

# 9th Grade English Language Arts 2016 - 2017

## Course Description and Expectations

*A good class has no ending...*



**Your Teacher:** Mr. Brian Bernys  
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### **Course Description:**

This 9th grade English course is designed to develop the four major components of the language arts- **Reading, Writing, Speaking/Listening, and Language.**

**Reading** and the study of literature is continual throughout the year. The literature section of the course consists of various units of study including (fiction and nonfiction) novels, short stories, plays, articles, and poetry. In 2016-2017, there will be an emphasis on building knowledge through *content-rich nonfiction*.

**Writing** is examined through the breaking down and building up of sentences. The processes behind learning and communicating ideas will be explored in the form of expository, argumentative, and research essays, as well as journal entries and poetry. In 2016-2017, there will be an emphasis on writing that is full of *textual evidence*.

**Speaking and Listening** will be an integral part of daily life in the classroom. Activities, both formal and informal, will include class discussion, oral reports, reading aloud, and group work. In a society where technology is taking up more and more of our time, it is imperative we continue to take the time to speak and listen to one another's ideas and opinions to further educate our own. In 2016-2017, similar to our writing focus, there will be an emphasis on *speaking that is informed and reliant on evidence from texts*.

**Language** will focus on the *details* of our work. Students will strive to develop a command over English grammar, including capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Vocabulary will be expanded through units that will coincide with the literature being covered in class, intending to further assist students' comprehension of in-class texts. In 2016-2017, there will be an emphasis on academic vocabulary. *Academic vocabulary refers to words that are most likely to appear in various subject areas.* For example, the word *ignite* may be found in a novel in English class as well as a Chemistry textbook.

### **Academic Expectations:**

- Improve your overall reading and writing for use inside the classroom and out.
- Practice speaking and listening through a variety of mediums.
- Increase the amount of exposure you have to reading and writing.
- Improve your ability to independently establish your own thoughts, ideas, and opinions.
- Expand your vocabulary.
- Increase your knowledge of various subjects through research.

### **Behavioral Expectations:**

Respect one another. We will adhere to the *Cattaraugus-Little Valley CSD Code of Conduct*.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Positive Attitude
- iPad
- Pen
- 3-Subject notebook (perforated paper)
- 1" Binder

### **Homework and Grading:**

Grades are based on the standard school system. Writing assessments will be completed in concert with state-provided rubrics. While most of our work will be done in the classroom, homework is still an occasional necessity. **Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. If a student is absent, it is that student's responsibility to meet with Mr. Bernys to discuss make-up work.**

### **Attendance:**

Cattaraugus-Little Valley attendance policy will be followed. Please be familiar with this policy. Excessive absences can result in a loss of credit for the class. Again, it is important to meet with Mr. Bernys (before or after school) to discuss make-up work.

## 9th Grade ELA Curriculum Outline (from EngageNY.com):

Module #1 - In this module, students will read, discuss, and analyze **contemporary and classic texts**, focusing on how complex characters develop through interactions with one another and how authors structure text to accomplish that development. There will be a strong emphasis on **reading closely** and responding to text dependent questions, annotating text, and **developing academic vocabulary** in context.

Module #2 - In this module, students engage with **literature and nonfiction texts that develop central ideas** of guilt, obsession, and madness, among others. Building on work with evidence-based analysis and debate in Module 1, students will **produce evidence-based claims to analyze the development of central ideas and text structure**. Students will develop and **strengthen their writing by revising and editing**, and refine their speaking and listening skills through discussion-based assessments.

Module #3 - In Module 3, students engage in an **inquiry-based, iterative process for research**. Building on work with evidence-based analysis in Modules 1 and 2, students explore topics of interest, **gather research, and generate an evidence-based perspective to ultimately write an informative/explanatory research paper** that synthesizes and articulates their findings. Students use textual analysis to surface potential topics for research, and develop and strengthen their writing by revising and editing.

Module #4 - In this module, **students read, analyze and evaluate informational and argument writing** and build, through focused instruction, the skills required to craft strong and well-supported argument writing of their own. Through the study of a variety of texts, students learn to think of the products they use and consume everyday as part of a complex web of global production and trade that extends not only to distant lands but to the past as well.

**Please tear off this page, sign and return to Mr. Bernys.**

**Student:**

I have read the course description and expectations, and fully understand what is expected of me to be successful in English 9.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:**

I have read the course description, expectations, and curriculum outline. If I have any questions throughout the year, I can contact Mr. Bernys at [BBernys@cattlv.wnyric.org](mailto:BBernys@cattlv.wnyric.org).

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred contact (phone # or e-mail): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_