



RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
Course Overview
Language Arts – Grade 8



General Information

Prerequisite: Student has met readiness level

Length: Full Year

Format: Meets daily for one period

Course Description

Grade-level Language Arts allows both on- and above- grade-level students to pursue rigorous coursework both at and above grade-level expectations. Students are admitted to these courses based on criteria that consider past performance and demonstrated readiness. This course is standard-based and designed to support students in meeting grade-level standards in reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as reaching beyond those standards if they demonstrate readiness. In and out of class reading, research, challenging class discussions and a variety of writing experiences will be required.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to read, understand, and respond to informational text such as essays, articles, and biographies.
2. Students will be able to read, understand, and respond to works of literature, including novels, stories, poetry, and drama.
3. Students will develop the skills of informational, argumentative, and narrative writing.
4. Students will engage in evidence-based analysis of text.
5. Students will focus on communication skills that enable critical listening and effective expression of ideas, including collaborative discussion, inquiry, and presentation.
6. Students will develop and refine advanced vocabulary skills to improve reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
7. 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

Common Assessments:

Vocabulary: Student will be regularly assessed in the appropriate 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 Standards 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 book log will assess student's 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: Grades in language arts are meant to reflect balance between the different areas of language arts as well as on-demand and process assessments.

Students will earn a grade in the course based on their achievement in the following areas:

- Writing
- Reading
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Speaking and Listening
- Homework

Please see teacher web page or supplemental handouts for specifics related to each course grade.

Major Units of Study:

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

- Science Fiction
- Drama
- Poetry
- Literary Fiction
- Young Adult Fiction
- Persuasive Writing
- Creative Writing
- Expository Writing
- Short Story

- Research
- Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language
- Public Speaking
- Active Listening

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.

Textbooks:

- *Glencoe Literature: The Reader's Choice- Course 3*
- *Glencoe Writer's Choice: Grammar and Composition – Grade 8*
- Spelling and/or vocabulary program assigned based on student achievement:
 - *Zaner-Bloser Spelling Connections - Grade 8*
 - *Vocabulary from Classical Roots*, Lee Mountain
 - *Robust Encounters with Vocabulary (REV it up!)*, Steck-Vaughn

Sample Literature Selections:

- **The Giver*, Lois Lowry (common)
- **Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
- *The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm*, Nancy Farmer
- *Gathering Blue*, Lois Lowry
- *Z for Zachariah*, Robert C. O'Brien
- *The Transall Saga*, Gary Paulsen
- *The Last Book in the Universe*, Rodman Philbrick
- *The City of Ember*, Jeanne DuPrau
- *Among the Hidden*, Margaret Peterson Haddix
- *The Diary of a Young Girl* (The Definitive Edition), Anne Frank
- *The Wave*, Todd Strasser
- **12 Angry Men*, Reginald Rose
- **To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee (common)
- *A Long Way to Chicago*, Richard Peck
- *A Year Down Yonder*, Richard Peck
- Short stories by various authors with a focus on science fiction, literary fiction, and young adult fiction.
- Poems by various authors with a focus on free verse poetry.
- Non-fiction readings that inform student understanding of literature.
- Literature circle and individualized reading selections based on student interest and reading level.

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

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

Summer Assignment

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