



**RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Course Overview**  
**Accelerated Language Arts – Grade 8**



### ***General Information***

Prerequisite: Student has met readiness level

Length: Full Year

Format: meets daily for one period

### ***Course Description***

Accelerated LA allows high performing, highly motivated, and academically gifted students to pursue rigorous coursework that is tailored toward students who are performing two or more years above grade level. Students are admitted to accelerated courses based on criteria that consider past performance and demonstrated readiness. This course builds on and extends the range of basic content from the on-grade-level language arts course and pursues skills and content from advanced grade levels. Students in this course will develop advanced skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and research. Rigorous in and out of class reading, challenging class discussions and a variety of writing experiences will be required. Summer assignments will also be required.

### ***Course Objectives:***

Students will read, understand, and respond to advanced informational text and works of literature– with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence.

Students will develop the skills of informational, argumentative, and narrative writing at an advanced level.

Students will practice communication skills that enable critical listening and effective expression of ideas, including collaborative discussion, inquiry, and presentation.

Students will develop and refine advanced vocabulary skills to improve reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Students will practice grammatical conventions, and apply them consistently as they write across all content areas.

For more detailed information on course objectives, please refer to PDE’s Academic Standards for English Language Arts: [http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/6-12\\_ELA\\_Standards\\_8-2-12\\_DRAFT.pdf](http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/6-12_ELA_Standards_8-2-12_DRAFT.pdf)

## **Common Assessments:**

**Vocabulary:** Student will be regularly assessed in the Wordly Wise vocabulary program including unit tests, mid-term, and final. (CCS.RL.8.4, CCS.RI.8.4, CCS.L.8.4)

**Writing:** Writing assessments will focus on the areas of emphasis identified by the Pennsylvania Common Core State Assessments including narrative, informative/explanatory, opinion/argumentative, and response to literature. This will be accomplished through both process and timed writing assessments. (CCS.W.8.1-5)

**Reading literature and informational text:** A midterm and final will require students to apply strategies, skills and terms to an unfamiliar text. (CCS.RL.8.1-6, CCS.RI.8.1-6)

**Range of reading:** A 25 books log will assess students' ability to read and comprehend literature, literary non-fiction and informational text on and above grade level, reading independently and proficiently. (CCS.RL.8.10, CCS.RI.8.10)

**Speaking and listening:** Assessed by the RTSD Speaking and Listening Rubric (CCS.SL.8 .1)

### **Grading Policy for Accelerated Language Arts**

Students can expect to be graded in the following areas. All points are approximate and are meant to reflect a balance between the different areas of language arts as well as on-demand and process assessments.

#### **For Each Quarter**

Writing - 250 points

- Process
- On-demand

Reading – 250 points

- 25 Book Log
- Responses to Literature
- Tests, quizzes, projects

Vocabulary – 125 points

- Wordly Wise unit tests

Grammar – 80 points

- Tests and quizzes
- \*Grammar is also evaluated within student writing.

Speaking and Listening – 30 points

- Whole group discussion, small group discussion, individual conferencing, and presentations

Homework – up to 30 points

- Homework grades reflect completion of assignments and student effort.

### **Major Units of Study:**

*Units of study are organized in a manner that encourages students to make connections across complex skills, strategies and content.*

Unit One: Literary Elements and Memory

Unit Two: Author’s Purpose: Revealed Through a Hero’s Journey

Unit Three: Drama and Argument

Unit Four: Voice and the Vulnerability of the Innocent

Unit Five: Justice or Injustice: The Eyes of the Beholder

*The following units are year-long and run concurrently with other units.*

On-going unit: Self-selected reading

On-going unit: Vocabulary

On-going unit: Grammar

### **Materials & Texts**

**The following are the anticipated materials and texts. Additions and/or deletions are possible.**

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry (common)

Selection from *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose (common) or an alternate dramatic work

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak or *The Power of One* by Bryce Courtenay

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (common)

Selected poems from *Poetry in Six Dimensions* by Carol Clark and Norma Fifer

Literature circle and individualized reading selections based on student interest and reading level.

\* *Pow-word Up!* A pre-AP/SAT vocabulary program implemented school-wide.

*Wordly Wise 9* by Kenneth Hodkinson and Sandra Adams

*Sentence Composing for Middle School: A Worktext on Sentence Variety and Maturity, Vol. 2* by Don Killgallon

Selected materials from Laying the Foundation, an organization that provides teacher resources

Criterion Online Writing Evaluation, a service that evaluates students' writing skills

### ***Summer Assignment***

STUDENTS IN ACCELERATED LA SHOULD READ AT LEAST FOUR BOOKS OVER THE SUMMER. Two will be assigned; two will be student choice.