California State University, Northridge
Summer Academic Enrichment Program

Writing for 8th Grade

“There is nothing more practical than learning to think, read and write.”
~Jack W. Meland

Course Overview:
“Writing for 8th Grade” challenges the student to grow in her/his ability to use correct composition grammar, develop strong sentences, build well-structured paragraphs, and, in turn, complete a standard five-paragraph essay. Grammar skills, proofreading, editing, and the writing process are addressed and refined.

Course Description:
Class time will focus on learning grammar (parts of speech, punctuation and sentence structure and sentence types), vocabulary, and paragraph development with an emphasis on topic sentence formulation and paragraph organization. Through the writing process of revising and editing, the student will form a comprehensive five-paragraph essay. The culmination project is a writing portfolio with a reflection letter to the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s).

Course Goals and Objectives

1. Goal: To improve each student’s composition skills.
   Objective: Learn grammar mechanics and be able to write comprehensive sentences.
   Objective: Be able to structure a sentence differently because of an understanding of the role different words can play.
   Objective: Learn when to use the correct punctuation and be able to manipulate the meaning of a sentence based on varying punctuation uses.

2. Goal: To increase the repertoire of each student’s vocabulary.
   Objective: Build a vocabulary list based upon encountered words that s/he does not recognize.
   Objective: Learn the skill of understanding a word, sentence or passage, based on the context, even if a word is unknown.

3. Goal: To learn the importance and power of a well-structured paragraph.
   Objective: Learn and use a well-written topic sentence.
   Objective: Understand the purpose of a paragraph.
   Objective: Be able to focus information in paragraph form.
   Objective: Utilize paragraphs effectively for clear presentation.

4. Goal: To learn the importance and power of a well-structured essay.
   Objective: Understand the purpose of an essay.
Objective: Learn and write a well-written topic sentence and its supporting details.
Objective: Be able to focus information in paragraph form and be able to transition each paragraph into the next.
Objective: Utilize paragraphs effectively for clear presentation of an essay.

5. Goal: To learn how to revise and edit a paragraph / composition.
   Objective: Learn the different editing symbols and use them on other students’ essays.
   Objective: Understand the importance of self-proofreading and peer-proofreading.
   Objective: Gain ideas for her/his paper based on the reading of another’s paper.
   Objective: Take student comments and make revisions accordingly.
   Objective: Understand that writing and re-writing is an important, yet often times tedious process.

Course Materials:
1. Grammar textbooks will be provided to be used in class.
2. A novel of the student’s choice is required for daily reading.
   The novel should be 175 or more pages, with a rising action, climax, and falling action.
Each student must provide and bring to class daily:
1. One two-inch binder with lined paper
2. College-rule, white, lined paper. (Note: not the notebook paper with the fuzzy edges.)
3. Writing utensils. (Pens in blue or black only.)
4. Highlighter.
5. A novel to read in class daily.
6. A dictionary and thesaurus.

Course Grading

Homework:
Expect 45-60 minutes of homework each night, either reading, writing or both.

MLA Format:
Every essay is to be typed in MLA format:
1. One-inch margins.
2. Double-spaced.
3. Upper right-hand corner: last name, period, date.
4. Lower right-hand corner: page number.
5. Font: Times New Roman.
6. Font size: 12.
Grading Policy

The final grade for the class will not be a letter grade. In place of a letter grade, a developmental level will be assigned based on a rubric. Students will receive a final score of: beginning, emerging, developing, capable, experienced, or exceptional.

Classroom Behavior:
The student is expected to demonstrate mature, polite behavior and extend courtesy to everyone at all times:

1. Actively participate, and respectful verbal and nonverbal interaction with all opinions must be shown at all times.
2. Since differing views will be expressed, the teacher and the student(s) will mutually maintain a safe environment for courteous dialogue.
3. Respect is to be shown for all CSUN property.
4. No food or beverages will be permitted in the classroom. Snacks must be eaten outside between the designated breaks.
5. Warnings for behavior / discipline problems will be given once. Any further problems will result in a phone call to the parent(s) or guardian(s) and possible dismissal from the program.

SAEP Electronics Policy

Cell phones, music players and headphones are not permitted to be used during class hours.

a. Please put your cell phone on silent (NOT vibrate).
b. No texting is allowed during class.

You will be given one verbal warning if the above is not followed. Should a second warning be necessary, your cell phone, music player and/or headphones will be confiscated and held by the teacher until after class. If a third time occurs, your cell phone, music player and/or headphones will be confiscated and held in the SAEP office and MUST BE PICKED UP BY A PARENT.
After reading through the syllabus, please sign and date and have your student return it to class. The signature constitutes your commitment to the class as we partner to make the next five weeks a life-long educational experience for your student.

Student/ Parent

Please bring this signed and dated Writing for 8th Grade syllabus agreement to class tomorrow.

If you do not understand any portion of this syllabus, or if you have any questions regarding this class, please do not hesitate to email the teacher.

We have read and understand the contents of this syllabus.

Student name ______________________________________________________

Student signature____________________________________________________

Date__________________

Parent/Guardian name _______________________________________________

Parent/Guardian signature_____________________________________________

Date_________________

Phone ____________________________________________________________

E-mail _____________________________________________________________