



RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT Course Overview



Soundings *Integrated*

General Information

Credits: N/A
Weighted: N/A
Prerequisite: N/A

Length: Full Year
Format: Meets Daily
Grade: 8

Course Description

SOUNDINGS challenges eighth graders to create a democratic learning community in which to explore student-selected themes that merge their adolescent concerns with state learning objectives and global issues.

Following a process of asking, analyzing, and grouping hundreds of questions, the class works together to decide which questions they most want to study. These then become our themes for the year. For each theme selected, students learn to set goals and objectives, develop and implement plans to achieve those aims, present their results, and assess their performance. As they experience this process with its emphasis on both quality performance and higher order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis and assessment, students master essential skills and concepts from all academic disciplines and apply them to real world issues.

SOUNDINGS replaces the conventional Language Arts, Social Studies and Science classes while meeting the Common Core Standards for those subjects.

Course Objectives:

Soundings guides students to the following enduring understandings:

- Each individual is ultimately responsible for his/her own education.
- To take fullest responsibility for one's own education, each student must develop effective strategies for improving self-discipline, organization, self-motivation, along with traditional academic skills.
- Within a viable community, rights, responsibilities and privileges interrelate.
- Tasks can often be most effectively accomplished through consensus, which requires cooperation by all parties.
- Consensus can be fostered by building familiarity, trust and self-confidence.
- Organized systems of inquiry enhance knowledge acquisition and facilitate the synthesis of solutions to complex problems. (This includes the scientific method, *per se*, as well as the larger S.A.I.L.S process we employ in Soundings.)
- Self-assessment is an indispensable tool for lifelong learning.
- The specific enduring understandings and Pennsylvania Common Core State Standards for Grade 8.

Common Assessments:

Language Arts:

WLB #1: Goals for School Year

ERB Writing

WLB #2: Cell Phone Use

WLB #3: *Mockingbird*/Walk in another's shoes

Social Studies:

Westward Expansion

Current Event – Social Issues

WLB: United States Policing the World

Past Effects Present, Present Effects Future

Science:

WLB: Scientific Method (Mold/Fungus)

Physical Science/Energy Prompt

Major Units of Study:

Coming Together

Selecting our Units of Study

Developing our Units of Study

Implementing our Units of Study

Assessing our Units of Study

Reading Journal

Log Book

Current Event

Word Study

Individual Research Project #1

Individual Research Project #2

Lab Experiments

Class Log – **Create this UNIT**

Focus Papers – **Create this UNIT**

Materials & Texts

As a research-based program, SOUNDINGS relies on internet and primary source materials in lieu of textbooks, with the exception of the required *Wordly Wise* word study workbook.

Materials pertinent to particular themes are presented, and students have opportunities to work with materials at many different levels of academic sophistication and representing multiple media formats. Thus technology plays an important role in Soundings as we work toward an increasingly paperless learning environment that addresses the individualized, differentiated needs of each student.

In addition to the resources described above, Soundings students also read and analyze at least two novels selected by the teachers from the 8th grade LA list. Novels vary yearly according to specific content themes developed by the students.

Required Novels:

The Giver (to be read over the summer prior to 8th grade)

To Kill a Mockingbird

Summer Assignment

Students must read *The Giver*, plus one other book from the RMS 8th Grade Summer Reading List. If time allows, students may read an additional three (3) books of their choice, for a total of five (5). The additional three books do NOT have to come from the Summer Reading List.