

7th Grade ELA Syllabus

Scholars, Readers, Explorers, Dreamers!

Welcome to your English class! We're so glad you're here. 7th grade is such an important year. There's so much growth and so much discovery and it can feel equal parts overwhelming and exciting. Understanding oneself is certainly a journey, or as you might say, "a vibe." But here's the thing, you've got all the tools you need - curiosity, empathy, imagination, determination - and ELA is the perfect place to hone those tools, to allow yourself to struggle, to allow yourself to grow. The stories we will read and the stories we will tell make space for all of that. So, we wanted to frame this year's class with one really big question: *Where do I see myself, my experiences and my community in the stories that other people write and tell? What is the story that I want to tell the world?* There's no one answer, but what a joy it will be to uncover the possibilities this question holds together.

Your teachers this year are Ms. Aldige (701, 702, 703), Ms. Orchard (701) and Ms. Moskowitz (703). Families can always email us at aaldige@schools.nyc.gov + morchard@schools.nyc.gov + mmoskowitz@schools.nyc.gov with questions and concerns, but you can find us in room 400.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything at all.

It's going to be a great year!

Ms. Aldige

Curriculum Map

The topics we will explore this year are outlined below. We are in the process of getting a **class website** up and running that we will update weekly so that you can preview and keep track of our learning.

Unit 1: Origin Stories In this unit, we will explore one of the very things that makes us human - our curiosity! We've always asked big questions about the world and we have always told stories to help explain who we are, how we got here and the natural world around us. We will read Egyptian, Mayan, Greek, Norse, West African and Native American creation stories and myths in order to ask some of the same big questions ancient peoples were asking thousands of years ago. The unit will culminate in writing our own origin stories.

Unit 2: Banned Book Club In this unit, you will choose from a selection of books that are currently banned in one or more states (not New York). We will take on big questions about the motivations and consequences of book bans and explore the social and historical contexts behind them. Our goal in this unit is to flex and grow our critical consciousness. In other words - how can reading and learning to read closely empower us?

Unit 3: Horrible Literature! In this unit we will dig into the genre of horror! Not only will we learn about the author's craft, but we'll also uncover the ways in which horror can be layered with really deep meaning. While it may be spooky and scary, horror can also help us uncover truths about ourselves and the world we live in.

Unit 4: Grammar Glow Up In this unit, students will learn, re-learn and practice essential grammar skills in order to strengthen our writing. But don't worry, we'll mostly be doing this through games! Trust us, it's a fun way to end the year.

Homework

Our only homework will be to revise, review and complete your classwork. Classwork and due dates will be updated weekly on our homework calendar/agenda.

Grading

Deadlines are important and we encourage you to complete your work on time, but we also want to encourage you to advocate for yourself when you need more time or are struggling to complete your work. Come to us and we will come up with a plan to support you!

Category 1: Independent Reading

This grade will be based on your independent reading. Each week, you will be able to select how you show us your growth through reading logs and teacher conferences. **Note: We have a small classroom library but we encourage students to get their library card and check out the offerings there and in the online library! We also love the Sora app (a free digital library) and we'd be happy to help set students up to read a digital copy of a book of their choice.**

Category 2: Classwork

This grade will be based on the day-to-day assignments, including small group and large group discussions, we do in class. Think of these tasks as the base of each unit, where you begin to practice the skills that you learn in class. Generally, these can be finished in class but may need to be completed at home occasionally. In this category, students will also be assessed (and will self-assess) their contributions as community members to our class activities and discussions.

Category 3: Reading Responses and Analysis

Think of these assignments as longer and more in-depth than classwork (Category 2) but shorter and more casual than a major assignment (Category 4). In these assignments, students will explore and expand upon a topic using analysis and critical thinking. You will usually have two or three days in advance to complete these assignments.

Category 4: Major Assignments

Major assignments vary depending on the unit, but they are always the project that we are working toward in the unit. This grade includes turning in, editing, and polishing drafts throughout the process.

Weekly Schedule

- **Mondays:** Each Monday will be reserved for independent reading and deepening our reading stamina, comprehension and joy.
- **Tues-Wed-Thurs:** On these days, we will dig into new content.
- **Fridays:** Each Friday, we will have a writing workshop in which we both learn and practice new skills as well as review and revise our work.

Goal Setting

Instructions: In the space below, set a goal for yourself and state your commitment to this class. **An example might be: Over the course of this semester, I will work hard to to actively participate in class, create my best work, and support my peers.*

Over the course of this year, I will work hard to _____

Your Signature _____

Date _____

Guardian Box

Guardian(s) Name _____, _____

Guardian(s) Preferred Phone Number: _____, _____

Guardian(s) Preferred Email Contact: _____

Guardian(s) Preferred Mode of Communication: Email, Phone Call, Text (please circle)

Guardian(s) Preferred Language _____

Anything else you'd like us to know?

Signature _____

Date _____

