

Eighth Grade ELA Workshop facilitated by Mr. Bailey

What is ELA Workshop?

ELA stands for English Language Arts, and you may hear me call it English, ELA, or Workshop. The workshop model is intended to help students create and deepen habits and skills for critical thinking, analysis, research, and writing. The workshop model emphasizes the use of writing groups, book groups, and student selection of texts for reading and writing. In a lot of ways ELA Workshop isn't too much different from old fashioned English classes, except the texts students use and write will be selected to better meet their needs, support their strengths, and pique their interests.

What do I need for ELA Workshop?

Each student will need a notebook. In that notebook we will keep track of student reading habits, goals, and plans. We will also use the notebook to practice strategies and new skills in both reading and writing. Students will also need some sort of writing utensil. I prefer pencils, but if the student is able to write legibly, I'm OK with pens.

After a highly successful book drive last year our classroom library is well stocked this year! Students will be allowed to check books out of the library, provided they agree to be responsible for the book. Once we get iPads in October, students will be exploring different ways of presenting their writing and deeper understandings of text in all sorts of exciting multi-media ways.

What kind of homework will I get in ELA Workshop?

After we get our reading plans set up and our books checked out, the students' main homework will be reading. Students will keep a reading log and will get some time to read in class, but students are expected to read at home as well. Most days our homework will simply be reading. Eighth graders can expect reading logs for the first half of the year, and more written assignments the second half. Occasionally, especially toward the end of each unit, students will also be expected to work on unit end projects/assessments outside of class if necessary.

How will I be graded in ELA Workshop?

Like many classes at Ramsey Middle School, **25 percent** of a student's grade comes from **formative assessments**. Formative assessments include class work, homework, small quizzes, and participation points. These assessments allow me to see a student's progress, and help me plan future lessons. I usually grade formative assessments based on effort and completion rather than accuracy or "correctness."

The remaining **75 percent** of a student's grade comes from **summative assessments**. Summative assessments show me what a student has learned, and how much they've mastered a certain skill. Summative assessments include tests, projects, papers, and presentations. Summative assessments are planned and conducted using the IB MYP framework and will be graded using MYP rubrics and also the district A-N. A letter and a post on my web site will explain the scales.

Grades will be entered weekly on **Schoology** (starting the week of 9/26). Students and families can check progress on Schoology at schoolology.spps.org. Students who are receiving a C- or lower will receive a call home after the first three weeks of a quarter, and again at mid-quarter. (During first quarter, I won't be making calls about low grades until mid-quarter due to our ungraded team building the first two weeks of school taking up most of our time.)

What are Mr. Bailey's behavior expectations?

During the first two weeks of school we took class time to get to know one another and to formulate our class essential agreements. These agreements are for all members of the classroom community (Mr. B included), and are intended to create a positive, productive learning environment. Community members who break our agreements will be asked to take a break, talk to Mr. Bailey on-one-on, and if the behavior disrupts the learning of others will be asked to visit a behavior Intervention Specialist. I will in most cases also call home if a student is referred to an IS person.

Our Essential Agreements:

We will respect community members' voices.

We will come prepared to work our hardest.

We will SLANT when there is a speaker.

We will support each other.

We will follow classroom routines.

How do I get in touch with Mr. Bailey?

You can call him or anyone at Ramsey at 651-293-8860. Mr. Bailey can be reached by email at sean.bailey@spps.org. Please visit ramsey.spps.org/Page/16136 and my Schoology page to see what we are doing in class.

Thank you!!! We are going to have a great year!

Unit Plan for ELA 8

This plan is tentative and could change. Please visit my web site and schoology site for the latest plans.

Quarter	Month	Reading	Writing
1	September	Reading Analytically Across Genres: Themes, Archetypes and Allusions	
	October		Investigative Journalism
2	November December	Historical Fiction Book Clubs	
	January		The Literary Essay
3	February	Critical Nonfiction Research Across Texts	
	March		Position Papers Research and Argument
4	April	Analyzing Poetry	
	May		Writing poetry for Performance
	June		

