

Dear Students and Parents,

Hello, and welcome to 8th grade English. Our team this year consists of **Mr. John Spurny**, and **Mrs. Tanya Rudolph**. We wanted to share with you some of this year's expectations in preparing for high school and answer some commonly asked questions. Please read this in detail and keep it for future reference.

**Team-Teaching:** We nearly always have BSU interns and multiple certified teachers helping in our classrooms. This is beneficial to your student as they will have multiple experts to look to for help; which also means you may hear another teacher's name referred to. This year's intern is **Miss Amanda Stewart**, and she will be the lead teacher in Mr. Spurny's classroom during her Student Teaching second semester. Any questions you have about interns should be sent to the scheduled teacher's email/phone lines. At various times your student will be transitioning between English 8 teachers for targeted instruction based on their learning needs. This means that the wall between classrooms may be opened allowing for all 40+ students to work together.

**Contact Us:** We mean it. Parents and students. Email us with any questions you have any time and we will try to respond within 24 hours. Do not hesitate to let us know if you don't understand any part of an assignment, grade, discussion, requirement, etc. If you don't tell us there's confusion, we may never know it's there. Please email us if you need to: [spurny.john@westada.org](mailto:spurny.john@westada.org), and [rudolph.tanya@westada.org](mailto:rudolph.tanya@westada.org).

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade English:** This is **NOT** a 90-minute block where Literature/Strategies is taught separate from Writing/Composition. This is a single 45-minute period where all standards go into one final grade. This makes class a bit more fast-paced and we hit the ground running.

**Novels/Textbooks:** There is a NEW textbook for daily reading assignments (both informational and literature). Fines will be given for any missing or damaged books (including novels and those from the classroom's mini-library). Many assignments will be given in the ONLINE format of the "My Perspectives" textbook. Each student will be taught how to log in at school and from home. If a student is absent, it is their responsibility to make up the reading and corresponding assignments on their own time.

**Writing:** We always outline and begin writing assignments in class and then edit and revise them together. However, your student may need to devote additional time outside of class to write and re-write their work before the due date. If we require students to type their final drafts, they will be given in-class time to do so (the library is open before and after school if additional time is needed, and the school has provided students with email addresses that have access to a Word program to use on both PC and MAC). **\*\*The rubrics provided are crucial.\*\*** These are what we use to grade student's final products - if they follow the guidelines and write well, they will receive higher marks. Journal writing will not be entirely read for content, but will be periodically checked for completion of topic by the teacher.

**Speaking & Listening:** Students will be expected to participate in small group and full class discussions. Students will also be expected to prepare presentations for small groups and the entire class both individually and in groups. These are not high-pressure, but students will need to follow the different rubrics each time.

**Language Practice/Tests (Vocabulary):** The concept is to understand the Greek and Latin roots in everyday words so students can apply those definitions to unknown words and expand their vocabularies. Four packets will be completed per quarter and one test over all four packets will be administered at the end of the quarter. Study aides will also be available online. Grammar is included in the LP packet every other week as well.

## LHMS English 8 Syllabus

2019-  
2020

**Agenda:** The weekly agenda is posted in the classroom, and students are asked to write it in their agenda books for reference every week. The agenda/calendar can also be found online 24/7 and is updated weekly on <http://westada.org/Domain/2079> or [2089](http://westada.org/Domain/2089). Please check it regularly, and know that 'not knowing' is not an excuse that will be accepted. Links to each Language Practice List, and many other in-class documents are also available online as they are assigned.

**Supplies:** Binder, loose-leaf paper, pencils, and pens. OPTIONAL: Tissues and sanitizer. If you do not have internet access at home, your student may need a USB drive to transport documents to and from school.

**Grades:** Grading will follow a standard grading scale. They are weighted in four categories based on the National Common Core State Standards: Reading for Information and Literature, Writing, Speaking & Listening, and Language (please see the class descriptions section). We do NOT give extra credit. There will be occasional extra credit questions available on tests or assignments, but no additional *work* may be completed to substitute or accompany the work that is already expected. It is the students' responsibility to track and verify correct scores on PowerSchool. Errors do occur, and we will be happy to discuss grades any time. After each Unit is over, all past assignments become "MACO" (Missing After Cut Off) and can no longer be turned in. Any cheating or plagiarism will result in a referral to administration.

**Late Work Policy:** Due dates are always clearly posted, and plenty of class time is given. If the assignment is turned in by the posted due date, it will receive the full credit it earned. This is to promote timeliness and discourage copying, which is a form of cheating that will involve disciplinary action. Projects that require a class presentation will lose partial credit if not presented during the class period scheduled, requiring the teacher to be an audience before/after school. All assignments given during a Unit have a Deadline at the end of the Unit, and may NOT earn credit after the completion of that Unit per the LHMS policy. **Absent Work School Policy:** If a student is absent, they have two days to turn in the work assigned on those days before the late work policy goes into effect. If the assignment was given before the absence, it is due as scheduled or the day the student returns. Extenuating circumstances will be discussed with administration so an agreement can be reached. **Ketchup Club:** Please see the student handbook or an administrator to discuss consequences of having a grade below 70% AND a missing assignment.

**LHMS Tardy Policy:** Students will be marked tardy in PowerSchool and disciplined by administration (see website/handbook). Excessive tardies (5+ will result in further teacher contact with administration).

**Technology:** Students have been allowed to bring phones/technology with teacher permission to classes for in-class use, but many often abuse this privilege. We only allow these devices with approval from the teacher. If your student is seen with their device without permission administrative action will be taken.

**Discipline: School Rules:** Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible. Please read the Student-Parent Handbook in the front of your student's Agenda carefully for details regarding the 'Step Referral' program for discipline used at LHMS by teachers and substitutes. Students are held accountable to the listed rules, and will face disciplinary action if one or more of them are broken. Attendance and tardiness are serious issues; students cannot learn if they are not present and on time.

\*\*\* We are very strict on the school rules and the tardy policy; students need to learn as much responsibility as possible in middle school as they can lose credits here and in high school and may have to pay for them later if they do not develop these skills. Thank you for your support.



PowerSchool Parent is a powerful tool to check your child's progress, assignments and/or missing assignments, and grades. You have real time access to my gradebook. Login, click on the letter grade/percentage grade for the appropriate quarter class or semester class and grades for individual school assignments/tasks will display. The PowerSchool Parent Website hyperlink for the West Ada School District is as follows:

<https://ps.www.westada.org/public/home.html>

If you have any questions about how to setup PowerSchool Parent, please call LHMS Registrar, Barb Nelson at 208-855-4375. PowerSchool can be set-up to view all of your middle & high school students with one login. It is critically important that you as parents, back up your children by checking their assignments/grades on PowerSchool. If your children know you are checking weekly, they are more apt to turn their work in on time, do better quality work, and avoid missing work with the dreaded zero score and "M" (for missing assignment) symbol.