

## Course Syllabus - English 8- Smith Junior High 2008-2009

Course: 8th Grade General English/ 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors English  
Instructor: Denise Hakala, Room 301  
Contact: Office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, call 480-472-9939 or email [dhakala@mpsaz.org](mailto:dhakala@mpsaz.org)  
Prep Period: 5th hour (1:45-2:40)  
Tutoring: While I am usually readily available most days before and after school, it would be best if students scheduled an appointment.

Web page: <http://teacherweb.com/az/smithjuniorhigh/hakala>  
The site provides very useful information about grades, daily/weekly lesson plans, work resources and requirements for special assignments. It also has a school calendar, useful resource links, and a link to the instructor's email. Every Friday grades are updated and **the password is the student school ID number**. Class worksheets can be uploaded and printed from the documents page. This is especially useful for absent students.

Course Objectives: **Writing-** To successfully incorporate the Six Traits of writing (Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions) to meet the standards expectations in all steps of the writing process.  
**Reading-** To acquire and use vocabulary in relevant contexts and employ different reading strategies for comprehension. Also to be able to identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structures and elements of literature. (For a detailed breakdown of the standards as taught by quarter see attached.)

Attendance: School policy will be adhered to regarding absence and tardiness. Students will have two days to make up any work and it is their responsibility to get the missed assignments.

Grading: Semester points are cumulative and will be assessed on all bellwork, essays, classroom assignments, homework assignments, activities, quizzes, tests, and class participation. The grade scale is as follows: 90-100% A 80-89% B 70-79% C 60-69% D 59-0% F. Incomplete work is not accepted and late work only earns half credit. Computer grade printouts may be sent home periodically.

**Students will have their current grade for the class written in their school planner every Friday.**

All formal writing assignments are scored according to the Six Traits rubric and are required to be kept in the classroom writing portfolio until the end of the year. This is very important. If a student does not keep assignments in the portfolio it will affect his/her grade. The grade slips for writing assignments can be taken home at any time. If a parent would like to see the student

portfolio or its contents, it is up to the student to check it out and return it the next day

Late Work: Late work is not acceptable but students will be provided with two late passes a quarter to use as they see fit (allowing one more day on any assignment).

Extra Credit: Extra Credit will be assigned rarely and is optional.

Classroom Management: The class standards include being prepared, respectful, and punctual. The Smith Junior High Discipline Plan will be followed. This can be found in the student handbook.

Materials: Students are required to have a book of their choice for independent reading **daily** (participation points). Library time will be scheduled twice a month, but students can go before or after school as well. There are books for check out in the classroom. Textbooks used in the class will include, but are not limited to, Elements of Literature and Elements of Writing, Second Course and Great Source writing resources.

Students should **always** have:

1. *lined paper*
2. a *writing utensil* (pencil and/or blue/black ink pen)
3. a *red checking pen* (to be used for grading).

Ink or typed font should **always** be used for the final drafts of writing assignments. And finally, spiral edged paper is **never acceptable**.

As far as supplies for the year, students will need at least two spiral notebooks for English bellwork , a binder section or folder to keep papers and assignments, sheet protectors (10-20; more about this at the end of the year) and a three-ring binder for the final portfolio project. Other useful class materials include boxes of tissue, scissors, a thesaurus, and coloring utensils.

### Independent

Reading: All eighth grade students are required to read two books each quarter independently. They will then be assessed on their knowledge of the books using different assessments.

### About the

Instructor: I am very excited to be teaching English and have always taught the middle school grades. I have taught in the Mesa district for over ten years. Please do not hesitate to contact me if for any reason you have a question or a concern. It is going to be a fantastic year!

Please fill out this form to indicate that you and your child have read and understand the course syllabus and then return it no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

Student Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Student mobile phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

Student email: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to reach you : \_\_\_\_\_

Parent mobile phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_