

**Be kind to others.**

Welcome to Mrs. Zinsky’s eighth grade ELA class. Our goal for the year is to apply the concepts of Sean Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* not only in the classroom but into everyday life as well. These habits provide a personal road map for solving problems, setting (and achieving) individual goals, and overcoming challenges.

Throughout the year, we will be reading and writing poetry, narratives, informational, and argumentative texts. Students will build their skills as readers and writers and learn to communicate ideas effectively. We will also spend time building vocabulary, grammar, and technology skills.

Class discussions, which require both *speaking* and *listening*, will play a large role in class. Working collaboratively with others is essential for success in the classroom and beyond.

Communication is the key! Please contact me with any concerns that might arise throughout the year. I am here to help.

I look forward to spending the year with all of you!

The expectation is that ALL students will read a “personal choice” book for a minimum of 20 minutes each night. This might be the “AR” book that students use for their monthly AR book project; however, it can be a nonfiction book about a topic of interest or any other age-appropriate book. Each student needs to have a book with him/her at all times. Students will also complete a reading log to increase comprehension and focus. Reading logs will be collected every two weeks.

Daily Reading Expectations

**Follow directions the first time they are given.**

Behavior Expectations:

Be respectful. Be responsible. Be safe,

Class Description

**Welcome!**

**Be on time &**

**be prepared.**

**Ask permission to leave your seat.**

**Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking.**

**Entering Class:** Students will gather any necessary materials, quickly find their seats, write down the homework, and begin working on the “bell-ringer” activity posted on the board.

**Restroom Usage/Locker Visits:** Students are expected to use the restroom and visit lockers during passing period or at the classroom “break” between class periods. If a student must leave the room, he/she must ask permission, sign out, and sign back in upon return.

**Food & Electronic Devices:** Food and drink are not permitted outside of the cafeteria for sanitary reasons. Personal electronics should not be seen or heard in the classroom. Ninth hour classes will return their tablets to the cart safely and responsibly.

**Exiting Class:** In the last five minutes of class, students will return materials to the appropriate locations and verify that the homework assignment is written down. Students do not exit the classroom until they are dismissed by the teacher (not the bell).

**Absences:** If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to make up missed assignments. Check my teacher page and see the “Absent Work” folders for handouts.

**“Oops” Board:** Students can earn a classroom prize by bringing in a *published* document that contains a grammar or spelling mistake. (Webpages and teacher-created documents do **not** count.) Students will present their findings to the class and hang the document on the bulletin board.

**STUDENTS WILL NEED:**

* A one-inch **binder** with dividers
* Writing utensils (**pencils** are preferred)
* A set of colored **highlighters**
* A colored **pen** for grading and editing
* A healthy supply of notebook **paper** and **Post-it notes**
* An **Office 365 account** (we will work on this together)
* A positive **attitude**, a sense of **humor**, and an **open mind**

**Grading**: Formative assessments (homework, classwork) count for 25% of the final grade. Summative assessments (tests, projects) count for 75%, per district policy. Please refer to the district assessment handout for further information about our district-wide policies.

**Revise & Redo:** Many assignments, especially our writing pieces, will require multiple attempts. This is a natural part of the learning process. All students who receive a D or F on a summative assessment are **required** to redo the assessment. Students receiving an A, B, or C may redo **one** summative assessment per quarter and must fill out the required paperwork for retakes.

Classroom Policies, Procedures, & Grading

Meeting classroom expectations and behaving appropriately in class help to create a learning environment where classmates feel welcome, safe, and respected.

Students who choose to meet classroom expectations will receive green PBIS tickets. These tickets can be used for school-wide raffles or for classroom privileges such as the “comfy chair,” a homework pass, or a special treat. Students who go “above and beyond” classroom expectations can earn a Spectacular Spartan card, which is mailed home and is also entered into a weekly school-wide prize drawing.

Students who choose **not** to meet the classroom expectations might receive a verbal warning, a change of seat, a student/teacher conference, a phone call home, a parent/guardian meeting, or an office referral.

Make good choices!

Classroom Incentives

