

**Instructor**

---

M. Neufeld

**Overview**

---

English in grade eight is intended to develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, representing, listening, and critical thinking.

**Content**

---

**Six Modes of Communication:**

1. Writing
  - Work to improve ability to communicate in written form
  - Different modes of creative writing
  - In class journal assignments
  - Writing and editing essays (including writing in complete sentences and avoiding grammatical errors)
2. Reading
  - Improve level and amount of reading
  - Read a number of novels, plays, short stories, and some poetry
3. Public Speaking
  - Goal is to become comfortable speaking to a class of peers
  - Give group and personal presentations of completed work or assignments
4. Listening
  - Work at listening to and respecting ideas of others
  - Respect others as they present ideas in front of classroom
  - Listen and evaluate others' ideas
5. Viewing
  - Learn to view different modes of communication and evaluate what we have seen
  - Watch movies/films/documentaries and comment on what they mean to us
6. Representing - Represent ideas through spoken word, art, and written work

**Units (in no particular order):**

1. The art of writing, culminating in the creation of original short stories.
2. Short Stories
3. Novels: *The Alchemist*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Outsiders* (one per term)

4. Fairy Tales
5. Poetry
6. Media – commercials in particular
7. Grammar – incorporated throughout the year

Throughout many of these units, attention will be paid to public speaking and presentations.

### **Evaluation**

---

Evaluation will be of a formative nature during the terms, and cumulative at the end of each term, using the MBCI Humanities Evaluation Guide.

There will be six types of evaluation in this course. They are as follows:

1. Assignments/Projects: Assignments will be given throughout the entire year.
2. Journals: During the year we will be doing journal assignments. Journals will be marked on length and content. Grammatical errors will not affect this grade. This journaling is most often connected with a given unit as listed above.
3. Tests/Quizzes: Tests will generally take place at the end of units. Not all units will have tests. There will also be a few content quizzes following the reading of some of the class-assigned novels.
4. Peer Editing: For some assignments, your peers may be required to edit and evaluate. I will take these evaluations into consideration when I evaluate your work myself. As well, there may be times when a mark in a given assignment will be the mark that a peer has given.
5. Class Participation: Throughout the year I will keep track of participation. Included in the class participation marks are: respect for others and involvement in class discussions/exercises.

Term One is worth 20%, term two and three are worth 30% each, and the final exam is worth 20%. For each term the marks will generally follow this pattern. Any handed in work will be valued between 5-10%. Major projects or assignments are worth 15-20%. Tests and quizzes amount to 20% of the term.

NOTE: Work submitted should and can be improved on by students. No mark on assignments ever needs to be the final one.

School Initiated Absences and Explained Absences will not be penalized, but students are responsible to find out what was missed and how they can make up the work on their return. These absences should be discussed with the teacher beforehand.

Unexplained Absences will result in a zero for any tests, assignments, or other work due on that day. Students who miss a test for any reason will be given an alternate test.

Due dates are often flexible and I despise keeping track of late penalties. Unexplained late assignments will be given credit to a maximum of 70%.

### **Homework**

---

There will be regular homework for the class, including reading, writing, and preparation for projects, tests/quizzes. Students at this level are expected to work towards being self-motivated and independent – able to take responsibility for their own learning and organization.

Please note that access to a computer for word-processing and Internet research is essential for this course. All work handed in should be computer-generated unless done during class time. Please note that I will make every attempt to limit the amount of work that must be done outside of class time.

### **Plagiarism**

---

Plagiarism is the use of the words, thoughts, and ideas of another person without acknowledgement. When this occurs, I will have a chat with both student and parent. We will determine together a course of action. Remember that I'd rather have your work, regardless of how bad you think it might be, than anyone else's.

---

I am looking forward to teaching Grade 8 ELA this year and am here to explore the beauty and power of **communication** with you, to foster and nurture your **creativity**, and to encourage and stimulate your **critical thinking**. Please feel free to come and talk to me about any questions or comments you have about our studies together this year.