

The course syllabus is not written in stone and therefore, I reserve the right to make any changes I deem necessary.

## **Eighth Grade English Language Arts**

*First Period*

**Instructor:** Colin Butts *they/them/theirs*

**Room:** 17

**Prep Period:** 5th

**Phone:** (505)830-3128

**Email:** [cbutts@paparts.org](mailto:cbutts@paparts.org)

**Website:** [bit.ly/teachingbutts](http://bit.ly/teachingbutts)

**Office Hours:**  
During our class & 8<sup>th</sup> Period, by appointment only. Please use the Request for Help form on provided on Google Classroom.

### **Course Description**

This English Language Arts (ELA) course will enable students to develop their skills in close observation and analysis, evidence-based writing, higher-order questioning, and academic conversations. This course is designed to strengthen student's abilities in critical analysis of written works. This not only allows the students to generate their own deep understanding but prepares them to utilize these skills in other academic settings. The following list shows what will be the focus in the class throughout the school year:

- *Create Your Own Learning Adventure*
- *The Hero's Journey and Writing Narratives*
- *Drama and A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- *Argumentative Writing and Informational Texts*

*\*This list is unexhaustive and is subject to change.*

### **Teaching Style:**

The style of teaching utilized within this classroom focuses heavily on creating a safe environment for students to explore ideas and engage with concepts without fear of judgement of failure. Failure is always an option and allows for the greatest learning. Ultimately, it comes down to respect. I, as your instructor, pledge to respect you and the learning that occurs within, so you should pledge to respect me and all others who enter this classroom.

This course will utilize Google Classroom for many student assignments and projects.

### **Course Objectives and Areas of Focus**

This course focuses on developing specific skills to help support the students in their current and future study of English Language Arts. This Course will focus on the following skills, with each Unit providing supplemental skills:

- Close/Critical Reading
- Educational Autonomy
- Evidence-based Writing
- Vocabulary in Context
- Precise Language
- Collaborative Communication

### **WEBB'S DOK**

All Levels of Webb's Depth of Knowledge are utilized within this classroom, with a focus on pushing students toward thinking in Levels Three and Four.

*Please See Attached sheet for an overview of Webb's DOK*

### **Grading Policies**

| Grade    | Percentage           |
|----------|----------------------|
| A- to A+ | <b>90%-100%</b>      |
| B- to B+ | <b>80%-89%</b>       |
| C- to C+ | <b>70%-79%</b>       |
| D- to D+ | <b>60%-69%</b>       |
| F        | <b>59% and below</b> |

- Projects will not be assigned that may place an undue burden on students/families with limited financial resources.
- Common rubrics will be used for all projects and formal writing assignments.
- Grades will be posted in a timely manner.

## Classroom Policies and Procedures

**Make-up Work:** It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to request make-up work. Make-up work is assigned when a student is absent. Students have one (1) day for each excused day absent in order to make up missed assignments. If a student's absence falls on the day a project or assignment is due, that assignment is due the day the student returns. To reiterate, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to request make-up work. Students need to see me during lunch or 8<sup>th</sup> period to receive their make-up work. No class time will be devoted to providing make-up work.

### *Tardy to class*

- The Golden Rule for tardiness is, "Early is on time! On time is late!"
- Each day students will have a bell ringer to work on in class. If the student is not in their seat, quietly working on the bellringer once the bell rings, the student is late to class.

### *Plagiarism and cheating*

- Dishonesty of any kind regarding activities and assignments will be considered

#### ***Cheating.***

- It is the student's responsibility to abstain from cheating, but also to take care to not create an environment of cheating among their peers.
- Students who aid a peer in cheating are just as guilty as the student who cheats.
- It is dishonest to take the work of any other person and claim it as your own.

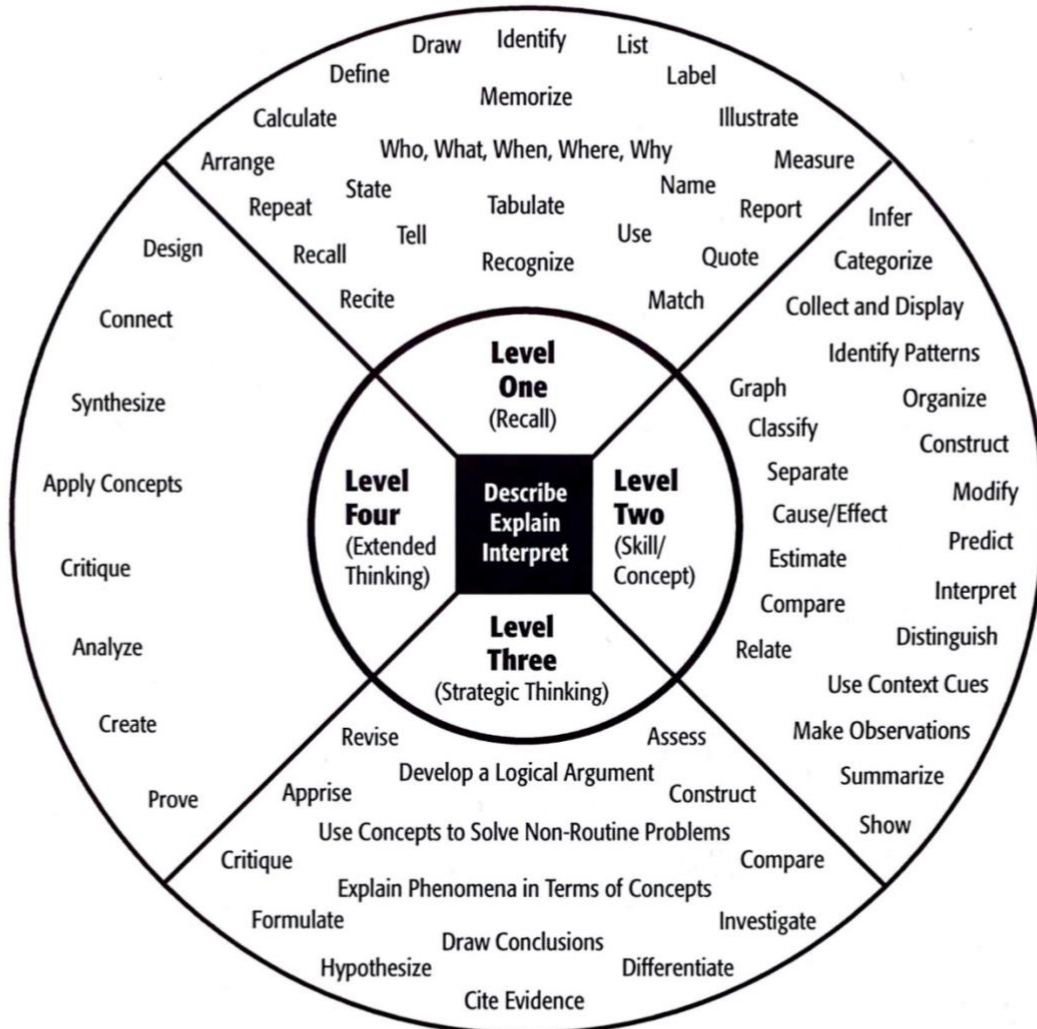
#### **Plagiarism.**

- If a student fails to cite a source for any activity or assignment, they are guilty of plagiarism.
- This also applies to having turned in an assignment done by another student as their own.
- Students who aid a peer in plagiarism are just as guilty as the student who is receiving the work.
- **If a student is found being dishonest on any activity or assignment, they will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may be required to meet with the principal.**

### *Missing, Late, and Corrected work*

- There is no grade reduction for any late assignment turned in.
- All late assignments will be graded by the end of the grading period, at the convenience of the instructor.
- Any assignment that has earned less than a 60% can be corrected and resubmitted.
- Students have until the end of the week, prior to the end of the grading period to submit any missing, late, or corrected assignments.

# Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels



| Level One Activities  | Level Two Activities  | Level Three Activities   | Level Four Activities   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Recall elements and details of story structure, such as sequence of events, character, plot and setting.</p> <p>Conduct basic mathematical calculations.</p> <p>Label locations on a map.</p> <p>Represent in words or diagrams a scientific concept or relationship.</p> <p>Perform routine procedures like measuring length or using punctuation marks correctly.</p> <p>Describe the features of a place or people.</p> | <p>Identify and summarize the major events in a narrative.</p> <p>Use context cues to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words.</p> <p>Solve routine multiple-step problems.</p> <p>Describe the cause/effect of a particular event.</p> <p>Identify patterns in events or behavior.</p> <p>Formulate a routine problem given data and conditions.</p> <p>Organize, represent and interpret data.</p> | <p>Support ideas with details and examples.</p> <p>Use voice appropriate to the purpose and audience.</p> <p>Identify research questions and design investigations for a scientific problem.</p> <p>Develop a scientific model for a complex situation.</p> <p>Determine the author's purpose and describe how it affects the interpretation of a reading selection.</p> <p>Apply a concept in other contexts.</p> | <p>Conduct a project that requires specifying a problem, designing and conducting an experiment, analyzing its data, and reporting results/solutions.</p> <p>Apply mathematical model to illuminate a problem or situation.</p> <p>Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources.</p> <p>Describe and illustrate how common themes are found across texts from different cultures.</p> <p>Design a mathematical model to inform and solve a practical or abstract situation.</p> |

**Please Sign and Return This Sheet!**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Legal First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pronouns \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and verify that you and your child have read and understand the terms of the syllabus. Please keep the syllabus and refer to it when needed.**

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing this syllabus, you as parent or guardian take full responsibility that you will communicate with your child about their grades and progress in the English classroom.**