

**OUR LADY OF REFUGE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL**  
**MRS. ELIZABETH ANGULO**  
**LANGUAGE ARTS--GRADES 6-8**  
**SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012**

**Course Overview**

The sixth through eighth grade curriculum's goal facilitates the students' effective communicators through listening, speaking, reading, or writing. The students will internalize the significance of reading and writing effectively both academically and socially. They will enjoy exploring the scope of language arts and will gain confidence through the empowerment that reading and writing give them. The literature component focuses on helping students appreciate and enjoy all types of literature—fiction, nonfiction, short stories, poetry, and drama. The sixth through eighth grade curriculum encompasses literature, composition, vocabulary study, and grammar/usage. All of these components are integrated, including spelling. Sixth grade has the added spelling component. Meeting with each class nine times a week for almost seven hours weekly affords us to cover multiple aspects of the curriculum. Methodology used include lecture, discussion sessions, guided and independent practices, peer group activities, oral and dramatic presentations, and audio-video support materials.

Students are expected to come to class prepared to work diligently every day. Being prepared signifies bringing the correct texts, and English binder with dividers, paper for writing, sticky notes, pencils, highlighters, and a blue or black ink pen.

**Textbooks**

*Prentice Hall Literature: Language and Literacy*

Gold Edition- Grade 6

Blue Edition- Grade 7

Red Edition – Grade 8

*Voyages in English-Writing and Grammar*, Loyola Press (resource book)

*Spelling Connections*, Grade 6

Selected genre books for class discussion

Student selected books for independent reading

The new adopted text has both language and literacy components. Reading, writing, language skills, listening, speaking, and research technology are integrated in the text.

**Units Covered**

Unit 1: Fiction and Nonfiction

Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking

Unit 2: Short Stories

Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking

Unit 3: Types of Nonfiction

Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking

Unit 4: Poetry

Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking

Unit 5: Drama

Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking  
Unit 6: Themes in Folk Literature (sixth grade)  
Themes in Oral Tradition (seventh grade)  
Themes in American Stories (eighth grade)  
Conventions, Writing, Research/Technology, Listening/Speaking

## **Literature**

Literature involves the study of fiction and nonfiction, short stories, poetry, drama, essays, and the novel. Reading carefully and analyzing are the students' goals. The students will learn basic literary terms, plot elements, character motivation, theme, and relevancy. In addition to the class reading assignments, students are required to read library books considered AR books.

## **Composition**

Writing involves a five-step process: prewriting, first draft, revision/ proofreading, and final draft. Through a variety of writing tasks, the students will express themselves. They will learn the main elements in essay development: structure, organization, and support. The students will learn the following objectives:

1. Generate reader's interest in the opening paragraph.
2. Create/Organize well supported paragraphs using facts, quotations, examples, etc.
3. Use effective transitions between paragraphs.
4. Create a closing or summary paragraph which ties all important points of the essay and which draws a final conclusion.

Ample writing opportunities are provided in each text unit. While not all assignments may be formally evaluated, they may be shared with peers, especially during the revision process. The students will thus receive feedback before writing the final draft. The student will maintain a **writing folder**, which will include all composition assignments. This folder will be kept in the classroom. When essays are assigned, parent input is welcomed, but please do not get too involved, consequently, depriving your child the satisfaction of assuming responsibility for his/her work and of learning through mistakes. The objective is to improve each student's writing skills. Students will be given class time to write under the teacher's guidance. However, much of the writing shall be done at home.

## **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is learned/acquired through context in the literature read. Students are expected to make a concerted effort to make these vocabulary words an integral part of their communication skills with others through their speaking and writing modes. Students should keep a list of assigned vocabulary words, their definitions, their parts of speech, and usage in the reading selections. Keeping a thesaurus/dictionary at hand should be helpful.

## **Spelling**

There is no formal spelling text. (Only the sixth grade class has a spelling book.) Spelling focus will be done through a review of spelling rules and through use of most frequently misspelled words. Students must know the pronunciation, spelling, and the meanings of all vocabulary words used within the context of the literature read and strive to make these words a part of their daily interaction with others.

## **Grammar**

The mechanics /conventions of language (grammar, usage, expression, capitalization, and punctuation) are reviewed, studied, and reinforced in context within the reading selections. *Voyages in English* will be utilized as one of the resources.

## **Homework**

Students can expect homework nearly every night. Homework will usually be corrected in class and collected for a grade. This allows the students additional learning and reinforcement and allows the teacher on-site gauging of student's strengths and weaknesses. Reteaching of concepts is done as needed. Daily homework will include reading their library books for at least 20 to 30 minutes. This is in addition to any assigned literature/grammar homework.

## **Language Arts Binder**

Each student is responsible for the upkeep of his/her binder with dividers and for maintaining it up to date with notes, class work, homework, and tests and quizzes. The binder will be evaluated as a major test grade for the nine weeks. The required English binder is a 1 ½ binder.

## **Enrichment**

The curriculum is quite demanding; therefore, students may or may not request enrichment exercises. If, however, the student does request enrichment activities, these may be at teacher discretion to suit each student's uniqueness. Enrichment challenges/activities could include extra reading or creative writing assignments, projects, or presentations. In addition, the students may participate in essay and/or poetry contests available.

## **Tests**

Tests and quizzes will be administered frequently at least once a week. Tests can be expected after each reading selection(s), grammar lessons, vocabulary assignments, literature units, or completion of assigned novels. The students should be consistent about doing their homework assignments and reviewing work. This helps the students be better prepared for test and quizzes. Students, by this age, will assume responsibility for note taking and studying on their own.

## **Late Work**

Homework that is not submitted on the date due will be considered late. Late work will be assessed a **twenty- point penalty** for each day that it is late. A parent conference will be requested when the student consistently submits late assignments.

## **Extra Help**

Encourage your child to seek additional help if he/she is struggling with the class material. Please keep in touch with your child's assignments and with the teacher. Extra help sessions can be arranged with me. Before such tutoring takes place, I'd confer with the child's parents.

## **Evaluation**

Students' evaluations are comprised through class work, homework, group work, class participation, written essays/creative writing, journal writing, class projects, quizzes, and tests.

## **Nine Weeks Exam/Semester Exam**

The nine weeks exam is administered at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> nine weeks grading periods; semester exams at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> nine weeks. (Refer to the “Grading System for Our Lady of Refuge Parochial School.”)

## **Attendance and Absences**

Refer to the Student/Parents Handbook.

## **Classroom Policies**

As a group of effective learners, the students will observe the following classroom rules:

1. **Be on time and in the assigned seat** daily.
2. **Be prepared.** Bring all necessary supplies/texts. Have your homework ready.
3. **Show respect for everyone.** Listen when the teacher is talking. Allow all opinions during brainstorming. Offer suggestions, when asked, in a positive Christian manner.
4. **Always do your best.** Work diligently on every assignment. Put your mark of excellence and uniqueness on all of your endeavors.
5. **Follow directions** the first time.
6. **Treat the classroom and the privilege of computer use with respect.** Misuse of computers will result in loss of computer privileges.

## **Consequences for Policy Breaking**

*1<sup>st</sup> offense:* Verbal Warning

*2<sup>nd</sup> offense:* Parent Notification (by phone, note, or pink slip)

*3<sup>rd</sup> offense:* Parent Conference

*4<sup>th</sup> offense:* Principal’s Conference with all proper written documentation

## **Grading System for Our Lady of Refuge School**

### **1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Nine Weeks**

Classwork/Homework	40%
Tests/Quizzes	40%
Nine Weeks Exam	20%

### **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Nine Weeks**

Classwork/Homework	30%
Tests/Quizzes	30%
Semester Exam	40%

## **Conference Period**

My conference period is fourth period, **10:45-11:30 A.M.** If you need to set up a parent/teacher conference, please call the office at 773-3531. I will be more than glad to meet with you and discuss your child’s progress and/or concerns.

**Note: Parents, please stress to your child the importance of good behavior in class. Students must exhibit self-discipline/self-control and listen attentively to the lesson presentation. A student who listens attentively in class has a higher rate of successful learning.**

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You have entrusted me with the education of your son/daughter. Your child’s Language Arts education in a Catholic environment is of utmost importance to me. As the **School Mission** stated, we are all committed to instilling “in our students **strong** Catholic values, academic excellence, and personal responsibility within an active school community that extends to an **active parish life** and to the **community** at large.”

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**I have read and understood all of the above in this booklet.**

**Student signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent signature:** \_\_\_\_\_