

6th Grade Language Arts Syllabus

Justice Page Middle School 2018-2019

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Overview

My name is Jenna Padilla and I will be your Language Arts teacher this year. I look forward to getting to know you and working together! 6th grade Language Arts at Justice Page Middle School will focus on developing our skills as readers, writers, talkers, and critical thinkers. Each of our units is based on the Minnesota Common Core Standards for Language Arts and the Understanding by Design model.

	Unit	Text	Essential Question	Final Project
1	Community	<i>Seedfolks</i> by Paul Fleischman	How does one person impact a community?	Narrative Vignette
2	Justice and Forgiveness	<i>Touching Spirit Bear</i> by Ben Mikaelson	What is justice and how can it be used to restore relationships?	Persuasive Multi-Media Project
3	Human Nature	Various Non-Fiction and Poetry Texts	What do these texts teach us about Human Nature?	Response to Literature: 5 Paragraph Essay
4	Family and Culture	<i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> by Jacqueline Woodson	How do our families, places, and culture and cultures shape who we are?	Poetry Portfolio

Reading

Daily reading is the foundation of our studies in Language Arts. Students will read choice books along with whole-class novels, short stories, nonfiction, and poetry. Throughout the year, students will track and share their reading through reflection, discussion, and blogging. *Students are expected to bring their independent reading books with them to class each day.* Students are also required to read at least 180 minutes a week at home. Students will be challenged to read multiple genres throughout the year.

Writing

Writing is a significant piece of every unit, from daily tasks to final projects. Throughout the year, we will explore narrative, informational, and persuasive writing. During each unit, students will participate in the writing process, from brainstorming and drafting to peer conferencing and revising. *Writing is a part of our daily life in Language Arts and students are expected to come to class every day with their materials, prepared to write.*

Vocabulary and Grammar

6th grade vocabulary focuses on the study of Greek and Latin prefixes, suffixes, and roots to help students make sense of word patterns and expand their word knowledge. Writing instruction will include study of sentence structure, punctuation, sentence variety, style, and overall mechanics. Students are always expected to use their best grammar. *Every week students will complete a Greek and Latin word study.*

Homework

- 180 minutes of independent reading a week (in addition to our in-class reading time)
- Reader's Response Blogs about your independent reading book, as assigned
- Weekly Greek/Latin word study

Late work/Redos:

Late work/redos will be accepted generally up to two weeks after the initial assignment was due (or turned back for redo work). If you have an emergency, and need an extension on an assignment, please speak to me as soon as possible.

Justice Page Middle School's Standards-Based Grading Scale:

- In 6th grade Language Arts we use a standards-based approach to grading based on the Minnesota Common Core Standards for Language Arts. Students track their own learning and receive feedback through a variety of formats, including reflection, conferences, and written and verbal communication. Students are assessed for ten Long-Term Learning Targets and for “Work Habits” where students will be assessed for assignment completion and participation.
- Assignment grades will be based on the JPS 4-point Standards-Based Grading Scale (shown below). The Student/Parent Portal then translates those grades into overall letter grades. Please see the separate handout about SBG and letter grades for details.
- Our goal is to help all students reach proficiency level (3), meaning they are demonstrating appropriate sixth grade skills. We offer a variety of supports for students who are struggling, and encourage students and families to ask for additional help when needed.
- Some students will demonstrate 4-range skills on some assignments, and we will support students whose goal is to excel beyond grade-level, but we want students and parents to know that 4s are extremely difficult to earn in sixth grade ELA. Our expectations for student work in sixth grade are high, and we want all students to be able to celebrate their successes, wherever they may be.
- Please see my website and click on 6th Grade Language Arts for a list of our 10 Long-Term Learning Targets: http://rms.mpls.k12.mn.us/padilla_jenna

Rubric Score	Proficiency Level
4	Exemplary
3	Proficient
2	Partially Proficient
1	Not Proficient
0	No Evidence

Required Materials

- Binder with ELA section
- Loose leaf lined paper
- Pencil or pen
- Student Planner

It is essential that students come prepared to class every day. If acquiring these materials is difficult for you, please let me know and I will help you get what you need.

Parent Involvement

Parent Portal is a great resource for checking grades and assignments, and do not hesitate to contact me (email is always the fastest way to get in touch). I look forward to conferencing with you and working together to ensure that your child has the best education possible. We are constantly adding to our classroom library, so if you would like to donate any young adult and age-appropriate texts, our hungry readers would be more than grateful!