

June 2011

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

We are excited that your daughter/son is enrolled in Enriched Language Arts 7 for the 2011-2012 school year. We are confident that this course will be an exciting and challenging experience for all students. Students in Enriched Language Arts 7 will be asked to read extensively and analyze more difficult and complex literature. **They will also be asked to complete more in-depth assignments, participate regularly in class discussions, and have an increased homework load.** Students will be expected to apply and use their knowledge in a wide variety of ways and work more independently, often at a faster pace. In addition, some literature they read may be more abstract and theoretical.

In keeping with these rigorous standards, we are requiring students to read two books this summer that will allow for earlier immersion in coursework once school begins. We have chosen *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Pattillo Beals (unabridged version) and *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor. Students need to either purchase the books or get them from a library. **On the first day of class, there will be a test on the two books.** In order to be prepared for this, students will want to know the plot, characters, and major conflicts in each novel. As students read, **they are required to find and mark 3 significant passages from each novel.** This could be done with post-its or highlighter or any other method that you choose. While it is not required, students may want to take notes while they read, giving them something to review before coming to class on the first day.

For students enrolled in the course before August 15, no extensions will be given if the reading is not completed and the student is not prepared for the test; extra time to complete the test will only be granted to students who were enrolled in our district after August 15, 2011.

In addition to reading these required books, we expect students to read several additional books of their choice during the summer. For suggestions, check the following reading links, which offer lists of recommended Young Adult literature: <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/> and <http://www.hclib.org/teens/read.cfm>.

Thank you for your commitment to your child's education. Please review with your son or daughter the enclosed list of characteristics that will enable each child to have a successful experience in Enriched Language Arts 7. We look forward to working with you and your student in the fall.

Sincerely,
Your 7th Grade Enriched Language Arts Teachers

Characteristics for Success
Enriched Language Arts
Grade 7

Students in Enriched Language Arts 7 cover most of the same topics as the traditional classes, though often on an accelerated timeline. The enriched classes will work with the material in a more rigorous, in-depth, and abstract manner. Tests will reflect this rigor, and more will be expected of projects and other assignments. There are also one or two additional units of study covered in the enriched sections, which are not part of the traditional syllabus. Overall a higher level of maturity and the ability to function independently is expected at the enriched level.

Another way to think of an enriched class is as a "challenge" class. The course is designed for those students whose learning needs and desires require that they be stretched to a higher level of performance. It does not mean that enriched students are better than other students; their learning needs are just more accelerated.

Enriched students should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- 1. Strong reading and writing skills.** Enriched students must be proficient, skilled readers who can achieve a high level of comprehension independently. Students must also be proficient in writing and be able to articulate their thoughts in many different writing modes.
- 2. An ability to think beyond concrete levels and to process information quickly** are also characteristics of students for whom the enriched classes are designed. Students should be able to make leaps of abstract thought to connect and further ideas.
- 3. A willingness to participate positively in both large and small group discussions and activities.** The enriched student should not be waiting around for others to give the answer or do the work for him/her. Students are expected to participate in class on a daily basis and to offer thoughtful, serious opinions.
- 4. A strong work ethic.** An enriched language arts student will have a greater workload and will be asked to go more in depth into the work assigned. In addition, an enriched student may be asked to do more work outside of the classroom, including a summer assignment.

Students who match these characteristics will feel successful in this class.