

Course Outline for Grade 8 English Language Arts 2025-2026

Grade 8 English Language Arts (ELA-8a)

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The Manitoba Curriculum describes English Language Arts practices as being based on Four Big ideas. We will use these 4 practices of language to develop our learning in the English language arts.

The practice of using language as power and agency

The practice of using language as sense making

The practice of using language as exploration and design

The practice of using language as a system

Essential Questions and Lenses that guide this course:

Our English Language Arts Learning will use three essential questions that will provide us the lenses with which to explore the English Language and the world we live in.

Where do we come from?

Who are we?

Where are we going?

These questions are actually the title of a painting by French painter Paul Gauguin. These questions are essential to provide us with a purpose and road map as we explore the English language. Some of the themes that will arise are **Identity, Community, Voice, Imagination and Social Justice**. Other themes will develop as the course goes on and students will play an active role in developing and pursuing themes and questions of their own.

Additional time will be given for recovery learning and to strengthen foundational outcomes as a whole class, small group or in response to individual student's needs.

Course Material: Novels and Text material will be provided. One Large Notebook for Writing Workshop

Pens/Pencils, 4 dividers for binder, pencil crayons/makers (optional), scissors.

Class Format:

The format of this course will be highly interactive. We are going to take on a constructive approach to learning-which means we will learn together and by listening, discussing, taking action and making sense of our lives.

We will be focused on multiple literacies and generating an abundance of student writing. Students will learn to develop their voice in telling their own stories and representing the stories of others in a thoughtful and authentic manner.

Mini-Lessons: These will range from grammar and spelling lessons to discussions about genres, theories and current events. (between 10-20 minutes long).

Writing Workshop-(Work on Writing, Word Work) Students will keep a writing notebook-all writing assignments will start in the notebook-and only in the final stages will they be in the form of publishable work (as word documents or pdfs).Writing workshop can be used to work on written assignments/activities and other assignments or projects.

Reading Workshop (Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading)-We will try to make time for independent reading at least a few times per cycle. The expectation is that students will come prepared to read daily with a book or prepared to work on their book reviews/book talks.

Students must select **10** appropriate/good fit books to read throughout the year-these are over and above novels/short stories assigned in class.

8 books will be reviewed by the student. We will spend some time discussing what books and other written materials would be appropriate for Reading Workshop.

Students will be expected to present one "book talk" or create a digital book review this year.

Literature Circles: We will do this at least once this year.

Students will form small groups and select a novel to read and then discuss and engage with together.

There will be a list of culminating activities that will be completed as part of the Literature Circles-

Due to Covid-19, social distance protocols will be followed.

Whole Class Novel Study

Tuck Everlasting

Major Assignments/Units for this year will include:

- 1) Journal Writing (September)
- 2) Class Novel Study and accompanying assignments (September)
- 3) Short Story (November)
- 4) Greek and Roman Myths and accompanying assignments (December)
- 5) Literature Circle and accompanying assignments (January/February)
- 6) Drama Project (March)
- 7) 6 Book reviews by May. Students should plan to hand one in every 6 weeks.
- 8) One 5 paragraph research paper to practice our persuasive essay writing. (May/June).
- 9) Debate (June) * as time allows
- 10) Book Talk - oral and digital presentation (in June)

Assessment:

Student will show what they know through formative assessments which includes daily work, reading and writing workshop assignments and drafts of major project/assignments (listed above). Student are expected to complete all formative assessments. Students will have approximately **10 major summative assessments/unit assessment**. Students will receive both a percentage mark (calculated cumulatively) and a numerical grade scale of ND (not demonstrated), 1 (50-59%), 2 (60-69%), 3 (70-79%) or 4 (80-100%).

Please note that students will go through a process of formative and summative assessment. Only summative assessments will be used on the Report Card.

Major Writing Assignments and Evaluation cycle-This process will be used for all written assignments.

1st Draft-Students will receive constructive feedback in the form of comments and/or a student writing conference.

- A rubric may be used to give this from time to time-no letter grade or mark will be designated at this time.

2nd Draft-Students will receive some constructive feedback-

1. A rubric will be used to give the majority of the feedback at this point-
2. A percentage grade will be assigned-but it is tentative
3. Students will be directed to address comments and feedback
4. Students will use their own knowledge and skills to improve on the 2nd Draft-

Final Draft-A final grade will be assigned to the product-

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PROCEED THROUGH THE THREE DRAFT MODEL.

Only the mark on the final draft will be used in the summative assessment.

Classroom Policies:

McCreary School Handbook outlines the expectations in regards to academic dishonesty, attendance and the use of technology. An assignment is due on the due date. Students who are unable to meet that due date must make arrangements with the teacher or take an incomplete. Teachers will use their discretion based on circumstances to make their final decision. An incomplete will result in a mark of zero.

Academic Dishonesty:

As you may have heard already today, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this school. If you are asking, "What is academic dishonesty?" the answer is simple – any type of cheating. This includes

(according to Wikipedia)

Plagiarism: The adoption or reproduction of original creations of another author (person, collective, organization, community, including anonymous authors) without due acknowledgment.

Fabrication: The falsification of data, information, or citations.

Deception: Providing false information to an instructor —e.g., giving a false excuse for missing

a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.

Cheating: Any attempt to give or obtain assistance (like an examination) without due acknowledgment.

Bribery: or paid services such as giving certain test answers for money.

Sabotage: Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or wilfully disrupting the experiments of others.

If you commit academic dishonesty, you will be required to meet with your teacher to discuss a reasonable consequence for your actions. Your parents will be notified.

*All assignments, projects, class activities and assessments are subject to change.