

Literature

In 5th grade Literature we read mostly novels in class. For some of the novels the students will be given their own copy of the novel and we will both read aloud and discuss in class and also they will be assigned some of the novel at home to read at night on their own. Other novels will be “read-alouds”. I will have a copy of the book and will read it aloud to them during class time. We will discuss it in class as I read. Each student will not be given their own copy of the book for read alouds but they will have the option to check out a copy for themselves, to help them follow along, at the school, classroom, or local libraries. Those will be checked out on a first come first serve basis. The read alouds help the students to hear a story read with expression and it also limits their homework outside of class while working on their listening skills that are tested on ISAT. Because Accelerated Reader is a significant part of their grade (200 pts), I expect them to use the time at home during “read aloud” stories to AR read because they will not have much Literature homework during this time. If they do not, then reading will have to take place at other times. Comprehension tests and quizzes will be given on both class and read aloud novels.

The students’ 5th grade Literature grade is comprised of four main components. (Although other assignments do exist, I am just identifying the “major” grades to be helpful and concise). They are Comprehension tests over the novels we read in class, tests over our weekly vocabulary words (usually on Thursdays), projects, and their score on how much of their Accelerated Reader goal they achieved for the quarter (AR points are due the Wednesday before end of the quarter unless otherwise stated.)

They have already been given their goals during the first week of school and should be reading outside of class each night. Their STAR Reading range is written inside of the front cover of their assignment notebook. Extra credit will be given if they surpass their goal for the quarter. (up to 25 points) Finally, as far as AR is concerned a great feature we have is that you can go to the Robein web page under “Accelerated Reader” and keep track of how many AR points your child has and how close they are to achieving their goal.

Your child will almost always know about their test and quizzes so it really is a case of them using that notice to adequately prepare themselves. For example, the basic routine involves them getting their vocabulary words on Monday and having the test on Thursday. It would be helpful to ask to see your child’s words on Monday night. If you study a little bit on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday night, it is better than having them cram on Wednesday night. As for comprehension tests, if they know the test will be the next day it helps to reread and review the night before. As for AR please continually keep up with your child’s progress. The goal is meant to be achieved in about eight weeks, so if they wait until the last week it may be too late for them and can seriously affect their Literature grade. Thank you for your help.

Language

The major components of the students’ language grades include spelling tests, parts of speech, journals, unit tests, projects, and writing activities. As with Literature class, other assignments exist, but these are all important parts of their grade.

The students will be given their spelling list on most Mondays. They will have until Thursday to prepare for their Spelling test. If they score a 100% on Thursday that grade will then be entered. Everyone else will take a retest on Friday and have their scores entered shortly after.

Throughout the year we will also cover a variety of parts of speech (nouns, verbs, prepositions, etc) and the students will be graded on their homework and unit tests.

Occasionally, the students will write journal entries. The length will start at a half of a page to open the year and will lengthen as the year goes on. Sometimes they are given a prompt and other times they will be allowed to write on a topic of their choice. Most times they are given time to start writing in class and those that do not finish are expected to do so at home. Spelling, grammar, length, staying on topic, being descriptive, and using a strong vocabulary all go into the grading of the journals.

Mixed throughout the year will be various projects. Some will have the focus of practicing parts of speech, while others will focus on giving the students experience in practicing both written and spoken language skills. Projects are a great way for the students to express themselves and work at their own levels or share an experience and learn valuable group skills.

One of the big areas we will work on is the development of the students' writing skills. It is an area of focus and can be useful throughout life. The students will gain experience and practice in writing for a variety of purposes with the goal to improve their overall skills in a number of areas.

Social Studies

Social Studies class consists mainly of a mixture of homework, tests, quizzes, and projects. Tests are given at the completion of most chapters. They usually have a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Much of the reading is done together in class. Class discussions and notes can be helpful in choosing what to focus on in studying for tests. Projects are used as an alternative way to assess student learning. It is meant to allow the students another way to show their knowledge and creativity.

I look forward to a great year together!