

Pine Valley Middle School Course Description 2009-2010

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Grades, class work & homework will be posted at least once a week online at this web site: www.schoolloop.com (You can also send E-mail through schoolloop.com)

My prep period is from 11:14 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or insights.

ENGLISH 8 -- Major Course Description:

The English curriculum is a balanced program of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking skills developed from the state's Standards.

Grammar, spelling and vocabulary are considered to be an important component of the program. These skills can be wonderfully developed when integrated with history.

Reading:

The eighth grade curriculum is literature based. *Prentice Hall Literature* will be utilized in our study of plot, character, setting, theme, and conflict. In addition, a maximum of five novels will be read throughout the year.

The Call of the Wild: Jack London

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry: Mildred Taylor

The Pigman: Paul Zindel

The Outsiders: S. E. Hinton

Writing:

With the adoption of the *Prentice Hall Literature* book, Daily Language Practice sheets, and the District Writing Project, students will be able to better learn the art of writing domains. Persuasive writing is the focus for 8th grade, however all of the following writing types will be assigned.

Autobiographical Incident

Cover Letter and Resume

Story and Poetry

Report of Information

Letter Writing

Problem- Solution

Evaluation

Persuasive Essay

Compare and Contrast

Response to Literature

Grammar and Punctuation: *McDougall/Littel Grammar Book*

While the major emphasis in writing will be upon content and organization, it is also important that students learn and be accountable for grammar and punctuation. They will learn the eight parts of speech, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence variation.

Spelling and Vocabulary:

With the adoption of *Houghton Mifflin's Spelling and Vocabulary*, students will embark upon a program that offers mastery commonly used words as well as challenge words. Vocabulary will be taken from the novels and studied as well as from prepared lists. Daily, students will be presented with a Word of the Day for which they will be accountable for using and spelling these words properly in their writing.

Speeches and Class Participation:

Students will learn and write a speech and will have opportunities to give impromptu speeches as well as oral presentations during the school year. Students are expected to participate orally in class. They will be awarded Class Participation Points for sharing their Word of the Day sentences, reading their writing aloud, and other forms of oral participation. The points will be added and averaged.

U.S. HISTORY- Major Course Description:

The history curriculum in the eight grade is to develop an in-depth knowledge of significant events, major happenings, and critical turning points in American history. To develop a greater understanding of our unique present in light of our historical past, we have incorporated into our curriculum the state Standards with particular emphasis to the areas of critical thinking and work-study skills.

Content:

- 1. Discoveries of the New World**
- 2. Colonial Period**
 - a. Settlement
 - b. Life in the Colonies
 - c. Governing the Colonies
- 3. Forming a New Nation**
 - a. War of Independence (Revolutionary War)
 - b. Early attempts at a central government
- 4. The Constitution and Government**
- 5. Westward Movement**
 - a. Age of Jefferson
 - b. War of 1812
 - c. Age of Jackson
 - d. Manifest Destiny

6. Civil War

- a. Slavery and abolitionism
- b. Issue of states' rights
- c. Steps leading to the War
- d. The Blue vs. Gray
- e. Reconstruction

7. Rise of Industrial America

- a. Railroad
- b. Corporations
- b. Inventions- Inventors
- d. Unionization
- e. Rise of political machines
- f. Immigration

8. Isolationism- Expansionism

- a. Theodore Roosevelt
- b. Reformers and Progressive

Grading Policy:

Grading will be based on a point system. Homework, quizzes, tests, and participation will be added together to formulate students' grades for both English and History.

99%+ = A+

94% - 98% = A

90% - 93% = A-

87% - 89% = B+

84% - 86% = B

80% - 83% = B-

76% - 79% = C+

73% - 75% = C

70% - 72% = C-

66% - 69% = D+

63% - 65% = D

60% - 62% = D-

Below 60% = F

Accessing Students' Grades:

Grades can be accessed online through the Pine Valley Middle School web site or through the schoolloop.com web site.

Binder Reminders:

Students will be expected to write down their assignments in their binder reminders on a daily basis. Students and parents may also look on pvms.schoolloop.com to see a calendar with the daily assignments.

Discipline Policy:

I expect students to behave. All school and district regulations are to be followed. (See Student Handbook) Each class member will follow the rules listed below:

Respect the rights of others. No one shall behave in such a manner as to interrupt the ability of another to learn or teach. This also applies to substitute teachers who may take over the class.

Respect property. Take care of your property, the property of others, and the property of the school.

Be prompt to class. This means, "Be in your seat when the bell rings." The teacher will handle the first three tardies. The first tardy is a warning. The second and third tardies require a trash pick up and parents will be notified. School administrators will handle the fourth and any further tardies.

Bring all required materials to class. Binder Reminders are to be used on a daily basis also.

Complete all assignments, and turn them in on time.

Keep your hands and feet to yourself.

Refrain from chewing or eating anything unless given permission. A litter pickup will be assigned to any student who is chewing gum.

Do not toss or throw anything.

Use appropriate language at all times, and never use put-downs.

Any serious physical or verbal misbehavior will result in immediate removal from classroom to the principal or assistant principal's office, and parents will be notified.

Absence Policy:

When absent, students will be responsible for missed assignments that will be listed in the front of the classroom on the class assignment sheet. Upon returning from their absence, students have 3-5 days to complete all work (depending on the length of the absence). It is the student's responsibility to pick up all worksheets located in the trays in the front of the classroom. **Tests must be made up after school on the WEDNESDAY at 2:30, following the absence.**

Necessary materials to be brought to class everyday:

Pens (blue or black) AND RED PENS (at least three)

Small three-ring binder - with six tab dividers

Glue stick

Homework - will not be accepted late unless there was an excused absence

Standard loose-leaf lined paper

Highlighters and TWO 100-page spiral binders (one for English and one for U.S. History)

BINDER REMINDER

Colored pencils

Written Work:

Written work must be neat and legible with final copies done in ink. Pencil is acceptable for drafts and specified assignments only.

Headings:

Heading must be on the right-hand side of your paper.

- a. Name: first and last
- b. Date: 8-27-08
- c. Core: 1/2 or 3/4
- d. Title: Centered on the third line

Saturday School:

As part of our intervention program for failing students, students may attend Saturday School ONCE per quarter. Students may make-up a maximum of three (3) missing assignments (excluding major projects).

Please read the entire course description. If you have read the course description and classroom discipline policies, please have your sign, you sign, and then return this page only. Have your student put the rest of the course description in their 3-ring binder under the tabbed section called **“IMPORTANT HANDOUTS”** for review as needed.

Dear Mrs. Barks,

We have read your course discipline policies. It is our responsibility to monitor binder reminders and grades online on a weekly basis.

Student's name:

I will do my best:

(Student's signature)

We/ I will help:

(Parents' signature)