

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Title	Teachers
English Language Arts Grade 8	Joanne King and Abby Franks

Course Description

This year long course follows the Expeditionary Learning Curriculum developed in New York State and based on the Common Core English Language Arts standards. The overarching focus is on building students' literacy skills as they develop knowledge about the world. To achieve this, students will have:

- Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language and vocabulary
- Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from literary and informational texts
- Building knowledge through content-rich, non-fiction literature (NFL)

Topics /Activities - Semester 1: August-December

Mini Unit 1: Creating a Collaborative Classroom: Establishing Collaborative Norms, Introducing Visible Thinking Routines, Reviewing Reading Strategies; Integrating the ICS Learner Profile

Unit 2: Close Reading and Writing to Learn - Using writing as a tool to deepen analytical thinking: Memoir, Autobiography and Biography Literary Circles (Book Clubs) and Memoir Writing

Unit 3: Working with Evidence – A Midsummer Night's Dream and the Comedy of Control: A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare. NFL: Shakespeare's appeal and primary source documents
A wide range of supporting primary, secondary and multimedia source materials are used to support shared texts. For further information see www.commoncoresuccess.elschools.org; www.engageNY.org; <http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/> <http://readingandwritingproject.org>

Topics /Activities - Semester 2 : January-June

Unit 4: Service Learning Week Without Walls Project Based Learning – integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM): Informational texts Chew on This by Eric Schlossart and The Omnivore's Dilemma: the Secrets Behind What You Eat by Michael Polla, plus NFL reading and viewing pack integrated with Social Studies (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, The Happiness Index, Ethiopian values, Community based needs assessment and Orphans and vulnerable children)

Unit 5: Research, Decision-Making and Forming Positions: Non Fiction Literary Circles (Book Clubs) including Advertising by E.Stanford, Healing Our World by D Morley, In Your Face, The Culture of Beauty by S. Graydon, the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by S. Covey.
Independent research based on social, global, political or environmental issues of high interest.

Unit 6: Understanding Perspectives: The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne. NFL: Propaganda, Media messages and Advertising

Basis of Student Assessment and Grades

Students will be assessed separately on their achievement and effort using the standards and benchmarks established by the school for this course. (See ICS Assessment Policy, August 2015). Assessments used to measure academic achievement include: literary analysis pieces, expository / informational, persuasive and narrative writing, Socratic seminars, presentations, debates, in class observations, independent inquiry projects, quizzes, tests, and performance pieces.

Effort and Attitude Expectations

Commitment to Learning	Commitment to Learning	Commitment to Learning
Student: -Tries to improve their work by seeking out extra help or asking and answering challenging questions (INQUIRER) -Shows work that demonstrates their best effort (THINKER) -Is fully engaged in the lesson (KNOWLEDGABLE) -Uses feedback effectively to produce best work (REFLECTIVE)	Student: -Tries to improve their work by seeking out extra help or asking and answering challenging questions (INQUIRER) -Shows work that demonstrates their best effort (THINKER) -Is fully engaged in the lesson (KNOWLEDGABLE) -Uses feedback effectively to produce best work (REFLECTIVE)	Student: -Tries to improve their work by seeking out extra help or asking and answering challenging questions (INQUIRER) -Shows work that demonstrates their best effort (THINKER) -Is fully engaged in the lesson (KNOWLEDGABLE) -Uses feedback effectively to produce best work (REFLECTIVE)

Required Materials

Students should bring a water bottle, light snack, planner / agenda, text / preparatory materials, fully charged laptop (plus charger, USB, adapter and headphones), a pen, pencil and highlighter to class.

Texts

Shared class texts; plus wide range of supporting primary, secondary and multimedia source materials

Teacher Contact Details

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Moodle Link

<http://elearning.icsaddis.edu.et/course/view.php?id=707>