

8TH GRADE READING CLASS SYLLABUS FOR THE 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR



1. What Is 8th Grade Reading?

8th Grade Reading is a class that will mainly focus on how to process a text through using Before, During, and After Reading Strategies. These Strategies or “reading tools” can be applied to any text AND other areas where you need to decipher symbols.

The goal of our class is to give you a “tool box” full of Strategies that you can apply to any text in order to understand it, get a deeper meaning from it, and eventually use the meaning somehow. These Strategies will be useful not only in 8th Grade Reading Class, but anywhere in your life you find yourself trying to comprehend a text.

Besides practicing how to use different Strategies during your 8th grade year, you will be presented with different forms of text or reading as well. During each quarter, you will have the opportunity to choose from a number of texts to read from based off your reading ability level and interest level. These texts will help us center on the quarter’s themes. Each quarter will have its own theme, books, curriculum focus, and “overarching ideas”. You will find a list of general curriculum goals and standards that we will try to accomplish by the end of 8th grade listed on page 4.

Not only will we strongly focus on improving your reading skills, we will work on the other three communication skills as well. Those are writing, speaking, and listening. Since all four skills are directly connected and work together to make you the reader that you are, 8th Grade Reading and Language Arts class will be tied together with what you will learn this year. More details on this will follow.



2. SUPER-IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS!!!

In years past, students were required to earn a specific score on the Reading MAPS exams in order to move on to the High School. This year, in order for you to be eligible to pass on to your Freshman Year of High School, you need to pass 8th grade Reading Class **and** meet your “Expected Growth Goal” set forth by the Reading MAPS exams we take throughout the year. Failure to complete one or both requirements will result in some form of retention, such as Summer School or repeat of 8th Grade Reading. Please note that this policy has been set forth by the Two Rivers Board of Education. More details on this will follow.

3. How Can I Be Successful & Pass 8th Grade Reading Class?

If you want to be successful in class, you need to complete a number of things:

- a. Be in class.
- b. Complete and do well on all work for class.
- c. Do well on all quizzes and Final Projects.
- d. Successfully read and actively process your chosen class text per quarter.
- e. Successfully read and log your Free Reading Books.
- f. Be a positive & responsible student in class.
- g. Check your grade progress on Skyward-Family Access frequently.
- h. **READ!** Read as much as you can, whenever socially acceptable.

4. What Is The Homework Policy For 8th Grade Reading Class?

Homework is practice from the day’s presentations. When homework is assigned, you will be informed of its due date. Homework must be completed by the beginning of the assigned due date’s class period in order to receive credit. If your homework is not completed by the date and time assigned, it will be marked as a zero in the grade book and on Skyward-Family Access.

“Never, ever, ever give up.”
-Winston Churchill

Please note that all your work is given points, including when you are here listening to a Reading Strategy Presentation. Point values will vary on each assignment but it is important to know that ALL WORK IS WORTH POINTS. Your grades are calculated through the accumulation of these points. You will be informed of the point value before work is given. Points will then be averaged into a percent for mid quarter or quarterly grade letter. Percentages and their letter grade equivalent are listed below:

100 = A+	82-80 = B-	66-63 = D
99-93 = A	79-77 = C+	62-60 = D-
92-90 = A-	76-73 = C	59-1 = F
89-87 = B+	72-70 = C-	
86-83 = B	69-67 = D+	

5. Did I Read Something About Quizzes And Final Projects?

Quizzes may be given throughout the courses of study. You will be informed of the future date of the majority of your quizzes. Quizzes will be given on what was taught that week, including Reading Strategies. I strongly encouraged your to study before your quizzes.

Final Projects are assigned at the end of the quarter on units of study. A guide and rubric will be given to you approximately a week before the Final Project is due. You will be given some opportunity in class to prepare your Final Project but please note that you will need to work outside of class in order to complete it. All Final Projects are worth a considerable amount of points and will count to the overall quarter and semester grade.

6. What Are Reading Log Sheets and Free Reading Books?

Reading outside of class and school is a very important part of becoming a better reader. Practice, practice, and more practice will eventually make a better reader. You are required to read books of your choice (Free Book) throughout the year in order to *qualify* for a specific letter grade. A certain number of pages read are required to be completed for each letter grade (please see the chart below).

After a book is read, whether it is at home or at school, you will need to fill out a yellow “Log Sheet” in order to let me know what you know about your book. I will keep track of how many pages you read throughout the year. This helps me figure out what grade you should earn at the end of each quarter. All log sheets need to be handed in a week before the end of the quarter.

Page requirements for letter grade qualification are as follows:

- 500 pages or more **per quarter** = *qualify* a student for an “A”
- 400 pages **per quarter** = *qualify* a student for a “B”
- 300 pages **per quarter** = *qualify* a student for a “C”

Please Note: reading a certain amount of pages *does not* automatically guarantee that letter grade. Assigned homework, quizzes, tests, and Final Projects must be completed successfully in addition to reading a certain number of pages in order to earn a certain letter grade.

6. What Are The Classroom Rules in Grade In 8th Grade Reading Class?

I only have four simple rules:

- Practice attentive listening.
- Show appreciation and no put downs.
- Students have “the right to pass” when asked personal questions.
- Show mutual respect to all.

ALWAYS TRY YOUR BEST!

7. What Do I Need To Do With Skyward-Family Access?

Skyward-Family Access is an on-line teacher grade book accessible by parents, students, and teachers. Skyward-Family Access keeps track of what work is completed and what is not. An average is always calculated according to what work is recorded on Skyward-Family Access. An account and password is required to access individual student academic information.

As a teacher, I will record all work on Skyward-Family Access. I will typically enter grades onto Family Access at least once a week so that parents, students, advisors, and teachers can check student progress. If there are any questions about student work or grades, I encourage you to see me or emailing me through in order to clear up any issues. I check my email daily and will respond promptly.

8. What Kind Of Material Will I Need For This Class?

You will have a shared Reading/Language Arts binder & notebook that will be carried between each class.

- A binder for all handouts and materials from class (*which will be checked for a grade at the end of the semester and end of the year*).
- One notebook.-use your Language Arts three subject notebook.
- Writing tools (pen is preferred)
- Sticky notes (recommended size: 3x3 and NOT SUPER STICKY please)
- Your chosen classroom book (provided during each quarter)
- A reading book (of your choice, at your appropriate reading level)
- A back-up reading book (of your choice, at your appropriate reading level). This back-up reading book can be a book in your locker, LMC, or in your head as your next read.
- 4 different colored highlighters

9. What Kind Of Books Are We Going To Read In Class?

Besides reading from other styles of writing, such as short stories, articles, poetry, plays, etc., I will try to give you the opportunities to read titles from these genre types during this year: Utopian/Dystopian Literature, Young Adult Problem Novel Literature, Historical Literature (Non-Fiction), and Biographies/Autobiographies/Memoirs (Non-Fiction).

Please note: you **will** have your own copy of your chosen classroom book. You will need to be responsible for holding onto and caring for your classroom book during the course of study. Replacement cost will be requested if a book is unfortunately damaged.

10. Odds & Ends:

- The Side Board:** the side board is always set up with three important things for students to note: the day's schedule, the assignments, and Charger Time prompts.
- Front Board:** I will use part of the front board to keep track of what we have worked on and what was handed in for absent students.
- Weekly Schedule:** the weekly schedule is as follows: Monday through Thursday: strategy presentation and practice. Friday: L.M.C. Time and Silent, Sacred Reading Day.
- Contact Information:** You and your parents can reach me by phone, email, or in person at L.B. Clarke Middle School during the times of 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Please feel free to contact me when questions arise.

Address: 4608 Bellevue Place

Two Rivers, WI 54241

Phone Number: 920-794-1614

Extension Number: 4012

E-mail Address: matthew.slattery@trschoools.k12.wi.us

8th Grade Reading/ Language Arts

Curriculum Goals/ Standards

Quoted as per CESA 7 & Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction

Quarter 1:

Overarching Enduring Understanding (OEU) 1: *Collaborative, self-directed learners read and respond widely and deeply to foster a deeper understanding of the human experience. (Meaningful connections)*

Module 1A: Analyzing Theme and Point of View in Short Narrative Texts

Module 1B: Analyzing Theme, Story Elements and Language in Novels

Module 1C: Writing Short Stories

Quarter 2:

Overarching Enduring Understanding (OEU) 2: *Collaborative, self-directed learners use a variety of thinking strategies to analyze, understand, and create text for personal enrichment, inquiry, and problem solving. (Comprehension/ meaning making)*

Module 2A: Analyzing Conflicting Information

Module 2B: Researching Current Events

Module 2C: Writing an Informative/ Explanatory Article about Current Event

Quarter 3:

Overarching Enduring Understanding (OEU) 3: *Collaborative, self-directed learners collect, analyze, and cite specific evidence to formulate questions, construct arguments, make decisions and change thinking. (Argument/ evidence)*

Module 3A: Reading to Write an Informative/ Explanatory Text and Develop a Question for Inquiry

Module 3B: Collecting Relevant and Sufficient Evidence

Module 3C: Taking Action to Change Thinking

Quarter 4:

Overarching Enduring Understanding (OEU) 4: *Collaborative, self-directed learners obtain, analyze, and synthesize information from a variety of resources to express information, change perspectives, clarify thinking, and make informed decisions. (Research/ inquiry)*

Module 4A: Analyzing the Choices of Authors and Directors

Module 4B: Creating and Reviewing a Movie Trailer

*****PLEASE RETURN JUST THIS SHEET*****

Please sign this material and return this page only by: _____

I have read the above material.

Student Signature: _____

Parent/ Guardian Signature: _____

*****NOTE TO PARENTS: *If you want your child to become a better reader, please make sure they are reading outside of school! It is required for them to read at least 30 minutes a day outside of class.******

Date: _____

Student and/or Parent Question/ Comment Section:

***“But words are things, and a small
drop of ink,***

***Falling, like dew, upon a thought,
produces***

***That which makes thousands,
perhaps millions, think.”***

-Lord Byron



8th Grade Reading Class

Syllabus for the 2013-2014 School Year

*“I’ve traveled the world twice over,
Met the famous; saints and sinners,
Poets and artists, kings and queens,
Old stars and hopeful beginners,
I’ve been where no-one’s been before,
learned secrets from writers and cooks
all with one library ticket
to the wonderful world of books.”*

~ Author Unknown ~