

**COURSE PROFICIENCY OUTLINE
LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE EIGHT
PINNACLE PROGRAM**

PURPOSE **State Standards 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5**
Workplace Readiness Standards 1,2,3,4

The language arts program in grade eight not only continues to build on the basic skills in reading, grammar, and writing that the students have acquired in the previous grades, but also prepares them to successfully pursue the English curriculum at the high school. The major phases of work that a student covers are grammar, oral and written communication, reading comprehension skills, vocabulary development, study skills, and the study of literature.

I. STUDENT OUTCOMES **State Standards 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5**
Workplace Readiness Standards 1,2,3,4

- A. Students will develop skills in writing, speaking, reading, listening, and viewing.
- B. Students will develop the skills necessary to interpret, analyze, and critique text and media.
- C. Students will demonstrate an ability to manage information and construct meaning through analysis, inference, interpretation, summaries, generalizations and appraisals utilizing a wide selection of materials.

In addition to these curriculum goals, the Pinnacle program in language arts will provide students with enrichment in many of the following areas:

- A. Group and individual activities in drama, short stories, novels, essays, poetry, and non-fiction writing
- B. Further development of critical thinking skills through written reaction and discussion of literature
- C. Strong emphasis on the role of grammar and its integration into our language
- D. Opportunities to explore and develop their creativity and areas of interest through writing and research.

II. CONTENT

- A. Grammar and Mechanics
 - 1. Types of phrases—adjective vs. adverb
 - 2. Participles/participle phrase
 - 3. Types of clauses: independent vs. subordinate, adjective/adverb
 - 4. Simple/Compound/Complex/Compound-Complex sentences
 - 5. Punctuation: focus on correct comma usage
 - 6. “Words Often Confused” (there/their/they’re, you’re/your, etc.)

7. Thorough review and extension/expansion of all learned concepts in grades 6/7
8. Focused attention on proper application of grammar concepts in student writing

B. Composition

1. Further development and reinforcement of revision/editing skills
2. Development of a multi-paragraph essay on topics that will ask the student to propose solutions to problems, relate causes and effects, and convince the reader of his/her position on an issue.
3. Development of a well-supported reaction to a story, book, article, or other text.
4. Single and/or multi-paragraph responses to a story, book, article, or other text.
5. Written response/reaction to a picture.
- * 6. Optional research reports not to exceed five pages.

C. Reading

- * 1. Reinforcement and refinement of basic reading skills and the ability to locate information using a variety of reference material. These basic reading skills include both literal and inferential comprehension of the following:

main idea	inference
supporting details	drawing conclusions
comparison/contrast*	predicting outcomes
cause/effect*	author's purpose*
sequence	fact/opinion*
classifying/organizing	

2. Understanding and application of the following literary terms:

figurative language	flat, round characters
plot	flashback
setting	foreshadowing
characterization	mood
flat/round characters	symbol
protagonist/antagonist	irony
conflict	point of view
resolution	resolution
	theme

3. Exposure to various literary types: novel, short story, drama, poetry, biography, and essay
4. Experience with various text types: narrative, informational, persuasive, everyday
5. Development of interpretative, analytical and appreciative skills

D. Vocabulary

1. Meaning from context and precise meaning of words through definition, spelling, pronunciation, and usage in a sentence
2. Words based on reading selections and teacher-prepared units
3. Effective use of dictionary and thesaurus

E. Study Skills

1. Listening
2. Following directions
3. Note taking
4. Scanning, skimming, surveying techniques
5. Test-taking strategies
6. Library/Reference skills

III. **MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES**

A. Texts

1. *Prentice Hall Literature New Jersey/ Penguin Edition 2007*
Pearson/ Prentice Hall 2007
2. Various supplemental reading materials in addition to class text.
3. *Elements of Writing, Second Course (8)*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
4. *Vocabulary Workshop Level C* Sadlier-Oxford

B. Class work

1. Lectures, discussions, audio-visual materials, class texts, and supplementary reading materials will be utilized.
2. Skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and critical thinking will be stressed.
3. Assignments, quizzes, and tests will be graded and reviewed by teacher and pupils.

IV. EVALUATION

- A. Students will be expected to complete homework and class work learning assignments on time.
- B. Students will be expected to participate in class activities.
- C. Students will be expected to study for and to complete tests and quizzes successfully.
- D. Students will be expected to take comprehensive quarterly exams.
- E. Students will be expected to bring text, pencil or pen, notebooks, and other necessary materials to class.
- F. The final grade represents the teacher's professional judgment of the student's performance. All of the aforementioned activities and/or requirements are included in the evaluation process.

* These items are directly related to the state standards.

Revised: August, 2011