Mechanics and Style. We know that your students will find the use of the *Criterion* service an exciting and effective way to improve their writing skills. We invite your questions and comments on this new tool which we have adopted to improve student writing.

Now, this program cost a one-time fee of \$10 for the ENTIRE school year. The student can access this program and utilize it in and out of school, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I am asking to please send your child with the **\$10** as soon as possible so we can start utilizing this great writing program A.S.A.P.!!

Please fill out and sign the below area:

Student Name (**Print First and Last Name**)

Student #

Period

We have read and discussed the course expectations for ELA 7 and understand the classroom procedures.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

PARENT/GUARDIAN, how do you prefer to be contacted regarding your child?

(Please fill in all that apply)

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I have included/sent my child with the \$10 usage fee for the Criterion Online Writing

Program/please initial: Yes: _____ No, but will A.S.A.P: _____

Dear Parents,

During the course of the 2018-2019 school year, the ELA department may show excerpts from PG rated movies and NR rated TV programming. These excerpts may be used to enhance exemplar texts such as Little Women, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Diary of Ann Frank, The Princess Bride, etc. or to communicate the Common Core State Standards, RL 7.7 which states students will “analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or dramas stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluation the choices made by the director or actors”.

Movies, along with our hands-on activities such as reading and in-class discussion groups, give students a well-rounded opportunity to discover the world of literature. Movies enrich complex literature and demonstrate a valuable contrast to written texts.

Be assured that we will use proper discretion when showing these movies or TV shows. Thank you for taking the time to read this permission form. If you *do* or *do not wish your* child to watch these excerpts, please sign and return this letter.

Sincerely,

Mr. Schucker

Student Name _____

_____ I DO approve my child’s viewing of curriculum and school appropriate moves rated PG or NR TV rated shows.

_____ I do not approve my child’s viewing of curriculum and school appropriate moves rated PG or NR TV rated shows.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____