

**Mt. Pleasant Middle School  
Syllabus**



***Esther Hauber***

UNCW Team  
8th Grade | ELA and ALPS  
2020 - 2021

**TEACHER DETAILS:**

Welcome to 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA. I am Ms. Hauber, and I love teaching ELA. I have been teaching at MPMS since 2000. I went to Wheaton College in Illinois for my bachelor's degree and Binghamton University for my master's degree. I completed my AIG certificate at UNC Charlotte and my National Boards while teaching here at Mount Pleasant. My favorite parts of teaching at MPMS are getting to know my students and teaching the amazing things that can be found in books. I still love learning new things, and we will learn a lot this year. The most important thing to me is that my students come to class every day willing to try. A good attitude is the best key for learning. I really look forward to getting to know the students and having a great year!

**COURSE DETAILS & DESCRIPTION:**

Our main goals in 8th grade ELA is to prepare students for the reading and writing that they will need to be able to do in high school.

- **Throughout the entire year:**
  - Students will be journaling to gain fluency in writing good sentences and paragraphs.
  - Students will be reading independently to work on reading fluency.
  - We will be doing grammar and vocabulary work weekly.
- **Unit 1-2: Class Intro and Basic Review of Fiction**
  - These two units will be about 5 weeks long.
  - We will read several different types of short fiction and write a personal narrative based essay showing a theme.
- **Unit 3: Novel reading: *The House on Mango Street***
  - This unit will be about 4 weeks long
  - We will explore all of the elements of a novel and analyze how the author builds characters and themes through the text.
- **Unit 4-5: Complex Fiction**
  - This unit will last about 8 weeks. It is one of our longer units.
  - ALPS will be doing a unit called *In the Mind's Eye*. It is a high-level analysis unit of different texts looking at how perspective and reality affect each other. We will read the novel *Fahrenheit 451* as part of this unit.
  - ELA classes will be doing a unit on classic genre short stories. We will read Edgar Allen Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, and other classic writers of fiction.
  - This unit will end for both ELA and ALPS with the writing of a literary analysis essay.

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- **Unit 6: Introduction to Nonfiction**
  - This unit usually begins around the beginning of second semester and goes for about 4 weeks.
  - In this unit, we look at different types of nonfiction. We review text features and structures and how they help us understand nonfiction.
  - Students will complete a mini-research informational project in this unit.
- **Unit 7: Critical Reading of Informational Nonfiction**
  - This unit will be about 6 weeks long.
  - ALPS will be doing a unit called *Finding Freedom* that is a critical reading unit of primary sources from American history
  - ELA will be doing a unit reading informational texts from the Civil Rights Movement.
  - Both groups will be completing a research project at the end of this unit.
- **Unit 8: Poetry and Figurative Language**
  - This unit will be about 3 weeks long.
  - Students will review the elements of poetry and learn about poetry appreciation.
- **Unit 9: End of Year Review and Mythology**
  - This unit will be about 5 weeks long.
  - Students will review the elements of reading from the year.
  - We will also embed some mythology/folk literature as a creative outlet as we prepare for end of year testing.

**OBJECTIVES:**

Here is a link to the Cabarrus County 8th Grade ELA Curriculum Map

- <https://www.cabarrus.k12.nc.us/cms/lib/NC01910456/Centricity/domain/527/curriculum/ela/8thELAYearlongMap.pdf>

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND RESOURCES:**

- Composition Notebook: Students do need a notebook and paper so they can jot notes and draft ideas during live classes. It is important to actually write things down in order to help them learn.
- Students will need an internet device and connection and access to the following resources. All instructions for these accounts and sites will be given in class the first week.
  - Canvas
  - CommonLit
  - Quizlet
  - Google Apps
  - Teams, OneNote, and Outlook (their Microsoft Office account)
  - Remind
  - Flipgrid
- Optional Texts:
  - All classes will be reading *The House on Mango Street*. Students will have online access to the book, but a physical text could be purchased if students prefer.

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- ALPS classes will also be reading *Fahrenheit 451*. Online access will be available but it could be purchased if students prefer a physical book.
- Supplies needed when face to face instruction begins:
  - Folder with pockets
  - Notebook paper
  - Post-it Notes
  - Highlighters, pens, pencils, and a personal pencil sharpener with shavings lid

**COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS:**

- Remind: Please only join the appropriate class
  - ELA (2nd and 4th Periods): @ehaub
  - ALPS (1st and 3rd Periods): @alpse
  - I send out a weekly Remind at the beginning of the week with an overview of the week's assignments and activities.
- Email: [esther.hauber@cabarrus.k12.nc.us](mailto:esther.hauber@cabarrus.k12.nc.us)
- I can also be messaged through the Canvas app.
- I will be in classes from 9 until 3:15.
  - Students will be able to ask questions in the second half of the class period when we move into independent work.
  - Parents feel free to email me or message me on Remind at any point throughout the day. I will be having office hours from 3:15-3:45 on Monday through Thursday. I will respond to all messages from that day by 4:00. If I will be unavailable on any day due to meetings or conferences, I will let you know in my weekly Remind.
  - Messages sent in the evenings will be responded to by the next day at 4:00 during the week.
- We can do parent conferences via Teams if needed. Contact the teacher to set one up.

**ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Reading and Writing Workshop: ELA class this year will be in the workshop and seminar format. Students will be working on skills and growth as they actively read and write. Expect students to be reading and writing extensively through this school year. During live classes, students are expected to have their work completed so they can join in discussions or activities. Students are expected to have books to read independently. Due to online learning, students can get digital books through the public library or do curbside pickup of physical books by calling the library or going online and putting books on hold. Some information about access to online books can be seen here:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a9KGbdpw18f8JiDICbSEGUFs69tpDbrU/view>
- Homework: Homework will be assigned daily as continued practice of reading and writing skills. Most homework will be finishing tasks begun in class. Please encourage your student to use their time wisely during school hours.

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- Extra assistance: I will have office hours most afternoons from 3:15-3:45 and can also meet with students on Teams when needed. Students and parents can email or remind me to set up a time to meet.
- Digital Classroom: Our main platform for class will be Canvas. All assignments will be found on the weekly assignments page for that week. It will have links to all assignments and activities. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to get a parent observer account so they can see all of the things that their student is doing. We will also be using Microsoft Teams to have our live meetings. We will also be using CommonLit, Quizlet, and a few other apps to help us be productive in ELA this year. Links for all other apps and sites that we will be using will be found on Canvas.

**Grading Policy:**

- Assignments will be based on total points:
  - 10 points for quick checks/homework
  - 20 points for classwork/quizzes
  - 30 points and up for small to big projects
  - Student's grade will be the average of the total points they've earned based on total points possible.
- Late Work: Students may turn in work late with teacher permission. As soon as a student realizes that they have missed an assignment, they need to check with me about correcting their mistake. Deductions may be taken for work that is not turned in on time. There will be final deadlines for assignments each quarter.
- Final drafts for writing can be revised and resubmitted for an improved grade. If a student fails a reading skill assessment, they need to see me to see what type of activity can be completed to improve the grade.
- Students who would like to improve a grade should ask me through email, Remind, or a conference outside of class time. Test corrections, retakes, etc. will be done outside of scheduled live class times during office hours or conference times.
- Mastery Levels: Skill assessments will be graded based on mastery of the skill or objective. There will also be specific rubrics given to students for specific skills. The rubrics will follow this general pattern:
  - Full Mastery: Student shows complete grasp of the concept or skill and makes connections to related skills. This will be an A.
  - Mastery: Student shows reasonable grasp of concept or skill and basic understanding that ideas are connected. This will be given a B grade.
  - Basic Mastery: Student shows basic grasp of the concept or skill. This will be a C.
  - Partial Mastery: Students will earn this if they are growing and showing improvement in the objective or skill even if they don't show mastery in it. This will be a D.
  - Unacceptable Ranking: Students will earn this based on lack of effort to improve. This will be an F.

