

**Stillman Middle School**

2977 W. Tandy Road

(956) 698-1000

**COURSE SYLLABUS  
  
2020-2021**

TEACHER: Miss K. Rangel

GRADE: 8th

SUBJECT: English Language Arts and Reading

E-MAIL: krangel@bisd.us CONFERENCE TIME: 9:15-10:08 A.M

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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| **Course Description: This course is designed to teach students effective writing and grammar skills at the 8th grade level and to prepare them for high school level writing courses. The students will be covering a variety of topics ranging from poetry to persuasive and expository writing, to conducting research and refining their skills in grammar. This course will also focus on guiding the students to read a wide variety of contemporary selections and informational text, which will be used to continue their growth in fluency and comprehension. Students will learn to appreciate the need to read and be successful. To meet all expected goals of the classroom, Google Classroom will be used as a means to support long distance learning. Individual classroom codes will be provided to students during the first week of school.** |

COURSE STANDARDS/YEAR AT A GLANCE:

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| 1st Six Weeks  **Writing/Literary Texts /Analyzing Fiction and Drama**  The students will write literary texts to express their ideas about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. They will also write about their own experiences.  The learners will also cover a variety of objectives through the use of a young adult novel. The students will also use elements of the writing process (planning, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose texts. Questions pertaining to purpose, audience, and genre will be addressed.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2nd Six Weeks  **Personal Narratives/Analyzing Poetry and Literary Nonfiction**  The students will write personal narratives that have a clearly defined focus and include reflections on decisions, actions and/or consequences.  The students will also analyze and read various texts and poems throughout the six-weeks period. The learners will write poems using poetic techniques such as rhyme scheme, meter, figurative language, idioms, hyperboles, etc.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  3rd Six Weeks  **Writing Expository and Procedural Texts**  The students will write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes.  The students will also analyze themes, respond to texts, draft, revise, and edit texts. Grammar focus: adverbs, pronouns, abbreviations, numbers, and prepositions.  4th Six Weeks  **Writing/ Persuasive Texts**  The students will write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. The learners will establish a clear thesis or position on a variety of topics.  The pupils will make connections, compare and contrast, and analyze differing texts. The students will identify main ideas and details. Grammar focus: spelling and vocabulary.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  5th Six Weeks  **Creating Connections Across All Genres/Grammar**  The students will create connections across different types of texts and genres. The pupils will make generalizations and synthesize texts. They will analyze literary works that share similar themes across cultures.  The students will also edit written drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling. They will use a variety of complete sentences (e.g. simple, compound, complex) that include properly placed modifiers, correctly identified antecedents, parallel structures, and consistent tenses.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  6th Six Weeks  **Producing Research/Writing Multi-Paragraph Works**  The pupils will revise drafts to ensure precise word choice and vivid images. The drafts will be edited for grammar, mechanics, and spelling. The final draft will be revised in response to feedback from the teacher.  The learner will compose an original research paper throughout the course of the six-weeks. The learner will brainstorm, decide upon a topic, and formulate a research question in order to address a major research topic. They will apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources. |

**CLASSROOM RULES (VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION)**

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| 1. Respect the teacher, the students in the class, and yourself.  2. Do not post or share (even privately) inappropriate materials.  3. Listen and remain quiet while the teacher is talking to the class or to individual students. Be sure to “mute” your microphone when entering Google Meetings. Use the “raise your hand” function to participate and/or ask a question during Google Meetings.  4. Be on time when attending Google Meetings and submitting work. Be sure to log onto your Google Classroom at least 5 minutes before the start of a Google Meeting.  5. Treat Google Meetings as though you were in school – dress appropriately and sit properly during Google Meetings.  7. Stay on task and avoid distractions during instruction.  8. Respect the privacy of your classmates. DO NOT take pictures and/or videos of your classmates.  8. Have a good attitude – no complaining, rudeness, foul language. Contact your teacher if you encounter any problems accessing Google Meetings, Google Classrooms, assignments, etc. |

**CLASSROOM RULES (IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION)**

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| 1. Respect the teacher, the students in the class, and yourself.  2. Follow all directions (the first time).  3. Listen and remain quiet while the teacher is talking to the class or to individual students.  4. Be prepared to class with your materials.  5. Be on time.  6. Food, candy, drinks, and gum are not allowed.  7. Stay on task. (Do your work and follow directions).  8. Have a good attitude – no complaining, rudeness, foul language.  **Cell phones, video games, headphones, mp3 players, or other electronic devices are not allowed. Cell phones and/or electronic devices should be turned off and placed in backpack during school hours.**  They will be confiscated by the teacher if found during class. |

**CONSEQUENCES**

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| 1.  1st Offense: Warning-Redirect; Document on Review 360  2.  2nd Offense: Teacher/Student Conference; Parent Notification; Document on Review 360  3.  3rd Offense: Team ITS/Counselor Referral; Document on Review 360  4.  4th Offense:  Team/Parent Conference; Document on Review 360  5.  5th Offense:  Office Referral; Document on Review 360  **\*Any SEVERE DISRUPTION requires immediate office referral.** |

**ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICY (IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION)**

**2020-2021 Secondary Grading Procedures**

**Attendance - Prompt and regular attendance is expected.**

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments or tests they miss due to an absence. Teachers shall inform their students of the time allotted for completing make-up work after an absence; however, the students shall be responsible for completing the assignment within the allotted time. **A student may not expect make-up work and tests to be identical to work/tests done by the class during his/her absence.**

**Tardy Policy**

Each class begins promptly after the bell rings. If a student is not in the classroom and prepared to work when the bell rings, he/she is tardy. Before student enters the classroom, he/she will get a tardy pass from the office, if they do not already have one. Students are responsible for any missed classroom instruction.

Tardy # 1 through Tardy # 4 – Parents will be contacted and tardy documented.  
Tardy # 5 – Office Referral.

**Students with excessive tardies will be placed on a contract by the attendance clerk.**

**REQUIRED MATERIALS (IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION)**

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| Access to Google Classroom and BISD student e-mail account  Loose leaf paper (college-ruled)  A spiral notebook  2 pencils (wooden or mechanical)  2 pens (blue or black ink)  your own pencil sharpener with cover (every day)  A three – ring binder with small rings (1 inch)(every day)  Hand sanitizer (personal use)  USB flash drive (personal use)  2 folders with prongs |

**GRADING**

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| **2020-2021 Secondary Grading Procedures**  **Middle School Courses: Six Weeks Grades**   1. Major assessments are sixty percent (60%) of the grade. This must include a **minimum** of **three assessments** per six weeks. Examples of major assessments include, but are not restricted to: reports, research papers, tests and projects. Major projects and/or subjective assignments will contain a rubric clearly defined criteria. 2. Daily Grades are fifty percent (40%) of the grade. These must include a **minimum** of **five** **daily grades** per six weeks. Quizzes, assignments, homework, and notebooks may be considered daily assessments. |

**HONORS CLASSES**

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| Those students enrolled in an Honors course will be expected to complete the following:  - Differentiated Essay Assignments  - Differentiated "At-Home" Projects |

**ABSENT/LATE WORK POLICY:**

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| **2020-2021 Secondary Grading Procedures**  **Make Up Work**   1. No student, who has an excused or unexcused absence, will be refused an opportunity to make up work if he/she is absent. ***The student will be given the same number of days to make up the work and turn in their work as the same number of days he/she was absent.*** 2. Students who are absent on an announced test day will be expected to take a test upon return. If any student has been absent the day prior to an announced test and if nothing new has been covered, the student will be expected to take the test at the regularly scheduled time. If the student has been absent two or more days, the student will immediately make arrangements with the teacher for the makeup test. 3. Any student who does not appear for a prearranged make up test or does not meet his prearranged due date for other work may receive a zero (0) on that test, work, or retesting. 4. Any student missing work due to participation in extracurricular activities must make prior arrangements with the teacher for work that will be missed prior to the absence.   **Late Work Policy**  **Late work** is defined as any work completed and turned in after a designated due date. Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the due date. Assignments not turned in on time will be made up and deadline will be at the discretion of the teacher. The **highest grade** a student will receive is a **70** for late work turned in. |

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/CHEATING**

**2020-2021 Secondary Grading Procedures**

**Academic Dishonesty/Cheating**

A student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The penalty for cheating will be a zero for work involved and the student will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in cheating offenses. All students involved will be subject to disciplinary action. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher or another supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation or information from students.

1. Cheating is interpreted as a procedure which involves the unauthorized giving or receiving help, offering or seeking aid, or the use of material prepared in advance for use on an assignment/assessment. Cheating also involves the use of electronic devices, books, or notes in any form being used during an examination without the permission of the teacher. Retesting will not be allowed in this situation.
2. Plagiarism consists of representing another person’s ideas or writings as one’s own, including but not limited to cutting and pasting from Internet sources. Plagiarism will be considered cheating, and is subject to **EIA [Local].**
3. If a student cheats on any part of a test and/or assignment given in parts that is administered on separate days, he will receive a zero(s) only in the part where the cheating occurred.
4. All students involved in academic dishonesty may be subject to disciplinary action stipulated in the EIA [Local} and BISD Student Code of Conduct. A teacher that determines the student has violated the academic dishonesty policy is required to file a discipline referral and must notify the child’s parents or legal guardians of the academic dishonesty.

**NOTE**: Involvement in academic dishonesty may affect a student’s eligibility for student honors, student leadership positions, and membership in some student organizations. A discipline consequence may be assigned to a student found guilty of cheating.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Personal Electronic devices may be used in class for educational purpose **only** at certain times throughout the year. When electronic devices are not being used for educational purposes, they must remain in student’s backpacks and **turned off** at all times (**including morning in the courtyard**). Electronic devices that are not in backpack(s) will be picked up and turned in to the office. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**Electronic devices turned into the office must be picked up by a parent/guardian.**

Absolutely NO ONE is allowed to take pictures or record anyone at any time.

Students are allowed to turn on their cell phones afterschool.

**DISCLAIMER**

While every effort will be made in order to adhere to syllabus guidelines, the syllabus is subject to change.