



# MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

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# Middle School Curriculum

## Language Arts: Grade 6

In sixth grade Language Arts, we read, discuss, and write about the stories of many different groups of people, including our own stories. We study works of literature with themes that are integrated with instruction in social studies, the arts, and math. We also work to become better speakers, thinkers, and communicators through a variety of media. Our overall theme is, "Who am I as a writer and reader?" Students are guided as they discover and develop their literary identities. Students learn not only the skills and processes they need to be fully literate, but also how those skills and processes fit into their personal goals.

TRIMESTER 1	TRIMESTER 2	TRIMESTER 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Seedfolks (Building community)</li> <li>○ Folk tales from around the world</li> <li>○ Sentence and paragraph writing</li> <li>○ Parts of speech review</li> <li>○ Vocabulary studies: Word of the Week</li> </ul> <p>Independent reading and active reading skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn (Japan)</li> <li>○ Visual Literacy</li> <li>○ Descriptive writing and sensory language</li> <li>○ Vocabulary studies: Word of the Week</li> </ul> <p>Independent reading and active reading skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Poetry reading and writing</li> <li>○ A Wizard of Earthsea (Novel study)</li> <li>○ Reflective, descriptive, and expository writing</li> <li>○ Audience and purpose in writing</li> <li>○ Vocabulary studies: Word of the Week</li> </ul> <p>Independent reading and active reading skills</p>

### LITERATURE

Students read and analyze a variety of contemporary literature. Literature selections provide a platform for thematic crosscurricular discussions.

### WRITING

Students write expository and descriptive pieces in a variety of genres while exploring the writing process. Teacher conferences, peer review, and self-reflection are essential components in this process.

### GRAMMAR

Students review the parts of speech and the parts of a sentence. Students begin study of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex).

### VOCABULARY

Each week, the entire 6th grade focuses on a "Word of the Week." Through this program, students learn about language history and development and common root words from various origin languages. Students also learn how to use these words in spoken and written communication.

### INDEPENDENT READING

Students select book titles independently to discover an enjoyment of reading and to strengthen their ability to comprehend, critically analyze, and understand the world around them.



# Middle School Curriculum

## Language Arts: Grade 7

The seventh grade Language Arts curriculum focuses on developing writing skills across multiple genres. Over the course of the year, students first read and examine literary works as model pieces and then experiment with writing pieces of their own. Students build a strong foundation of grammatical and mechanical concepts that can be directly applied to their writing, and vocabulary studies reinforce the development of a student’s ability to communicate effectively. Throughout the school year, students are encouraged to explore a variety of literary genres in their independent reading studies.

<b>TRIMESTER 1</b>	<b>TRIMESTER 2</b>	<b>TRIMESTER 3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refugee, Alan Gratz (Summer Reading)</li> <li>○ Expository Writing (Research-based)</li> <li>○ March, John Lewis (Graphic Novel Genre Study)</li> <li>○ Grammar (Mechanics and Usage)</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Studies</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Animal Farm, George Orwell</li> <li>○ Drama Genre Study</li> <li>○ Collaborative Play Writing &amp; Performance</li> <li>○ Analytical and Persuasive Writing</li> <li>○ Grammar (Mechanics and Usage)</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Studies</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Literature Circles</li> <li>○ Analytical and Persuasive Writing</li> <li>○ Poetry Writing and Digital Storytelling</li> <li>○ Debate and Public Speaking</li> <li>○ Grammar (Mechanics and Usage)</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Studies</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> </ul>

### LITERATURE

Students read and analyze a variety of both classic and contemporary literature. Literature selections provide a platform for thematic discussions as well as models for various writing projects.

### WRITING

Students explore a variety of writing genres in which they critically examine and then apply the writing techniques needed to compose original pieces in the same genre. Students approach writing as a process through which ideas are generated, organized, composed, revised, edited, and published.

### GRAMMAR

Students engage in teacher-directed and self-paced grammar studies. They learn to apply their understanding of grammatical concepts to their writing and speech.

### VOCABULARY

Students engage in a customized, multi-modal vocabulary instruction through the Membean vocabulary program. They learn to incorporate their newly acquired words into both written and spoken forms.

### INDEPENDENT READING

Students select book titles independently to discover an enjoyment of reading and to strengthen their ability to comprehend, critically analyze, and understand the world around them.



# Middle School Curriculum

## Language Arts: Grade 8

The Language Arts curriculum for the eighth grade is structured to encourage students to become a community of active, engaged readers and competent, creative writers with unique voices. Equally important, the students are given opportunities to become confident, articulate speakers. Independent vocabulary and grammar studies enhance and reinforce the development of a student’s ability to use language effectively to communicate, while film literacy allows students to make connections among multiple media. Throughout the year, cross-curricular connections with history will be present in both themes and activities. Through literature studies and independent reading, students are given opportunities to develop a better understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

The essential questions for the course are: What is America? Why does the past matter? What makes people take a stand? How is a story best told?

<b>TRIMESTER 1</b>	<b>TRIMESTER 2</b>	<b>TRIMESTER 3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Student-Selected Biographies (Summer Reading)</li> <li>○ Politicians in Film (Film Literacy)</li> <li>○ Persuasive Writing</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Program</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> <li>○ Literature Circles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senate or Supreme Court Project (Joint unit with US History)</li> <li>○ Selected Short Stories</li> <li>○ Creative Fiction Writing (Including guest author residency)</li> <li>○ The Moon is Down by John Steinbeck</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Program</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee</li> <li>○ Literary Analysis</li> <li>○ What is America? Film Essay (Including oral history)</li> <li>○ Membean Vocabulary Program</li> <li>○ Independent Reading</li> <li>○ Film Media Literacy</li> </ul>



# Middle School Curriculum

## Language Arts: Grammar

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As a department, our guiding philosophy is that grammar is descriptive, functional, and open-ended. We do not teach grammar as its own class since it is not a discrete or isolated discipline separate from reading and writing. As we design our overarching curriculum as well as individual lessons, we always focus on using grammar as a tool to think about language and how to communicate effectively.

Research shows that grammar is best learned through analysis of examples in mentor texts and application while writing. We have found in our learning community when a student is working individually with a coach or in a group setting, a basic set of terms is necessary in order to facilitate analysis and application.

Early lessons in 6th grade will focus on equipping students with a basic set of terms while also introducing them to linguistic concepts that set the stage for long-lasting change in their writing habits. 7th grade will continue building that common vocabulary with the focus fully shifting to an individual application model by the end of the academic year. In grade 8, students will review common vocabulary as needed but will focus on an individual application model.