

Indian Mound Middle School

6330 Exchange Street, McFarland, WI 53558
Phone: 608.838.8980 Fax: 608.838.4588 Website: www.mcfarland.k12.wi.us

Hi! I am Heidi Meyer. I am excited to continue working with this community to prepare students for their future. I am dedicated to using my passion for reading and writing to foster my students' acquisition of skills. I'm pleased to have you in my Language Arts class.

Our Philosophy

Ms. Burke, Mr. Luedtke, Ms. Meyer, and Ms. Ndlovu ascribe to the belief that to become better readers and writers, students should have time to practice reading and writing. We aim to provide time for reading as well as discussing and writing about what we're reading in class. Sharing the ideas that are hatched from what we read leads to greater literacy and engenders excitement about new books. Writing assignments in Reading/ Language Arts will be as authentic and real-world ready as we can make them. Writing is generative and will lead to students developing a better understanding of themselves and their world. We will foster this greater awareness with diverse and thought-provoking writing opportunities.

Language Arts 7/8 Course Description

IMMS Language Arts seeks to continue the progress made by students in language arts using authentic practice and implementation in these core areas of literacy: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking. Students will demonstrate their growth, understanding of the process and create products in the following areas:

- **Independent Reading**

Students will be expected to independently read 30 minutes every night--approximately 200 pages per week (about 40 books by the end of the school year). Students need to read outside of school to make their goal. We also will consistently provide reading time in class to build literacy skills and receive support.

- **Reading Units**

Students will have a variety of choices in multiple thematic book group units throughout the year. In these units, students will practice reading strategies to gain a deeper understanding of elements within a text. In each unit, students will work collaboratively with their peers applying skills they've learned in mini-lessons. Each thematic unit has essential questions that will guide the students reading and discussions.

- **Writing Workshop**

Writing Workshop Units of Study follow our philosophy, in that more practice doing something leads to greater skill level. Students will write in different genres throughout the year. Ample time will be given to write, rewrite, confer with teachers and to practice skills taught in mini-lessons. Over time, students will create writing that will show growth as well as the students' understanding of the writing process in these genres.

Mr. Aaron Tarnutzer
Principal

Mr. Brett Jondle
Associate Principal

Ms. Jill Runde
Guidance Counselor

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Please Be Prepared. Items that students will need to bring to class on a daily basis:

Daily Supplies

1. Book or articles to read during independent reading time
2. Writing utensil
3. Language Arts Folder or Binder
4. A notebook and loose-leaf paper
5. Fully charged iPad w/headphones

Grading Procedures:

1. Summative Assessments (80%):
Includes unit-ending reflections and final copies of writing assignments
2. Formative Assessments (10%):
Includes in-class assignments, writing workshop check-ins, and IR essays
3. Independent Reading (IR) (10%)
4. Conduct and Effort:
Students will be expected to follow the guidelines outlined in the “We A.R.R.E. Spartans” rubric.
5. Late work:
Students will be given ample opportunity to learn new skills and achieve the goals of class. Timeliness is encouraged. Setting goals to meet deadlines also will be practiced. Due dates will be revised/extended when students need extra time to accomplish assigned tasks. Significant delays might result in requests for students to schedule additional work time and/or affect a student’s conduct and effort grade.

Grading Scale:

7th grade teachers will employ a 4-point grading scale for all graded work in reading/ language arts. The 4-point grading scale:

<p><i>4 – Going Beyond</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Skills demonstrated are above grade level <p><i>3 – Got It</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Skills demonstrated are at grade level <p><i>2 – On the Way</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Skills need to be practiced and demonstrated more consistently to reach grade level	<p><i>1 – Just Starting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Skills need to be learned, practiced and demonstrated consistently to reach grade level <p><i>0 – No Evidence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Work is missing
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How to Contact Me

You can contact me using email; my address is meyerh@mcsfd.org. You also may call IMMS (608) 838-4500 ext. 4879.

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Dear families,

Middle school is tough. Starting the year, figuring out routines, and getting to know expectations can be overwhelming. There is one message I want to make sure doesn't get lost in the shuffle. I try to be sensitive to all my students' needs and the more information I have, the more helpful I can be.

I've noticed after several years of teaching that, when students hide their confusion or that they are feeling overwhelmed, ELA begins to feel impossible instead of challenging. My goal is to find out about the confusion and stress early on, so I can help students work through the situation. Sometimes, students are unclear on what they need to do. Other times, they think the assignment is larger than it actually is. Talking to the student is usually all that is needed. After listening to their concerns, I sometimes modify assignments to make them manageable. Assignments should be challenging, but not impossible. I do my best to assess individual student needs in class by asking if students have questions, having students fill out exit slips, and circulating around the classroom during work time. Sometimes students feel uncomfortable approaching me during these times and have reached out to me through email. Students may also share their confusion and stress with the adults in their life before bringing it up with me. If this happens with your student, please encourage them to let me know, or contact me yourself. No matter how busy I am, my job is to help them learn. If I am unable to help in the moment, I will make the time to meet with them later. Their experience is just as important as every other student in the classroom.

While developing their reading and writing skills, ELA students explore the human experience. Readings in class provide students the opportunity to discuss and reflect on ideas like individuality, family, friendship, justice, and death. I am aware that students' time in my classroom is only a small part of their lives, and that each student has experienced these concepts in different ways. In 7th grade the themes of family and justice are explored in literature circle groups. While engaging with these ideas, the topic of death is often brought up. If someone close to your student has died, please consider letting me know. If you feel your student may need additional support during these discussions, contact me so we can make moments like these manageable for your students.

I want you and students to know that there are options available to address each student's needs.

Sincerely,
Heidi Meyer

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Principal

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