

# **BNS Middle School Language Arts Curriculum 2024-2025**

## **Instructor: Jared Bond Myths and Legends**

### **Introduction**

The middle school language arts curriculum allows students to explore multiple genres and authors through the integrated study of literature, critical writing, creative writing, and grammar. Students will read selections from and write responses to a variety of authors, works, and genres. This curriculum correlates with the current World Studies curriculum, which surveys ancient civilizations this year. Thus, many of the books and themes discussed in language arts will be tied into the mythology of these ancient cultures. The contemporary literature selections will help students better appreciate these same topics in their World Studies curriculum. All instruction, materials, and assignments will be based on the strengths and needs of the class and individual students. The curriculum will incorporate student interests while meeting Virginia SOLs and BNS objectives. Grammar and vocabulary lessons will be derived from Sadlier-Oxford *Vocabulary Workshop* and a grammar program loosely based on the *Easy Grammar: Plus* model of instruction. Spelling lessons will be derived individually from student mistakes.

### **Reading**

A variety of literary genres will be covered this year, including short stories, drama, modern fiction, and science fiction. While topics correlate with themes explored in social studies, works have been chosen based on depth of themes, perceived student interest, language complexity, and purposeful exposure to a variety of writing styles, both classical and modern. Aside from reading assigned for class, students will be further expected to select books for independent reading. Time will also be set aside for sustained silent reading. Students will be asked to respond to literature in various ways, in particular through questioning, connecting literature to previous experiences, creating images, making predictions, and exploring themes, literary devices, and word choice. Student comprehension and use of inference will be encouraged through active discussion, questioning, reflection, and critical thinking.

### **Writing**

Students will likewise be asked to respond to literature by writing in a variety of ways, both creatively and technically. Each unit allows students to produce creative and technical products, and a variety of formal and informal response forms will be studied. Through response journals students will informally respond to reading throughout the curriculum. Writing will be further enhanced with regular assignments requiring students to master a variety of styles, to write for a variety of audiences, and to explore their own experiences through writing. Emphasis will be placed on form in writing, including

proper sentence formation, paragraph formation, and composition organization. Students will experience the full complexities of the writing process by regularly engaging in brainstorming, composing, revising, proofreading, and publishing. Content, organization, voice, fluency, grammar, and word choice will be emphasized throughout the writing process. Students will work on retaining their cursive skills through monthly practice assignments. All students will participate in the school-wide celebration of writing at the end of the year by producing, revising, proofreading, and presenting a short writing project for Authors' Tea.

### **Grammar and Vocabulary**

Grammatical conventions will be studied regularly in the form of regular lessons as part of a 3-year program. Grammar will also be emphasized throughout the course of student writing. Writers' workshops will enhance exploration of the conventions of writing styles and purposes. Students will be expected to use studied grammar and spelling rules in all formal writing assignments and to revise assignments so that they contain no grammatical mistakes. In addition, there will be a focus on vocabulary enhancement, especially words they encounter frequently in high school reading.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Speaking and listening will be integrated throughout the curriculum through regular oral presentation, small group discussions, literature circles, sharing of writing, debate, and drama. All students are expected to contribute to group discussions and to listen attentively to others in the classroom. Students will work to develop confidence in their own speaking abilities as well as to show respect toward the work and opinions of others.

### **Assessment**

Students will be assessed both formally and informally throughout the year. Ideally, each student will be able to use his or her own strengths and interests to display knowledge. A variety of assessment opportunities will be given, including quizzes, informal response journals, short term assignments, long-term assignments, essays, homework completion, portfolios, creative pieces, and participation in a variety of in-class assignments, including whole-class, group, and individual. The grading policy will include the following:

Quizzes and short-term assignments	15%
Long-term assignments, including major creative assignments and essays	40%
Class preparation and homework completion, including response journals	25%
Class work, notebook organization, and appropriate participation in discussion	20%

## Curriculum Overview:

Dates Projects	Unit of Study	Literary Works	Writing
August / September	<b><u>Introduction to Literature</u></b> - Short Stories	6 <sup>th</sup> - “The Three Questions,” “Chivalry,” “Charles,” “A Sound of Thunder” and more  7 <sup>th</sup> - “Secret Life of Walter Mitty,” “Gator,” We Can Get Them For You Wholesale,” “There Will Come Soft Rains” and more  8 <sup>th</sup> – “Celebrated Jumping Frog,” “Cop and the Anthem,” “The Lottery,” “Owl Creek” and more	- Book Review  - Compare/ Contrast Essay
October/ November	<b><u>Greek Mythology</u></b> - Novels  <b><u>Creation Stories</u></b>	6 <sup>th</sup> - <u>The Night Tourist</u>  7 <sup>th</sup> - <u>Nobody’s Princess</u>  8 <sup>th</sup> – <u>The Odyssey</u> (Graphic Novel)  World creation stories	- Character Essay  - Origin Story
December	<b><u>Norse Mythology</u></b>	Neil Gaiman’s <u>Norse Mythology</u> (selections)  8 <sup>th</sup> – Begin <u>Runemarks</u>	
January / February	<b><u>Norse Mythology</u></b> - Novels	6 <sup>th</sup> – <u>Sea of Trolls</u>  7 <sup>th</sup> - <u>Sea of Trolls</u>  8 <sup>th</sup> – <u>Runemarks</u>	- Literature Circles

<b>February / March</b>	<u><b>Egyptian Mythology</b></u> - Novels	<b>6<sup>th</sup> - <u>Theodosia &amp; the Serpents of Chaos</u></b>  <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> – <u>Sphinx’s Princess</u></b>	- Outside reading book project
<b>April / May</b>	<u><b>Shakespeare</b></u> - Drama	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	- Authors’ Tea Projects: - 6 <sup>th</sup> - Dialogue - 7 <sup>th</sup> - Vignettes - 8 <sup>th</sup> – Inner Monologue  - Play Performance