

City Honors School
Grade 6
English Language Arts / Writing Composition 2021 - 2022

INSTRUCTOR: Ms. Serwon

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ROOM: 29

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I. Goals: Using a rigorous curriculum, students will gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications to prepare for college and career readiness. Students will use high-quality literary and informational texts to build knowledge, enlarge experiences, broaden world views and interject with purposeful communication. Students will use language as a tool for personal growth, social interaction, and developing relationships within a community.

II. Description: The City Honors Grade 6 Writing /English Language Arts Course is aligned with the New York State Common Core Standards and International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. It is designed to build a foundation of literary and expository analysis through close readings, discussions and interpretations of texts and writing as it relates to students' own lives, areas of study, their community and other cultures. This course is also designed to develop student characteristics which exemplify the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile traits. The grammar lessons in *Language Network* and *Step Up To Writing* clearly and concisely model key grammar skills with reinforcement assignments to enhance and develop writing skills. The written components of the course follow New York State Common Core and MYP assessment guidelines and are writing intensive. Students will build their writing skills through the use of style and tone, audience and purpose, sophisticated vocabulary, skilled organization, sentence variety, conventions, and cited evidence. The students will explore their own ideas and understandings of literature, making text to text, text to self and text to world connections.

The units studied in sixth grade ELA support the three fundamental concepts of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. Students will learn that the strategies they develop to analyze literature and informational texts and to write both non-fiction and fiction pieces are those strategies that will be used throughout their lives; they will discover an understanding and appreciation for many cultures; and students will be active and reflective learners who can communicate their knowledge to others. The six skill areas in the MYP language and literature subject group—listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting, develop as both independent and interdependent skills.

III. Module Descriptions - The focus of these modules and their assessments is subject to change. In order to optimize student learning, independent reading is mandatory for every module. These modules include:

a. Grade 6 Module 1 – Myths, Not Just Long Ago (*The Lightning Thief*)

Students study the purposes and elements of mythology. Students read Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief* with a focus on the archetypal hero's journey and close reading of mythical allusions. They also read a complex informational text about the elements of mythology. As a whole class, students will closely read several complex Greek myths, and then work in small groups to build expertise on an

additional myth. Students then develop their narrative writing skills as they create their own hero's journey narrative (EngageNY).

Global Context: Identities and Relationships

Related Concepts: Intertextuality, Character, Structure; conflict, setting, point of view, theme, reading closely, plot outline, context, setting, drama, working with evidence, purpose for reading, point of view, etc.

MYP Assessment Criteria: Criterion A: Analyzing, Criterion B: Organizing, Criterion C: Producing Texts, Criterion D: Using Language

Literary analysis: fiction and nonfiction

Writing focus: informative and narrative texts

b. Grade 6 Module 2b – Voices of Adversity (*Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!*) Students explore the idea of adversity of people across time and place, and through multiple modes of writing. Students begin this module with a research-based unit on the Middle Ages. They break into expert groups to read closely about one demographic group in order to write an informational essay based on their research. Students then move on to read literature: *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village*, in order to identify the various adversities faced by this cast of characters and to examine the author's craft. To conclude the unit, students move into modern voices of adversity by reading concrete poems in the books *Blue Lipstick* and *Technically, It's Not My Fault* and write their own text about adversities faced by sixth graders (EngageNY).

Global Context: Fairness and Development

Related Concepts: Intertextuality, Character, Structure; context, setting, drama, reading closely, working with evidence, purpose for reading, point of view, etc.

MYP Assessment Criteria: Criterion A: Analyzing, Criterion B: Organizing, Criterion C: Producing Texts, Criterion D: Using Language

Literary analysis: fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama

Writing focus: informative and research-based texts

c. Grade 7 Module 1 Journeys and Survival (*A Long Walk To Water*)

Students explore the experiences of people of Southern Sudan during and after the Second Sudanese Civil War. They build proficiency in using textual evidence to support ideas in their writing, both in shorter responses and in an extended essay. They read *A Long Walk to Water*, analyzing the points of view of the central characters, Salva and Nya. Students focus on one key theme: how individuals survive in challenging environments. The novel is paired with complex informational texts on Sudan. Students then combine research about Sudan with quotes from the novel and craft a research based two-voice poem (EngageNY).

Global Context: Globalization & Sustainability

Related Concepts: Intertextuality, Character, Structure; identity, empathy, style, reading closely, context, setting (location), working with evidence, purpose for reading, point of view, etc.

MYP Assessment Criteria: Criterion A: Analyzing, Criterion B: Organizing, Criterion C: Producing Texts, Criterion D: Using Language

Literary analysis: fiction and nonfiction

Writing focus: argumentative and explanatory texts

d. Grade 7 Module 4a – Screen Time and The Developing Brain

Students explore adolescent brain development and the effects of entertainment screen time on the brain. Students read informational texts to build background knowledge about adolescent brain development in general. Then they begin to focus on the issue of screen time and how it may affect teenagers. Students evaluate the soundness of reasoning and the sufficiency and relevancy of evidence

in argument texts and media. They dive deeper into first the potential benefits and then the potential risks of screen time by participating in a robust research project. Students finish the module by writing a position paper and creating a group project (EngageNY).

Global Context: Scientific and Technical Innovation

Related Concepts: Intertextuality, Character, Structure; self-expression, reading and research, structure, cause and effect, purpose for reading, reading closely, fact and opinion, point of view, multimedia reports, etc.

MYP Assessment Criteria: Criterion A: Analyzing, Criterion B: Organizing, Criterion C: Producing Texts, Criterion D: Using Language

Literary analysis: informational texts and media

Writing focus: argumentative and informative texts

IV. Texts / Resources

Common Core Modules

Step Up To Writing

Schoology

Students are required to organize their texts, assignments, notes, rubrics, handouts, and information (etc.) and to keep a detailed notebook / binder throughout the year.

1. V. Methods of assessment - A wide variety of assessments are used to determine the success of City Honors students and will be formative and summative. Assessment is viewed as a continuous process that allows students, parents and teachers to have the best and most accurate information about student achievement. Formative forms of assessment will be utilized to determine student understanding during each unit or area of study. During and at the end of each unit, instructional period, or concept of study summative assessments are utilized to determine levels of mastery. The summative assessments can be a test, performance task, essential quarterly writing tasks, projects and/or presentations. These will be assigned in advance and it is the expectation that students are responsible for writing the assignments in their planner and being prepared. Rubrics will accompany writing assignments and projects to provide clarity of grading. Homework will be assigned on an as needed basis and will reflect instruction in the classroom. Homework will be checked during the scheduled class the day it is due. Students will also be assessed using District placement and benchmark assessments.

New York State ELA Assessment: TBD

VI. Excused Absences/Make-Up Work – Students are expected to be present during Synchronous Instruction days (attendance will be taken). Asynchronous instruction means students work on their own on certain letter days and times. Students who are **in class for instruction** but absent on test or quiz day are expected to take the test or quiz on the next day of class attendance. In case of an excused absence, assignments received prior to the absence are due upon return to class. It is the expectation that students continue to complete routine assignments while they are absent. **It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the make-up work or assignments through Schoology.**

VII. Late Work Policy - Late projects, writing assignments, presentations, classwork, etc., will be penalized 5 points per day after the due date. Students are required to turn in assignments when they are due. In keeping consistent throughout the sixth grade, homework assignments will be checked as either complete or incomplete. Late homework will not be accepted however all graded assignments will be accepted late.

VIII. Grading Policy including the use of MYP and Common Core criteria - Grade reports are sent home every 10 weeks and progress reports distributed 5 weeks into each quarter. The students will be assessed at least once per quarter against each of the following criteria and percentages: Tests and Quizzes (35%), Writing or Projects (35%), Classwork (20 %) Homework (10%). Grades can be accessed through Infinite Campus at any time.

Grading Scale:

Numeric Code	4.0 Scale
97-100	4.0
93-96	4.0
90-92	3.7
87-89	3.3
83-86	3.0
80-82	2.7
77-79	2.3
73-76	2.0
70-72	1.7
67-69	1.3
65-66	1.0
Below 65	0.0

IX. Academic Integrity - Cheating and academic fraud will not be tolerated. City Honors considers academic misconduct to be any act that can give unfair academic advantage to a student, his grades, or his records. Such acts include lying, stealing, and cheating. Cheating is any dishonesty, written or verbal, or implied. This dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following: Academic Fraud (“recycling” work, taking credit for another’s work), Plagiarism (cut and paste) and Electronic Cheating (text messaging, using electronic devices without permission). Academic Fraud will result in no credit being given for the assignment or assessment.

X. Code of Conduct: It is expected that students will abide by the District Code of Conduct and embody the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program profile.

XI. Communication: I can be reached via email, phone, or notes. Phone calls during instructional time cannot be received therefore our clerical staff will take a message and I will respond as soon as possible. Conferences using Microsoft Teams can be scheduled and a link will be provided through email.

XII. Supplies: It is expected that students come to class prepared with school supplies (that will need to be replenished throughout the year), and all materials. Students will be required to use Schoology, Office365, Moby Max and Lexia; everyone is responsible for memorizing their username and password. Students may call 716.816.7100 for tech support if they need assistance.

XIII. Schedule: Students are expected to be present during Synchronous Instruction days.

Asynchronous instruction means students work on their own on certain letter days and times.

	Ms. Wolff's Gr. 6 HR 19	Ms. Serwon's Gr.6 HR 29	Mrs. Reiss' Gr. 6 HR 11
Block 1 8:40 – 9:30	Go to ELA Ms. Serwon	Go to SS / Science Mrs Reiss	Go to Math Ms. Wolff
Block 2 9:40 – 10:30	Go to SS / Science Mrs Reiss	Go to Math Ms. Wolff	Go to ELA Ms. Serwon
Block 3 10:40 – 11:30	Go to Math Ms. Wolff	Go to ELA Ms. Serwon	Go to SS / Science Mrs Reiss

I have read the Grade 6 ELA syllabus. I understand my responsibilities and know how to contact Ms. Serwon if I have any questions or concerns. I will keep the syllabus for reference.

X _____

Student Signature: **Please sign and return by 9/16/21**

I/We have read the Grade 6 ELA syllabus. I/We understand our student's responsibilities and know how to contact Ms. Serwon if I/we have any questions or concerns.

X _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: **Please sign and return by 9/16/21**

**This syllabus serves only as a guide to instruction throughout the year. It may be revised and changed (without warning) at any time to meet the needs and goals of students. **