Welcome to Language Arts and the beginning of a new school year! I am very happy to be here and I hope we have an insightful and captivating time together. This year will be filled with reading from a diverse collection of texts related to the theme of “The Perils of Being Human” or why being human is really dark, scary, and complicated. This year we will read some classic literature such as Edgar Allan Poe, delve into the Holocaust, and read up on psychology and current events. In writing, we will work on the craft using narrative structure to enhance informative essays and argumentation, as well as analyze and create strong arguments. We will write and conduct research on a regular basis in order to prepare you for high school.

Be prepared to create a host of collaborative projects, work on your public speaking and debate skills, strengthen your vocabulary, and finally figure out those grammar rules as we work our way through the core content standards.

In order to have a safe and effective learning environment, it is important for you to completely understand what is expected of you in this classroom.

Grading:

Grade Calculation

- Grades will be calculated based on the categories below and in accordance with the JCPS Promotion and Progression Policy. Grades are posted on Parent Portal. Grades will also be posted every Friday in the classroom. Below are the letter grade equivalents for student scores.

A  (Exceeds Standards) ................................. 90–100%
B  (Meets Standards) ................................. 80–89%
C  (Approaching Standards) ...................... 75–79%
D  (Below Standards) ............................... 70–74%
U  (Unsatisfactory) ................................. Below 70%

Conduct Grade Calculation

Conduct grades represent the extent to which the student does the following:
- Shows self-control and self-discipline
- Respects the rights and feelings of others
- Accepts responsibility for his or her own actions
- Cooperates in group activities

Grade Components/Categories:

There are 3 categories for academic grades: Student Engagement with Standards, Student Progression toward Standards, and Student Mastery of Standards.

- Student Engagement with Standards (20% of total grade)
  - Possible assignments in this category include participation (P), group work (GW), journal (J), student reflections (SR), and other measures of student interactions (SI).

- Student Progression toward Standards (30% of total grade)
  - Possible assignments in this category include homework (HW), class assignments (CA), quizzes (Q), project planning (PR), and other measures of student progress (SP).

- Student Mastery (50% of total grade)
  - Possible assignments in this category include tests (T), proficiency assessments (PA), performance assessments (PF), projects (PR), presentations (PT), and other measures of student mastery (SM).
Other Policies:

Classroom Expectations-
1. Do your best.
2. Participate.
3. Respect yourself and others.
4. Be prepared to learn.

We have high expectations for students. Failure to meet those expectations may result in various consequences depending on the severity and frequency of the offense. Consequences may include a phone call home, after school detention, lunch detention, behavioral referrals, or administrative action.

Homework-

Students will be assigned homework on a regular basis. Homework will always be announced and students will be expected to record it in their agenda. Late work is accepted for 50% off and only accepted up to a week after it was due. All homework will be stamped at the beginning of class only if it’s complete. Incomplete work and tardy work will not receive a stamp and will be considered late.

Absences & Late Work-

If you are absent from class due to illness or a school event, work can be made up for full credit. In this case, students will need to follow the class procedure for getting missed work. All absent work needs to be made up in a timely manner (within 3 days after the absence).

Getting Missed Work & Homework-

- Students will be expected to check the daily agenda calendar on days they miss class. The calendar will have a record of class lessons, any assignments that were given, and directions for what to get. If you need help with understanding the activities and/or class events, please ask a classmate first. If you have further difficulties, please see me.
- Turn all make up work into the basket and write that you were absent on your work.

Agenda-

Mastering organization skills is crucial to success in 8th grade and to the future of your education. Students will be expected to carry their school agenda at all times and will record their homework in their school agenda. Time will be given in class to do this, but it will be students’ responsibility to record necessary reminders. Bathroom breaks will not be given without an agenda.

I look forward to our time together and will do anything I can in order to make this a successful year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

–Ms. Taylor