

6th Grade Language Arts
Mrs. LaMaster—Room 224
kelli.lamaster@jefferson.kyschools.us

Welcome to Meyzeek Middle School! This is simply the best school to begin your middle school years. You have best teachers here that provide you with a caring learning environment. This will be my first year teaching at Meyzeek Middle School. However, I did teach sixth grade language arts in the parochial schools for nine years. I look forward to sharing our first year together here at Meyzeek. This year will be filled with loads of reading from a diverse collection of novels, poetry, plays, and informational texts related to the unique settings we visit in literature. In writing, we will work on the craft of creating a believable narrative, strong arguments, and analyzing what we read. We will write a lot, but by the end of the year, you will be able to crank out an effective, organized essay in no time flat.

Be prepared to create a host of projects, work on your public speaking and debate skills, strengthen your vocabulary, and finally figure out those dreadful grammar rules.

Hopefully, I can instill the inspiration for you to love reading, enhance your writing skills and feel confident when speaking in front of others. I have a 16 year-old son, 14 year-old daughter, 10 year-old daughter and a husband that travels! Life is busy in my home life, so I promise to challenge you, but not to overwhelm *your* busy schedules. I understand how busy our lives away from school can be! Homework will be assigned weekly, but is always due on Friday. Here's to a start of a great year!

Supplies

Students will need the following items by Friday, August 23rd

- 2 composition notebooks (put name on one)
- 1 spiral notebook
- Pencils
- Loose-leaf paper
- 2 pronged folders (one for class, one for take-home)
- A novel at all times

The following items would be appreciated at any time:

- Pack of expo markers or permanent markers
- Pack of Crayola markers
- Disinfecting wipes or paper towels/Kleenex

Overview of Year:

This year will focus on effective reading strategies, literary analysis, vocabulary enrichment, and building the writing tool box with a competent use of grammar and writing strategies. Units will be designed around a particular theme that will guide communication and listening skills through discussion and debate, enhance critical thinking, and develop empathetic connections with the world around us.

Grading Procedures

Students will receive a progress report every three weeks detailing their progress in the class, but parents and students may check grades periodically using Infinite Campus. I do my best to update grades at the end of each week, but late/make-up work is usually the last to be updated. Be patient and logical—sometimes only one assignment in a category will reflect a shocking grade, but realize this: I'm aware. There will be more assignments to come that will balance out the grading in a fair, student-friendly manner.

One homework assignment will be assigned weekly and should take 1-2 hours to complete. Please help students manage time, work efficiently, and not stress their poor little selves out! Usually homework is a tool to enhance writing and research methods while throwing in a little creativity. My homework assignments are given to get the family talking about pertinent, complex topics, and are sometimes (dare I say it) even fun. All homework should be typed unless otherwise specified in order to prepare students for the keyboarding skills they will need in their 21-century learning. I do not accept late homework since it is only assigned once a week. Homework is always passed out on Monday and due on Friday, so if you miss Monday, it is your responsibility to pick it up from the folder in class. If you are absent Friday, your homework must be turned in when you return. As for class work, if a student is absent he should borrow a trusted friend's agenda and locate missed assignments from the hanging red folder. "Absent" should be written at the top of the assignment and placed in the "to be graded" box.

Grading categories are as follows:

Participation 20%

Journal 10%

Classwork 20%

Homework 15%

Assessments 15%

Projects/Presentations 20%

Independent Reading

Students should be reading at least 20 minutes every night from home. We will have one project per grading period that analyzes, in depth, one of the chosen novels read. The project consists of a creative presentation of theme (more info to come) along with a one-page, typed critical essay that analyzes the theme of the novel (more info to come). Students will have access to the school library, to my classroom library, and are free to read the books collecting dust at home. Students should carry a book with them all day and read whenever they have free-time in their classes. Stay tuned for project guidelines.

Behavior

Students will follow these classroom rules:

1. Be on time.
2. Be prepared.
3. Be respectful.
4. Give your best effort and attitude.