Peters Township Middle School  
Course Syllabus: English language arts 8

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| Course Information | Teacher Information |
| Course Length: Full Year  Class Location: B204  Teacher Website: http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/brown.aspx | Name: Renee Brown  Phone: 724.941.2688  Email: brownr@pt-sd.org |

**Course Overview and Essential Skills**

In eighth grade language arts, students will scaffold on essential elements of writing, research, and literary analysis introduced in seventh grade. Students will work with all genres, including: nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and drama. Students will develop key writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills necessary to function as successful ninth graders.

**Course Textbook, Supplemental Resources and Required Materials**

Books read in part or in full:

* *The Best of Poe: The Tell-Tale Heart, The Raven, The Cask of Amontillado, and 30 Others* (2006) ISBN# 9781580493871
* *Great Stories of Horror and Suspense* (2008) ISBN# 7981603890670
* *Great American Poems* (2008) ISBN# 7981603890717
* *The Twelfth Night* (2007) ISBN# 9781580492201
* *The Taming of the Shrew* (2007) ISBN# 9789580495929
* *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (2005) ISBN# 97881580495882
* *The Cage* (1986) ISBN# 100027818306
* *Unbroken* (2014) ISBN# 9780385742511
* *Night* (2006) ISBN# 139780374500016
* *Daniel’s Story* (1993) ISBN# 139780590465885

Additional Print Texts *that may be used if time allows*:

* Selected poems from Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Dylan Thomas, T. S. Eliot, Alfred Tennyson, and others
* “Cruelty in the Olympics” (nonfiction article by Samantha Retrosi, 2014)
* “The Art of Failure” (nonfiction unit created by The University of Pittsburgh’s Institute for Learning)
* “10,000 Hour Rule” (nonfiction article by Malcolm Gladwell, 2014)
* “Everyone Has an Accent” (nonfiction article by Walt Wolfram, 2000)
* “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson
* *Flares of Memory* (excerpts) edited by Anita Brostoff
* *After Long Silence* (excerpt) by Helen Fremont
* "Death of my Father" and "Moshe the Madman" from Legends of our Time by Elie Wiesel

Video Clips:

* *Toyland (2007 short film; rated TV-PG)*
* *Paperclips (2004 documentary; rated G)*
* *Nicky’s Family (2011 docudrama)*
* Approved Suspense Clips*: Finding Nemo, Lion King, Ice Age II: The Meltdown, Bourne Ultimatum, Signs, The Sixth Sense, I am Legend, The Day After Tomorrow, What Lies Beneath, Jurassic Park; Sponge Bob "Squeaky Boots" (Season 1, episode 8, 1999)*
* *She’s the Man (2006)*
* *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967, director Zeffirelli)
* *Ten Things I Hate About You* (clips only)
* *Do You Speak American?* (Travel Channel documentary)
* John Green’s “Crash Course #38” WWII introduction

**Course Outline of Material Covered:**

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| Unit or Topic | Course Activities/Resources | Timeframe |
| Unit of study or major topic as outlined in curriculum | Projects, papers, quizzes, labs, homework, class work, movies used, etc | May indicate the month or amount of time for unit |
| Accelerated Reader | * Independent Reading * AR digital tests | All year |
| Vocabulary (tier II and III) | * Vocabulary HW, quizzes, and tests | All year |
| Grammar | * Punctuation, usage, and improved style * IXL digital software | Embedded in units throughout the year |
| Writing | * Essay writing * Analyze nonfiction articles * HW, quizzes, and test | 4-5 weeks |
| Suspense | * Analyze elements of suspense in multiple media * Create short story with elements of suspense * Short stories by Poe and other authors * HW, quizzes, and test * Please visit the Suspense Clip movie listing above and on the PTMS website | 3-5 weeks |
| Language | * Study of the unique elements of the English language * Essay writing * HW, quizzes, and test * “Everyone Has an Accent” * “Do you Speak American” short documentary | 3-4 weeks |
| Poetry | * Analyze elements of poetic style in various poems (e.g. theme, mood, devices, etc.) * Create original poems with multimedia project * HW, quizzes, test | 4-5 weeks |
| Shakespearean Comedy | * Analyze elements of Shakespearean language and comedy * Examine the text through various media * Dramatization of the text * Analytic writing * HW, quizzes, and test * *She’s the Man*; clips from *Ten Things I Hate about You;* and *Taming of the Shrew (1967)* | 4-5 weeks |
| Holocaust and WWII Texts | * Analyze excerpts from several historically accurate texts * Read and analyze one full book on this topic * *Unbroken, Night,*  and *The Cage* * Writing assignments * Class discussion, HW, quizzes, test * *Paperclips, Toyland,* and/or *Nicky’s Family* | 4-6 weeks |
| Research | * Research a topic related to the WWII era * Create and deliver multimedia presentation * HW, quizzes | 4-5 weeks |

\****Depending on the needs of the class or changes in the school year, the course outline is subject to change.***

**Teacher Grading Policy:**

* Grades for the course will be calculated by total points.
* Late work will automatically receive zero credit.
* Long term assignments or projects may be turned in one day late for half credit before grading.
* Cheating and plagiarism are disciplinary infractions and result in a loss of credit as explained in the student handbook.

**Classroom Procedures and Expectations:**

* Be on time: You are expected to be in your seat and completing the warmup activities when the bell rings.
* Be prepared: You need to bring all of your materials with you to class every day.
* Be respectful: Do not touch anything unless it belongs to you. Show respect for all classmates and school personnel (including substitutes).
* Be responsible: Students are responsible for making all arrangements with the teacher regarding absences and missed assessments. Students are expected to self-advocate.
* All school rules apply in class and will be enforced. This includes the policy for late work due to student absences.

**“Other”:** Possible ways in which students can receive extra help are listed below:

* Students should make arrangements with teachers to receive extra help or to make up work.
* Writing Lab is available to all students for help with writing assignments for any class. It is in B204 during period 11. Ask your language arts teacher for a pass.
* Students should take advantage of any optional assignments if and when they are offered.
* Hot Shots Program: Students can sign up for this after-school program held in the PTMS library from 3:00 – 4:00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students must sign up through guidance.

Updated August 2017