

Ms. Maxwell
Eighth Grade
2014-2015

Language Arts

Class Expectations:

In this classroom, we STRIVE for success!

- S- Stay Focused
- T- Take Responsibility
- R- Respect Everyone
- I- Inspire Others
- V- Value Education
- E- Expect Success

Grading Policy:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Weighting:

Weighting will change based on the assignments for each nine weeks. Please check the information board in the classroom or Edsby for the current weighting.

Welcome to Language Arts!

Our focus this school year will be learning and developing our skills as critical thinkers, readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. The development and mastery of these important literacy skills not only is important to achieving success in the Language Arts classroom, it is a critical

component of achieving success in other school subjects, building strong relationships with others, and attaining a flourishing career as an adult.

Basically, the quality of life you experience now through adulthood will depend a lot on how well you read, write, and communicate with others.



Scan here for the class website!

Attendance Policy and Late Work

When a student is absent from class for any reason, *he or she is solely responsible for any work missed during that absence*. Make-up work will be available in folders on a table in the front of the classroom. If an extended absence is anticipated (a family vacation, for example), please inform me ahead of time so we can make arrangements. Students will have three school days from the date of the absence to make up any work that may have been missed; after that, any work will not be accepted. Points will not be deducted from assignments during those three days.

Late work is not accepted for any reason. Students are expected to complete each assignment in its entirety and turn it in on time. If they do not, they will receive a zero. The only exception is on an Embedded Assessment. A student may be granted a two-day extension on an Embedded Assessment with a written and signed note from a parent or guardian at my discretion.

Let me state that again, because your awareness of this policy will affect your grade: ***late work will not be accepted.***

Textbooks and Supplies

Our main textbook will be the SpringBoard workbook that each student will be assigned when we start the curriculum. These books will remain in the classroom at all times unless express permission is given in certain cases. In addition, each student will receive a copy of Lois Lowry's *The Giver* when we begin our dystopian literature study. Both of these resources are to be treated with respect, and there will be consequences for severely damaged books.

In addition to the SpringBoard books, each student will be responsible for a Reader-Writer Notebook (RWN). We will be working in the RWN throughout the year, which means that this will be graded. Missing, severely damaged, or incomplete RWNs will negatively affect a student's grade. Make sure you always have it ready!



“Literature is no one’s private ground, literature is common ground; let us trespass freely and fearlessly and find our own way for ourselves.”
-Virginia Woolf

Independent Reading

All students will be expected to engage in independent reading on a daily basis. Although the majority of independent reading will be done outside of the school day, students must bring a reading book to Language Arts and all other classes so they are prepared for independent reading when an opportunity arises during the school day. There will be book checks every week to reward students who are prepared with their independent reading books. Generally, students are expected to finish one novel of their choosing every two weeks- and yes, this will be checked and graded. Realistic exceptions will be made for ambitious reading. I’m not going to expect you to finish the 500-page-long *Divergent* in two weeks.

For most of the year, students will be free to choose their own reading materials. However there will be times during the year when I will assign guidelines for your independent novels that will correspond with the units we will be studying. For example, while studying the first unit of SpringBoard, students will be asked to read an independent novel about a hero. There will be a project that will tie in these independent novels with our classroom learning.

Parents- please review your students’ book choices with your students. You are your child’s first teacher, and I am not responsible for making decisions about what is or is not appropriate for your child to be reading at home.

Electronic Resources

This year, I will be utilizing both Edsby and a class website to post course information, additional resources and materials, and general messages to both students and parents. Students and parents may contact me through either one of these websites, although Edsby is preferred. Edsby is the only place where grades will be posted online. Our class website can be found by either scanning the QR code on page 1 of this syllabus or going to msmaxwellsdragons.weebly.com.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

Students today are growing up in the digital age, and personal devices such as smartphones, tablets and eReaders are becoming more and more commonplace. This year, HCPS has unrolled a Bring Your Own Device policy which will allow students to use their personal devices in school for educational purposes under the supervision of a teacher or administrator. This means that sometimes your personal devices will be welcome and used in my classroom, but with permission and purpose. I reserve the right to confiscate any electronic devices that are being misused or used without permission, and neither I nor the school will be responsible for lost or damaged personal devices. More information on the BYOD policy is available on page 13 of the Student Handbook.

The bottom line: with great gadgets comes great responsibility. Be smart about it.

Classwork and Homework

Classwork is due at the end of class each day unless specific directions are given otherwise. Classwork not finished during class time typically becomes homework and must be completed at home that night. If a no-penalty extension is granted to students who did not finish and turn in their work by the end of the period, they must remember to give their papers to me the next day. “I forgot” is not an acceptable excuse.

Contact me at teresa.maxwell@sdhc.k12.fl.us or through Edsby.



Please READ the course information, SIGN the page below, and RETURN to Ms. Maxwell by Friday, August 22nd.

Students

Please sign below to signify that you have read the course information for Ms. Maxwell’s Language Arts class, will keep it in your binder, will be responsible for the information throughout the year, and will check Edsby at least twice each month, at school or at home.

Student’s Printed Name

Student’s Signature

Parents/Guardians

Please sign below to signify that you have read the syllabus for Ms. Maxwell’s class and that you will help your student be accountable for the information. If you have any questions about the course, your student’s work or your student’s progress, please do not hesitate to contact me; email is the best way to reach me quickly.

Parent/Guardian’s Printed Name

Parent/Guardians’s Signature

Parent/Guardian’s Email Address

Parent/Guardian’s Daytime Phone

Please check the best way for me to be in contact with you. I will call for any major concerns, but with over 150 students, I would like to know how you prefer to communicate!

___ I have internet access at home and will check Edsby at least twice a month to check on my student’s progress. We will contact Ms. Maxwell with any concerns.

___ I plan to email Ms. Maxwell weekly or monthly for updates on my child’s progress.

___ I don’t have internet access at home, but will call for updates on my child’s progress.

___ I prefer to receive a letter home with any updates.

___ Other:

