

Penn Cambria Middle School  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts  
Ms. J Comstock

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Office Hours:  
Monday-Friday, By Appointment

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In order to ensure a successful academic year, all the information below should be carefully reviewed.

**Course Description:** ELA 8<sup>th</sup> grade

In reading, students will focus on comprehension and analytical reading skills through the study of a variety of authors and genres. Students will learn how successful readers think critically and analytically when they read and how to interact and examine multiple types of text. They will also work on listening and speaking skills in relation to the texts. In writing, the focus will be on the construction of expository and argumentative writings in connection with conducting research. Additionally, students will learn how to write meaningful responses, summaries, and cite textual references.

**Curriculum:**

The curriculum for this course aligns with the Pennsylvania State Standards for English Language Arts and the Penn Cambria School District's approved 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA curriculum. Please visit [www.mylaresources.weebly.com](http://www.mylaresources.weebly.com) to access the PA Core standards. Links to PDE and other documents will be listed there.

**Textbooks:**

All textbooks and reading material will be provided. The books will remain in the classroom and may be signed out if necessary for make up work due to absences.

**Classroom Library:**

The books in the classroom are available for student check out. Upon checkout, the books then become the responsibility of the student. If the book is lost, stolen, or irreparably damaged, the book must be either paid for or replaced. This should be ready by the end of the second full week of school. Please be patient.

Please be aware that some of the books on the shelves in my classroom contain more mature content and language. If there are elements that you would not like your child to access please check on the following websites: **[ARbookfind.com](http://ARbookfind.com), [Goodreads.com](http://Goodreads.com), or [commonsensemedia.org](http://commonsensemedia.org)** to read a detailed synopsis before reading a book of their choosing. Links to these websites can be found on the classroom website under reading recommendations. Mrs. Gibson and I will try and assist the students in selecting books that will keep their interest and make earning their points a more enjoyable experience.

**Outside Reading Requirement:**

In addition to classroom reading, students will be responsible for reading self-selected, **level appropriate** books throughout the year in which they will have to opportunity to take an Accelerated Reader test, if one is available. The required amount of AR point for this year is **17** for each quarterly marking period. Students will be scored on **both points and accuracy**. The student's AR book should be in ELA class **every** day. *\* Students will **NOT** be permitted to test on current or previous year's read aloud books. To do so will constitute an infringement upon academic integrity (cheating) and the student will receive a referral.\**

**\*Important Note:** Parents are responsible for approving outside literature selections. Teachers will make recommendations, but parents have the final say or approval. Please visit the above-mentioned sites to help with book selections and information.

**Homework/Homework Policy:** Students have homework **EVERY NIGHT.**

Students are expected to read 20-30 minutes every evening from their A.R. reading choice. Students will occasionally have additional homework for class. These assignments are for enrichment, exercise, practice and review. Other assignments may include work that was not completed in class. The students will need to copy the assignments in their school-provided agendas, and they will have time to ask questions or to review the directions and expectations.

Missing assignments that are excessively overdue (2 weeks or more) may not be awarded any credit (with teacher discretion).

**Plagiarism/Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is expected on **all** assignments. Plagiarism is defined as presenting the work of another as one's own. Cheating on an assignment or assessment is another activity that violates ethics and school rules. Any work that exhibits cheating/plagiarism will result in a zero, parental notification, and disciplinary action will be taken as outlined in the Student Handbook.

**Writing:**

In preparation for high school, **ALL major essays are required to follow MLA format.** This means that the paper must have a proper heading and be **typed** (double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1" margins) and include parenthetical citations and works cited page. Use of One Drive is strongly encouraged so the student will have access to the writing at home. Work must be submission ready. It is the student's responsibility to type, print, and/or email papers prior to the assigned due date. Please visit Purdue OWL for the MLA citation guidelines. Links to helpful pages can be found on the classroom website under writing resources.

**Absences:**

It is the student's responsibility to retrieve missed handouts/assignments when absent. Students that have missing assignments due to an absence will be given the number of days absent plus one to complete any missing work. Students are responsible for asking for their assignments upon returning to school. In the event of an extended absence, arrangements will be made to get the student caught up on necessary work.

**Anticipated Absences:**

If students anticipate an extended absence from school (vacation, fair, sports, etc.), please provide notice at least 1 week in advance (if possible) to prepare any make-up work to be completed before returning to class.

**Help Time:**

If a student needs additional help with an assignment beyond the school day or needs access to technology, please notify me before the due date. Students are encouraged to schedule a help session for additional support during homeroom or the 15-minute study period before lunch. After school arrangement may also be made as well.

**Tardy:**

Students are expected to be in their seat with required materials ready at the start of the class period. If they are running late from another class they **must** have a pass.

**Grading Policy:**

All grades will be based on points and weighted using the scale below.:

**A = 93% – 100%      B = 84% – 92%      C = 78% – 83%      D = 70% – 77%      F = 69% or below**

**Weighting Scale:** These are Approximate

<b>Assessments (Test/Projects/Essays/Quizzes) - Approximately</b>	55-60%
<b>Practice (Homework/Warm-Ups/Class Activities/Interactive Notebook)</b>	30-35%
<b>Accelerated Reader</b>	10%

\*Grades will be posted and available online using the MMS gradebook system.

### Materials:

- 1" Binder – to remain in classroom. It will not be used for any other classes.
- Loose-leaf paper OR 1 subject notebook (students preference)
- Pencils
- 2 Folders that must be able to go into the binder rings – 1 for reading/1 for writing

### Class Rules:

1. Respect yourself.
2. Respect others.
3. Respect the class community.

### Behavior and Discipline

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, be prepared with books and materials, and show respect. Students are also expected to adhere to the school wide and classroom rules and expectations at all times.

- Only pencils and blue or black ink will be permitted in class for work.
- Electronic devices (cell phones, I-pods, video games, e-tablets, etc.) are not permitted unless they are being used for instructional purposes with teacher directives. If the student's cell phone is visible or heard during class, the consequences are outlined in the student handbook
- Absolutely **NO** gum chewing, eating, or drinking (juices, colas, etc.). Water ONLY!!
- Backpacks, bags, etc.. will be placed in a designated spot in the room and the student must ask for permission to access their bag during instructional time. Students should retrieve all necessary items before the start of class.
- Other Non-Negotiable school wide rules have been outlined as well.

### Teacher Website:

Additional classroom resources and a few flipped classroom assignments will be found on my website: [www.myelaresources.weebly.com](http://www.myelaresources.weebly.com) . There is also a direct link to this page via the Penn Cambria Middle school website under my teacher page. There are videos and links detailing some of the work that students will be completing along with review games and other helpful resources. If you do not have access to the internet, please call or contact me ASAP so that I can provide other means to assist your child.

Please read and go over these pages with your parents. Detach the last page and return it by Friday of this week acknowledging you have read and understand the information contained. I am looking forward to an exciting and challenging year of learning. Parents, please email me at any time if you wish to discuss your child's progress.

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Please return this page with both sections completed. Thank You!!!

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By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the course syllabus and classroom guidelines. I also acknowledge that a copy of this form is available for viewing and download on: [www.mylaresources.weebly.com](http://www.mylaresources.weebly.com)

Student's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Internet access at home:

We **DO** have access to a computer, tablet or similar electronic device with internet access that my student will be able to use for classroom assignments

We **DO NOT** have access to a computer, tablet or similar electronic device with internet access and other arrangements to complete these assignments will be made.