

8th Grade Language Arts with Mr. Mulhern
Global Arts Plus-Upper Campus 2020-21

Hello all! This is my second year at Global Arts Plus, and my ninth as a classroom teacher. Last year was certainly eventful, and I'm happy to be back to work with this awesome team. Previously, I taught for five years at Art & Science Academy in Isanti, where I was a founding teacher. Like Global Arts, our school followed the arts integration model, so I am well versed in this as an educational philosophy. Global Arts Plus follows the middle school model, laid out by SPPS below:

'Saint Paul Public Schools is committed to providing a successful middle school model that supports students during a key transition time in their lives. We believe that our young adolescents deserve a middle school experience that is developmentally responsive, challenging, empowering and equitable...In the middle school model, teachers in core subject areas collaborate as a team to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of a common group of students and includes:

- Grades 6-8
- Student-centered teaching
- Seven periods with electives, and a Foundations Advisory class'

Class Expectations and rules:

*Students should come prepared to learn, listen and have productive discussions each day.

*Students will be expected to read and engage with new texts, develop reading stamina and work on improving fluency, think creatively and critically, and practice conventions of grammar.

*There will be no tolerance of put-downs, negative talk or exclusion. Our class will be an inclusive and safe space for all 8th graders, one where students can take risks and make mistakes without worrying about the result. **This will be just as true over the internet!**

*Students will always be expected to take care of classroom materials.

Grading Policy/Homework

*We will follow the typical grading scale (93-100% = A, 90-92% =A-, 83-89% =B, etc.).

*Students may turn in work up to two weeks after an assignment's due date to receive credit. An assignment that is not turned in will be graded as incomplete.

*Students are expected to use their asynchronous time to complete assignments and ask questions of teachers through office hours, if necessary. 8th grade team's office hours are from 1:30-2:30, M, T and Th.

*Students should be reading at home on a daily basis. **It will be my responsibility to find and suggest ways for students to have access to texts during distance learning!**

Course Policies

*Absences: It is the student's responsibility to make up work they missed due to absences and complete it in a timely fashion.

*Attendance: Students are expected to check themselves in each day through the campus system.

*Punctuality: There will be five minutes in between classes to sign off and log-in to the following class. Students should be logged in on time and prepared with their materials. If and when we are back in the building, there will be three minutes passing time between classes.

*Cell phones are not permitted in class or during instruction unless otherwise noted.

*iPads and other technology are property of Global Arts Plus and must be treated as such. If students are not utilizing the technology responsibly, they may lose technology privileges.

*Students may be allowed to check out books from the class library for a set period of time.

Materials

Students should bring the following to class:

- *Binder/class notebook
- *Pencils or pens
- *Independent reading book(s)

8th Grade Language Arts Basic Trajectory and Assessments

Quarter 1:

**Textual Lineage*: What is a timeline of our own personal reading history, and how can we expand going forward?

**Memoir Writing*: What is something compelling that has happened in our lives and how can we present it as a story?

Quarter 2:

**Nonfiction Study*: How can we suspend judgment on an issue as we research, weigh and evaluate ideas and information presented across texts, and carefully consider the strength of arguments?

**Position Paper*: How can we use research to assist us in preparing and presenting an argument?

Quarter 3:

**Dystopian Book Club*: How do we avoid the mistakes of the past to help create a better tomorrow?

**Literary Essay*: What can novels teach us about the world and ourselves?

Quarter 4:

**Poetry and Close Reading*: How can we read a text closely to determine its meaning and a character's point of view?

**Investigative Journalism*: What are the ways that journalism can be used as a tool for change?

Readers/Writers Workshop Model

St. Paul Public Schools and Global Arts Academy uses the Readers and Writers Workshop model.

If it were a typical classroom, we would have a brief topic introduction followed by 10-15 minutes of teacher instruction, 25-30 minutes of workshop time (independent work, partner work, conferring with a teacher or small group activities) and a five minute share or wrap up as class comes to an end.

In the distance learning model, synchronous instruction time will be 25 minutes, and students will do independent work for the lesson on their own time. Essentially, an introduction activity, 10-15 minutes of instruction time and a review of expectations at the end. Similar to the in-person model, except independent work time will be handled outside of the classroom structure.