**Floydena Smith**

**Course Syllabus 2024-2025**

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***“Students who can identify what they are learning significantly outscore those who cannot.”***

**I. Course Description:** The objective of this course is to provide students with the essential knowledge and skills required to excel in 8th grade English Language Arts (ELA) by means of a challenging curriculum. This course is designed to cater to the increasing interests and needs of middle school students by establishing rigorous benchmarks in areas such as self-directed reading, literary analysis, informational reading, interdisciplinary writing, research-based learning, and effective communication, all facilitated by the use of technology. The ultimate goal of mastering these areas should be the ability to successfully apply the gained information and abilities to tackle complicated issues and situations that promote innovative and analytical thinking. The eighth grade English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum includes the disciplines of literary analysis, information and media literacy, reading competency and vocabulary growth, grammar and syntax, research skills, and the writing process.

**II. Course Objective (s):**

**Reading and Listening**

**After the conclusion of each lesson or activity, students will be able to:**

(1) Employ efficient reading techniques before, during, and after reading or listening in order to comprehend and expand the intended message in accordance with the text and objective.  
  
(2) Utilize prior knowledge, examine the organization of the survey, anticipate, inquire, condense, clarify, create mental images, deduce, confirm assumptions, scrutinize, combine information, draw logical deductions, and assess.

(3) Students apply and develop these strategies to a wide variety of texts that are becoming more complex and challenging to comprehend.

**B. Writing and Speaking-** A writer must possess the ability to assume several roles, determine when to shift between roles, and even master the art of balancing multiple roles all at once (Gleason, 1995).

**By completing the activities, the students will be able to:**

(1) Apply their understanding of the fundamental components of effective writing and speaking, which encompasses language conventions, organization, diction, syntax, intonation, and ideas and development.   
(2) Utilize their understanding of the essence, organization, and structure of language to enhance their abilities as writers and speakers.   
(3) Implement a recursive process that encompasses prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and disseminating.   
(4) Apply their comprehension of the writing process and language to compose coherent and organized responses to literature, synthesize information, construct arguments for a variety of purposes, describe situations or events, and articulate their personal perspectives.

**C. Literature**

**Students will be able to:**

(1) Recognize that literary themes are frequently derived from universal human experiences.

(2) Understand that authors deliberately make choices to influence an audience.

(3) Analyze how directors, speakers, and writers combine genres, literary devices, and language to provide their readers new views and viewpoints.

(4) Use the rules that govern language, grammar, syntax, and organization.

(5) Apply their language skills to enhance their communication skills and to examine the textual choices writers make to influence voice, tone, and meaning in works of literature.

**III. Textbook:** Beers, K. (2022). *Into Literature*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

**IV. Unit/Concept Names:**

Unit 1: Development of Characters/Ideas

Unit 2: Central Ideas

Unit 3: Text Structure

Unit 4: Point of View

Unit 5: Summarizing Text

Unit 6: Text Analysis

**V.** **Richmond County Board of Education Grading Policy**

* Minor Grades 60% (classwork, quizzes)
  + **Minimum number** of minor grades per 6-week progress report period = **5**
* Major Grades 40% (tests, pro)
  + **Minimum number** of major grades per 6-week progress report period = **2**

**VI. Academic Grading Scale**

* A (90-100) B (80-89) C (75-79) D (70-74) F (below 70)
* Parents are encouraged to monitor their child’s grades using the district Infinite Campus Parent Portal.
* Please contact the front office at 706-737-7288 for information to gain access to Infinite Campus.

**VII.** **Academic Dishonesty**

The Student Code of Conduct, Rule 1(A)(t), states that no student shall cheat, alter records, plagiarize, receive unauthorized assistance or assist another in any type of academic dishonesty. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty will be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher and a supervising administrator, taking into consideration any written materials, observation, or information from witnesses. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to “incomplete” and the student required to redo the assignment or retake the assessment.

**VIII. Late Work**

Late work is defined as assignments that are submitted after the specified deadline. This does not apply to work submitted late due to absence from school. Students are expected to submit assignments on time. Multiple incidents of late work may result in teacher-student-parent conferences to examine and correct the student’s work habits through an academic contract. Students in grades 6-12 may have their scores reduced by 5% per day for a 25% maximum reduction (five school days). Late work submitted after the fifth school day will only be accepted at the teacher’s discretion. Completing work in a timely manner during the learning unit is essential for academic success. If the score is reduced for late work, the teacher must make a notation in the Infinite Campus comment section of the gradebook to reflect the reduction for late work. Students and parents should refer to the teacher’s course syllabus for specific late work procedures.

**IX. Make-up Work**

Students are expected to make-up assignments and assessments that were missed due to absence from school. Students are responsible for asking teachers for the make-up work upon returning to class. Make-up work should be completed by the student within the time specified by the teacher. Teachers should provide reasonable timelines for completing make-up work. Generally, such work should be completed within 5 days of returning to school. A student should not be required to take a quiz or test on their first day back at school if the assessment was first announced during their absence. Graded assignments should be scored to accurately reflect the level of mastery of standards.

**X. Homework**

Students will have homework weekly. Homework is to ensure the student is able to demonstrate a specific level of competency in the specific content domain. Students’ performance on the assigned task will assists the teacher with developing and modifying learning goals for the student.

**XI.** **Relearn & Reassess (R&R Procedures)**

Students have the opportunity to submit a relearning plan for any **major assessment**. Upon satisfactory completion of the plan, a student will be given a minimum of two opportunities to be reassessed. Students scoring below 70 on a major assessment are expected to complete a relearning plan unless exempted with parent approval.

Teachers have discretion to determine if R&R opportunities will be given for any **minor assessment**.

**XII. Richmond County School System Cell Phone Policy**

**Cellular phones are not permitted in class, per district policy, and should not be seen nor heard. Students should turn cell phones off and place them in their bookbags. To promote the best possible learning and social environment in the classrooms and schools of Richmond County, students will adhere to the terms of this policy. The intent of the cell phone policy is to limit access to and use of cell phones in order to avoid distractions from**

**learning and the loss of instructional time. Under the terms of the RCSS cell phone and electronic devices policy, all cellular phones, smart phones, smart watches, any type of headphones, earbuds, and other devices or accessories used to electronically communicate are considered personal electronic communications devices and will be referred to as “cell phone(s)” and/or “electronic communication devices” throughout this policy.**

**XIII. Classroom Procedures (Rituals and Routine) & Expectations**

**A. Entering the classroom**

1.When you enter the room, sign the attendance sheet.

2.Please sit in your assigned desk.

3. If a homework assignment is due, place it on the corner of your desk, and I will collect.

4.Begin your bell ringer assignment. Once you have completed it, place it on the corner of your desk. You have only a few minutes to complete this assignment.

## ****B. Classroom Routines for Dismissal at the End of Class****

## 1. Every student in the room is seated at his/her desk. 2. The area around each student is clean and all materials have been put away. 3. All students are quiet. 4. Class will be dismissed when # 1, 2, and 3 are completed.

## C. Routine for Teacher Calling for the Class’s Attention

I will say, “Give me five.”  In five seconds or less, students will do the following:  
1. Eyes on speaker  
2. Be quiet  
3. Be still  
4. Hands free  
5. Listen

## D. Classroom Routines for Asking for Help:

One of our goals during our time together is to have as few interruptions as possible. In order to cause minimal disruptions, I ask you to do the following to let me know your needs:



## Routine for Bathroom Sign-Out

When you have been given permission to go to the bathroom:

1. Request Permission from the teacher.

2.You will sign the bathroom/ hall pass sheet.

3. Then, you will receive the pass.

4. When you return, place the pass in the box.

**Class Rules**

1. Respect yourself, your peers, your teacher, and your surroundings.
2. Raise your hand silently to speak.
3. Follow all directions quickly the first time they are given.

**Consequences**

1. Warning.
2. Complete a behavior reflection sheet. If it is deemed necessary, the seating arrangement will be changed.
3. Parent or Guardian contact.
4. Office referral.

**Course Materials**

1. Two Folders with pockets
2. One three ring binder
3. 1 pack of College wide/ruled notebook paper
4. Six pencils
5. Two black or blue ink pens
6. One pack of crayons or color pencil
7. 2 glue sticks
8. Pencil box
9. Erasers
10. Pencil sharpener

**Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further guidance on Richmond County School System’s policies and procedures.**

**My contact information: Email:** smithfl@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us

**Tutt Middle School Phone Number:** 706-737-7288

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Please sign and return this portion of the syllabus to affirm that you have reviewed this document:

Student’s Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_