

The eighth grade English curriculum synthesizes and further develops the multitude of language arts skills taught in grades 5-7.

Vocabulary is taught in conjunction with content units as well as with the Latin and Loving It Latin morphemes book.

Spelling is applied spelling from lists generated from student work, with cumulative quizzes given.

Traditional grammar is a major emphasis of this course, with much drill on parts of speech, noun functions, and diagramming of simple and compound sentences.

A wide variety of outside **reading** is encouraged through Accelerated Reader, in addition to in-class analysis of The Giver, an introduction to Greek mythology utilizing the text The Greek Gods, and Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Students also read a biography or autobiography of a personal hero or heroine.

Expository writing skill development is key in this course. Students write at least three paragraphs and a minimum of three essays in preparation for the ERB multi-paragraph writing assessment (WrAP) given in March. Rubrics and graphic organizers are employed, as well as journals and writing exercises. A very large "Letter to Self" project is done during the final nine weeks to be returned at the end of high school. Much class time throughout the course is devoted to prewriting, drafting, developing specific elaborations, revising, and editing skills.

The ultimate goal of this class is to thoroughly prepare students for the rigors of high school reading and writing assessments while simultaneously instilling the values of Christian character.

The advanced class does all the above, but with several main differences. The **first** is that each 9 weeks these students all read different classic books as part of their AR requirement. The pace of traditional grammar instruction is quickened to allow time for oral presentations on these books, so that students are exposed to a wide variety of classics before entering high school. **Second**, there are additional writing projects, including each student entering at least one out-of-school writing contest during the year. Occasionally there are supplementary writing (and reading) assignments. **Third**, additional vocabulary is required through time spent on www.freerice.com and from other vocabulary activities. **Finally**, each quarter these students do a collaborative enrichment project, such as creating a class alphabet book and designing their own "utopia."