

English Language Arts Page

Spectrum Middle School English Language Arts Program Philosophy

The goal of the Middle School English Language Arts Department is to equip students with effective communication and critical thinking skills. We offer complementary block writing and literature courses in order to empower our students to develop a greater depth of knowledge, thus giving them the tools to be life-long learners and clear communicators beyond school.

Spectrum Middle School English Language Arts Program Goals

Spectrum students will be able to independently use their learning in order to:

Writing

- Write in a variety of genres for various audiences (formal vs. informal) with clear purposes: explain (expository), entertain (narrative/poem) argue (persuasive) and reflect (personal).
- Use elements of the writing process to fit the task: prewrite, draft, revise, edit and publish.
- Develop and strengthen writing traits: ideas, organization, voice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation.

Literature

- Read and respond to text in various genres (literature, non-fiction, technical) for various purposes (entertainment, to be informed, to perform a task).
- Comprehend text by inferring and tracing the main idea, interpreting ('between the lines'), critically appraising, and making personal connections.
- Enjoy reading as a chosen leisure time pursuit!

Critical Thinking

- Think critically about information and claims encountered at school and beyond by seeking clarity, accuracy, sound evidence, good reasons, and fairness.

Communication

- Effectively communicate for different purposes and varied audiences using appropriate media.

Collaboration

- Work effectively with, and learn from, others in a variety of situations, in school and beyond.

Research

- Locate pertinent information from varied and credible sources (print, online; primary, secondary)
- Critically evaluate sources and information (e.g., for accuracy, completeness, timeliness, lack of bias, properly referenced).

Taking Responsible Risks

- Try something new and different without a paralyzing fear of making mistakes.

English Language Arts Curriculum Resources and Novels

Grade 7:

Textbooks:

Literature, McGraw Hill

Traits Writing, Scholastic

Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition, McGraw Hill

Novels:

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, John Boyne

The Outsiders, S.E. Hinton

The Westing Game, Ellen Raskin

Grade 8:

Textbooks:

Literature, McGraw Hill

Traits Writing, Scholastic

Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition, McGraw Hill

Novels:

The Diary of Ann Frank

Animal Farm, George Orwell

Standards and Content Resources

[MDE English Language Arts Standards Page](#)