

**ARIZONA CULTURAL ACADEMY**

**Subject: Language Arts**

**Grade: 8th**

**2009-2010 Syllabus**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**Office hours:** Please email me to schedule a conference.

**Required Texts:**

Elements of Language

Elements of Literature

**Work Load:**

In school, for each credit hour, it is expected that students will work two or more hours a week outside of class time in preparation for class. This means that for a typical 3 credit hour course, you would expect to spend 6 hours a week in prep time outside of class. To succeed, you will need to be prepared to spend adequate time on this class.

**Prerequisites:**

A grade of D or better in Grade 7<sup>th</sup> subjects

**Instructional delivery format:**

Approximately 6 class periods per week; each class meeting may include lecture, discussion, activities, library research and/or student presentations; this will vary depending on the topic we are covering.

**Course description:**

This course is a year long course combining the study of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The course content will review basic skills previously taught and teach new skills with emphasis on application of skills. The course will include an intensive composition unit teaching multiple paragraph writing, preparation and presentation of speeches and discussions, exposure to a variety of literary forms and techniques, vocabulary development, and instruction in and application of mechanics. This course is intended to prepare students for success in high school.

**Performance Objectives:**

**STANDARD 1: READING**

**Strand 1: Reading Process**

Reading Process consists of the five critical components of reading, which are Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension of connected text. These elements support each other and are woven together to build a solid foundation of linguistic understanding for the reader.

<b>Concept 1: Print Concepts</b>	Demonstrate understanding of print concepts.
<b>Concept 2: Phonemic Awareness</b>	Identify and manipulate the sounds of speech.
<b>Concept 3: Phonics</b>	Decode words, using knowledge of phonics, syllabication, and word parts.
<b>Concept 4: Vocabulary</b>	Acquire and use new vocabulary in relevant contexts.
<b>Concept 5: Fluency</b>	Read fluently.
<b>Concept 6: Comprehension</b>	Employ strategies to comprehend text.

### **Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text**

Comprehending Literary Text identifies the comprehension strategies that are specific in the study of a variety of literature.

<b>Concept 1: Elements of Literature</b>	Identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of literature.
<b>Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature</b>	Recognize and apply knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of American, British, and world literature.

### **Strand 3: Comprehending Informational Text**

Comprehending Informational Text delineates specific and unique skills that are required to understand the wide array of informational text that is a part of our day to day experiences.

<b>Concept 1: Expository Text</b>	Identify, analyze and apply knowledge of the purpose, structures, and elements of expository text.
<b>Concept 2: Functional Text</b>	Identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the purpose, structures, clarity and relevancy of functional text.
<b>Concept 3: Persuasive Text</b>	Explain basic elements of argument in text and their relationship to the author's purpose and use of persuasive strategies.

## ***STANDARD 2: WRITING***

### **Strand 1: Writing Process**

Research has established the major steps of the writing process. These steps are identified in the five concepts of this strand, each supported with specific performance objectives. While all steps are needed and used by effective writers as they compose text, different skills may be emphasized in individual assignments. These steps may be used recursively as a piece moves toward completion. Throughout the process, students should reflect on their own writing skills, set goals, and evaluate their own progress.

#### **Concept 1: Prewriting**

Prewriting includes using strategies to generate, plan, and organize ideas for specific purposes.

#### **Concept 2: Drafting**

Drafting incorporates prewriting activities to create a first draft containing necessary elements for a specific purpose.

**Concept 3: Revising**

Revising includes evaluating and refining the rough draft for clarity and effectiveness. (Ask: Does this draft say what you want it to say?)

**Concept 4: Editing**

Editing includes proofreading and correcting the draft for conventions.

**Concept 5: Publishing**

Format and present a final product for the intended audience.

**Strand 2: Writing Elements**

This strand focuses on the elements of effective writing. Good writing instruction incorporates multiple performance objectives into an integrated experience of learning for the student. . Throughout the process, students should reflect on their own writing skills, set goals, and evaluate their own progress. The order of the concepts and performance objectives is not intended to indicate a progression or hierarchy for writing instruction. Instructional activities may focus on just one concept or many.

**Concept 1: Ideas and Content**

Writing is clear and focused, holding the reader’s attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details. Purpose is accomplished.

**Concept 2: Organization**

Organization addresses the structure of the writing and integrates the central meaning and patterns that hold the piece together.

**Concept 3: Voice**

Voice will vary according to the type of writing, but should be appropriately formal or casual, distant or personal, depending on the audience and purpose.

**Concept 4: Word Choice**

Word choice reflects the writer’s use of specific words and phrases to convey the intended message and employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to the audience and purpose.

**Concept 5: Sentence Fluency**

Fluency addresses the rhythm and flow of language. Sentences are strong and varied in structure and length.

**Concept 6: Conventions**

Conventions address the mechanics of writing, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar and usage, and paragraph breaks.

**Strand 3: Writing Applications**

Writing skills particular to the applications listed here may be taught across the curriculum, although some applications may lend themselves more readily to specific content areas. It is imperative that students write in all content areas in order to increase their communication skills, and ultimately to improve their understanding of content area concepts. When appropriate, other content standards are referenced to show interdisciplinary connections.

**Concept 1: Expressive**

Expressive writing includes **personal narratives**, stories, poetry, songs, and dramatic pieces. Writing may be based on real or imagined events.

**Concept 2: Expository**

Expository writing includes nonfiction writing that describes, explains, informs, or summarizes ideas and content. The writing supports a **thesis** based on research, observation, and/or experience.

**Concept 3: Functional**

Functional writing provides specific directions or information related to real-world tasks. This includes letters, memos, schedules, directories, signs, manuals, forms, recipes, and technical pieces for specific content areas.

**Concept 4: Persuasive**

Persuasive writing is used for the purpose of influencing the reader. The author presents an issue and expresses an opinion in order to convince an audience to agree with the opinion or to take a particular action.

**Concept 5: Literary Response**

Literary response is the writer's reaction to a literary selection. The response includes the writer's interpretation, analysis, opinion, and/or feelings about the piece of literature and selected elements within it.

**Concept 6: Research**

Research writing is a process in which the writer identifies a topic or question to be answered. The writer locates and evaluates information about the topic or question, and then organizes, summarizes, and synthesizes the information into a finished product

***STANDARD 3: LISTENING AND SPEAKING***

Students effectively listen and speak in situations that serve different purposes and involve a variety of audiences.

**ESSENTIALS (Grades 4-8)**

Students know and are able to do all of the above and the following:

- ❖ Prepare and deliver an organized speech and effectively convey the message through verbal and nonverbal communications with a specific audience
- ❖ Prepare and deliver an oral report in a content area and effectively convey the information through verbal and nonverbal communications with a specific audience
- ❖ Interpret and respond to questions and evaluate responses both as interviewer and interviewee
- ❖ Predict, clarify, analyze and critique a speaker's information and point of view

***STANDARD 4: VIEWING AND PRESENTING***

Students use a variety of visual media and resources to gather, evaluate and synthesize information and to communicate with others.

**ESSENTIALS (Grades 4-8)**

Students know and are able to do all of the above and the following:

- ❖ Analyze visual media for language, subject matter and visual techniques used to influence opinions, decision making and cultural perceptions
- ❖ Plan, develop and produce a visual presentation, using a variety of media such as videos, films, newspapers, magazines and computer images
- ❖ Compare, contrast and establish criteria to evaluate visual media for purpose and effectiveness

Additional objectives of this course are to help you develop your skills in working cooperatively with other students, in making and interpreting graphs, and in communicating orally.

**Assessment:**

In order to determine whether this course is meeting its above-stated objectives, a variety of classroom assessment techniques will be used. These may include, but are not limited to, “objective” questions regarding your comprehension of the material presented in class, essay exams, oral exams, discussions, analysis and presentation of case studies, and student peer and self-evaluations. These assessments fulfill two purposes: First, they help you and your instructor determine how well you are acquiring factual information in the class, and, second, these assessment instruments will assist your instructor in improving this course. Because this course fulfills a general education requirement, your instructor will also assess whether the skills of the students in your class improved in any of the following areas: oral and written communication, critical thinking, awareness of cultural diversity and global awareness.

**Grades:**

Grades will be calculated from the following:

Area of Assessment	Percentage Allocated (%)
Spelling and Vocabulary	10
Reading Comprehension & Accelerated Reading	20
Writing	20
Grammar	10
Class Participation (including class work)	10
Research Project	30

Final grades will be calculated based on the percentage of total points:

- A = 89.5% and above
- B = 79.5%
- C = 69.5%
- D = 59.5%
- F = 58.5% and below

**Exams:**

There will be chapter assessments after every chapter as well as end-of-quarter exams. Students will also demonstrate their overall content knowledge through the essays that they will write that will focus on respective topics. Final exams will be replaced by the Research Project. (More details will be provided regarding this arrangement.)

**Assignments:**

Class assignments will be in the form of from in-class discussions, cooperative learning, written assignments, research projects, and oral presentations.

**Policy on late assignments:**

In accordance with the school-wide policy, late assignments and assessments can only be made

up with an excused absence. If an excused absence is issued, students will only be allowed the same amount of days they were absent to make up missed work. A grade of zero or an “F” will be issued if work is not made up during the allowable timeframe. This policy is subject to change with administrator approval.

**Participation:**

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and to be respectful of the learning environment. All students are required to bring their own required writing materials (pens, pencils, erasers, sharpeners and notebooks) and textbooks to class on a daily basis.

**Classroom Rules:**

Classroom rules will be determined by the teacher and the students during the first week of classes. Students will be required to provide their signature to verify that they have read and understood the rules and agree to abide by them.

**Consequences:**

In the event that a student violates the classroom rules (barring extraordinary circumstances) the following consequence guideline will be utilized:

1. Verbal warning
2. Red card, which will result in class participation points being deducted (5pts for each red card)
3. Call or note home
4. Parent/Teacher conference scheduled
5. Office referral

**Positive Incentives:**

1. Class recognition (praise)
2. Additional class participation points for outstanding behavior and performance
3. Acknowledgement of academic achievement via Language Arts achievement certificate