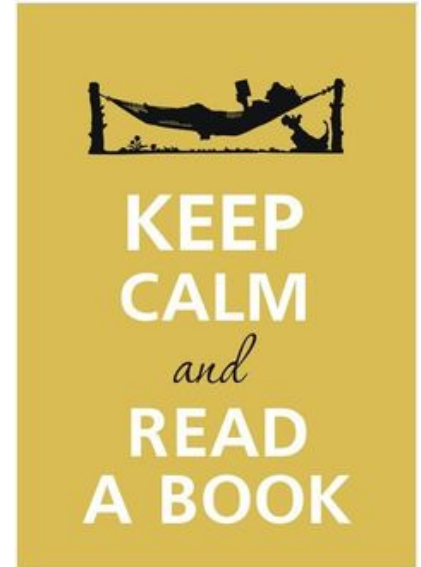


Ms. Zappia's 6th Grade Language Arts Syllabus

Dear 6th Grader,

Welcome to Mills Park Middle and welcome to language arts on the Jaguar Team. I'm ecstatic to be your teacher this year and look forward to exploring literature with you, reading your stories, and seeing you grow. (Do you know what ecstatic means? If you don't, look it up.)

Sixth-grade language art focuses on all areas of literacy. That means we don't just read. We read, write, speak, listen, visually represent, and view. This year, you'll read novels, mythology, non-fiction, short-stories, and even graphic novels. You'll write a personal narrative, letters, poetry, a myth and an argumentative research paper. You'll improve your grammar and add words to your vocabulary. You'll create projects to visually represent mastery of skills, and write reflective blog posts about our thematic units. You will work collaboratively with your classmates and hold class discussions and debates. I am here to guide, challenge, and support you. Ask questions. Develop intellectual curiosity. Read books. It will be a great year!



Dear Parents,

I look forward to working with you and your student this year. Now that your student is in middle school, he or she has four core teachers, a PE teacher, and an elective teacher. Here are some good ways for you to help your students stay on top of information, dates, and grades.

The **Mills Park Middle website** (<http://millsarkms.wcpss.net/>) is a great source of information. The Jaguar team also has a team website at www.mpmsjaguars.weebly.com where each teacher will post homework nightly, materials that will help your student study, and important upcoming dates. My class website is zappialanguagearts.weebly.com and is linked to the team site. I'll also send home quarterly grades and progress reports in the middle of each quarter.

One goal that we have for 6th graders at MPMS is that they begin to advocate for themselves. I encourage the students to talk to me directly when they have questions or need help. I'll also teach them to use their WCPSS student email accounts the second week of school and encourage them to email me if they don't get the chance to talk to me during homeroom, class, or leopard time. That being said, you and I are a team when it comes to your child, so please reach out to me with any social, emotional, or academic issues that affect your student. The best way to contact me is through my email: jzappia@wcpss.net.

Ms. Zappia

Important Information

Thematic Units : There are six units that take us through the year. Wake County provides a pacing guide and standards for each unit. From there, the 6th grade language arts team creates engaging, challenging lessons and activities using literature related to the thematic concepts and designed to meet the specific needs of each child. Each unit tab on my website will contain a document detailing the specific objectives covered in each unit and we come to them.

Unit 1: Who Am I?

Unit 2: Belonging

Unit 3: Survival

Unit 4: Making Choices

Unit 5: What's Your Point

Unit 6: Where Am I?

Vocabulary: Every two weeks, I will give students a list of 10 words that they will encounter in upcoming lessons. Students will participate in vocabulary activities in class, learn to use the words in context, and will complete one or two short assignments designed to deepen understanding of the words. There is a Quizlet set for the vocabulary words on my website that gives students access to flashcards, games, and practice quizzes for the words.

Grammar: Grammar is taught throughout the year. There will be a focus on parts of speech at the beginning of the year and we will move on to sentence types, and proper usage. Grammar instruction is mostly integrated into the writing lessons so that students are directly applying what they learn and see grammar as a tool rather than arcane information.

Portfolio Blogs: My website was made using weebly.com. Weebly education allows me to set up password-protected blog pages for my students. Each student will create a secure website that contains a reflection blog and a portfolio where he or she can post work created during 6th grade. We will work on these blogs during class especially at the beginning of the year, and as students become more comfortable, they will work on them at home.

Books: This year students will read *American Born Chinese*, *Navigating Early*, and several other novels. We will read some books as a whole class, but others will be read in book clubs, giving students a choice in the books that they read. I will give several weeks notice when students are asked to find a copy of a particular book. I will scour bookstores to have a few copies of the books in case students cannot provide their own. Students may also check out books from the school or public library, or can find used copies at bookstores or online. *Ebooks are usually fine, but should not be used for sequential art (graphic novel) books and I prefer that students bring paper copies so they may annotate.

Late Policy: Students should turn things in when they are due. If students do not complete work by its deadline, they will need to use leopard time to catch up and I will still accept it and grade it for mastery. Any late work must be turned in by unit deadlines.

Absences: Students, it's your responsibility to make up any missed work. For each day you missed, you may turn in the assignment late without a penalty. It's a great idea to keep up with the team website if you're home sick. If know that you'll be absent ahead of time, please talk to me about the work you will miss and arrange to do it ahead of time. You can also email me from home if you have any questions or want to let me know that you won't be at school.

Grading: At Mills Park, we believe in using a balanced grading system that incorporates a variety of assessments. We understand and value the fact that all students learn differently and we strive to create and maintain an environment in which every student will be successful. Students are graded on mastery of the objectives, not on organization or habits. The student's final grade for each quarter and semester will be determined by dividing the number of points the student earned on all assignments by the total points available. This will produce a percentage grade that will be assigned the appropriate letter based on the WCPSS 7 point scale. Students will be told the point value of an assignment in advance.

Grading Scale (All subjects are graded on this scale.)

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	77-84
D	70-76
F	0-69

Homework: Homework is assigned as a tool to help students practice concepts learned in class. Homework that is collected for a grade will be graded for mastery, not for completion. Graded homework assignments are worth 1 pt. each.

Classwork: Classwork is anything completed during a class period. It is worth 1-15 points.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given throughout each unit. There *will* be pop quizzes. Points for a quiz will range from 1-20pts.

Tests: There will be an assessment at the end of each unit. Usually the assessment will be a test, but it may be a written assignment or project. Students will receive advanced notice of and study guides for unit tests. Points for a test will range from 25-50 points. All 6th grade language arts teachers will offer an opportunity for ALL students to make up missed points on tests. Students will be required to attend a study session with me within a week of the test being handed back, will correct his or her mistakes, and will write an analysis of the problems missed. Each student can earn back ½ of the points they missed. So a student who earned a 30/ 40 on a test can earn up to a 35/40. A student who earned 38/40 can earn a 39/40, etc.

ELA Supplies Each student should have:

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Student's Name _____ Student's Signature _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Students, keep this in your language arts binder.