

8th Grade English Language Arts

Ms. Nancy Lee

2023-2024



Contact information:

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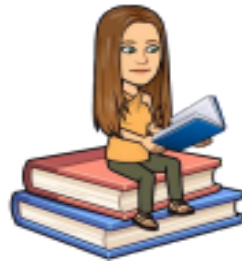
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Students:

Welcome to the beginning of another school year. I am looking forward to working with you this year in English Language Arts. I work hard to know my students, understand their individual needs and abilities, and make them feel comfortable in my classroom. My values as a teacher align with our school's vision: *Sutter Middle School is committed to providing an inclusive, student-centered approach focused on fostering a safe environment where all students can grow academically, socially, and emotionally.* I firmly believe in fostering an environment in which we all (students, parents, and staff) work together to make Sutter Middle School:

- student oriented by addressing the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the whole child
- safe, secure, and challenging
- a place where students are responsible and accountable
- an experience in learning through varied and different teaching strategies and student learning styles
- a high performance school focusing on student growth and achievement

A little bit about me: this will be my 24th year of teaching middle school. I have taught 7th and 8th grade English Language Arts (in addition to 8th grade social studies, 7/8 composition, 7/8 intensive ELA, & 6-8 ELL) in this district for 18 years. Prior to that, I taught 7th grade English Language Arts/Social Studies in the Bay Area for six years.

I truly believe that all students can learn and that your involvement in your child's education is a key factor. I genuinely welcome your communication. Please feel free to e-mail as often as you would like throughout the year. In addition, I encourage parents to check grades through the parent portal (PowerSchool) which you can access from the district website, and/or download the *PowerSchool app on your smart phone* (district code DRMT).



Recommended Materials

The following items are necessary for this class in order to help with organization, foster good study skills, and be successful in this class. They should be **brought to class every day**, unless stated otherwise:

- 1 three-ring binder (1 or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) just for English — *crucial for organization*
- 4 divider tabs — *students must have 4 sections in their ELA binder (again, crucial to organize papers; label tabs "vocab," "grammar," "writing," and "lit")*
- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" **college-ruled** binder paper — *please, no spiral notebook paper or composition-size paper (spiral notebooks will not be used in English)*
- blue or black ink pens — *no other colors for work turned in*
- pencils (*allowed for notes, warm ups, rough drafts, etc.*)
- green, yellow, blue, and pink highlighters — *at least 1 of each (no substitutions of colors)*
- 3" x 5" lined or blank index cards — *125 needed for the whole year (required flashcards)*
- 2 sandwich bags — *this is the best way to keep flashcards together! (roots & vocab.)*
- a free reading book — *any genre, any number of pages, any level (needed every day, beginning Mon., 8/14)*
- sheet protectors — recommended but optional to keep numerous papers intact all year
- 1 red pen — recommended to use for editing & warm ups

If you are unable to find/get any of these items, please let me know by Monday, August 14 so I can plan accordingly. If students do not notify me that they were unable to obtain any of the above items, it will be assumed that they have all necessary materials. You may ask me in person, send me an email, write me a note, etc., but please let me know if you need any of these from me.



Homework/Late Work Policy

Students ideally should be reading at least 30 minutes every night and reviewing vocabulary, roots, and grammar notes. Although it is very rare for me to assign homework one day due the

next, this may occasionally happen. Typically, several days are given, and often, especially assignments worth many points, students are given class time to work as well. Homework will be written on the "Homework/assignments" board in class with date assigned and due dates posted as well. Students are expected to copy these assignments down daily in their agendas, and class time is always given for this. In addition, at the end of each school day, I will post a "daily agenda and class/homework" by date on my Google Classroom Classwork page, so students who are absent and/or parents can see what students should be working on. Most assignments are not actually completed in Google Classroom though; they are typically done on paper.

Late work may be accepted, but it will not receive full credit (unless accommodations are in place). For each day that an assignment is late, the grade is lowered one full letter grade. For instance, an assignment turned in 2 days late and graded as an A- (91%) will be recorded as a C- (71%). After 4 days, late work **will not be accepted**, and a zero will be given for the assignment. Weekends will count as 2 days. Work turned in on the same day it is due but AFTER the turn-in time will be marked down $\frac{1}{2}$ a letter grade. Work due on Friday but submitted/emailed on Saturday will be marked 1 day late; Sundays will be considered 2 days late.

Please note: if you know ahead of time that you will not be able to turn in an assignment on time, for any reason, please email me. I do realize that things happen that are out of our control or unexpected, so there are exceptions to the late work policy; all I ask is that you communicate, please, before the assignment is due. I'm very flexible when there has been communication.

Grading Policy

Final grades will be determined based on a variety of assignments and total points earned for the semester. Please know that **I do not give extra credit**, and end-of-the-semester requests to re-do assignments or make up work from earlier in the semester will also **not be accepted**. Grades are determined according to the following percentages:

93% - 100% = A	73% - 76% = C
90% - 92% = A-	70% - 72% = C-
87% - 89% = B+	67% - 69% = D+
83% - 86% = B	63% - 66% = D
80% - 82% = B-	60% - 62% = D-
77% - 79% = C+	59% or below = F



Grade Recovery offered on selected assignments

My goal is for all students to succeed; therefore, I am willing to accommodate students with the opportunity of grade recovery on **some** formal writing assignments. Please note: no re-takes will be given on quizzes/tests since these are typically not worth as many points as writing assignments, AND, if there is a test/quiz, students will have been given ample time to study — in some cases, weeks or even months. Formal writing assignments are usually worth the most points in my class, and I can't stress enough the value in correcting/improving upon one's own writing to improve one's writing! So, for **many** formal writing assignments (i.e., ones with a formal rubric), students **may** have the opportunity to edit/revise for more credit after the final drafts are returned. **However, this opportunity will only apply to students who turn in all papers included in the writing process on time** (e.g., pre-write, rough draft, final draft). Please understand that these must be done on time in order to take advantage of this opportunity.

Can I help you?



Absences

If a student is absent from class for ANY reason (e.g., sick, in the office, sports, counseling office, doctor's appointment, etc.), it is his/her responsibility to check the "daily class agenda & HW" posted on my Google Classroom Classwork page and to ask the teacher about missing work/assignments, notes, class work, etc., when he/she returns or via email. Per district policy, for each day a student has an **excused** absence, he/she is allowed 2 days to make up the work. Please note, if a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, the assignment should be turned in when he/she returns to campus. For long-term assignments (e.g., student has a week or 2 to work on an assignment), an absence in between the day it was assigned and the due date **may** not automatically lead to extended time, so please communicate with the teacher to be clear about due dates.

Citizenship and Behavior Policy

Students will be held accountable for their behavior in and outside of the classroom. If students do not follow the 3B's in my classroom (Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and Be Safe), the consequences **may** consist of the following:

1st infraction: verbal warning

2nd infraction: email or call home (*parent/guardian will be contacted*)

3rd infraction: office referral to Assistant Principal (*parent/guardian will be contacted by an administrator*)

If behaviors are repetitive or more severe, it is this teacher's discretion to skip some steps and move straight to more severe consequences. Students will earn an N (*needs improvement*) or a U (*unsatisfactory*) in citizenship if there are repeated infractions in a semester. Chewing gum, not being in one's seat with materials out and working when the bell rings (i.e., late to class), socializing at inappropriate times, getting out of one's seat repeatedly, not being on task, and not bringing materials to class will negatively impact citizenship grades. In order to earn an O (*outstanding*) in citizenship, a student needs to not only adhere to classroom rules, but also participate in classroom discussions.

Restroom Policy

Students should try to use the restroom during passing periods and lunch. However, students will be given 4 bathroom passes per semester to use during ELA. Once a student uses all 4 passes, a 5-minute lunch detention will be assigned (to be served in my classroom) for any further visits to the restroom during class. Students **MUST** fill out the electronic hallpass on their chromebooks (sign out and sign back in upon return), and they are required to have a physical pass with them at all times, so after filling out the electronic pass, the student must pick up the hallpass hanging by the door and wear it so it is visible to other staff in the hallway. This is a school-wide policy.

I am looking forward to a very successful and fun year with your child. I have high expectations for the students, and with your help, we will be able to accomplish the goals we have set for this year. Please do not hesitate to call or send a message if you have any questions.

Respectfully yours,

Ms. Nancy Lee

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