Miller Middle School - 6th Grade English Language Arts and Social Studies

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“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” – John Dewey

**Dear Students and Parents (Guardians),**

Welcome to sixth grade at Miller Middle School!  I am thrilled to have you in my classes this year.  This year marks my twelfth (12th) year teaching at Miller and a total of twenty-five (25) years of teaching.  My goal this year to reach every one of you in a positive way so you can grow and learn academically, socially, and emotionally.  You will learn that you are now becoming a mobile student and you will find that being organized and responsible will be a daily task for you.  It will be hard at times, but hopefully, you will develop some great skills this year to help you. I will provide you with tools, strategies and resources to engage you in your education.

**Classroom Procedures**I have one classroom rule:

“Be prepared to solve any problems you make for others.  Problems can be solved in any way, provided the solution does not make a problem for anyone else on the planet.” *The Love and Logic,* Jim Fay and Foster W. Cline, M.D.

You will quickly understand that I will give you time to solve any problem you make for others, but you will need to take that time to come up with a plan.  It is important to understand that my room is a “Bully Free” environment, and I stress we all respect and show dignity to everyone. I tolerate nothing less.

**BEFORE YOU SPEAK: THINK**

**T – is it true?**

**H – is it helpful?**

**I  – is it inspiring or important?**

**N – is it necessary?**

**K – is it kind?**

**Preparedness** You must come to work prepared to work.  You must have the necessary materials like a pencil, planner and your binders or any other materials that you find necessary to complete your work in class.  Students who regularly forget will have to come up with a solution to solve that problem.

**Discipline Plan** There will be no more than two (2) redirects for behavior that is inappropriate for the class or students to learn. If behavior is not corrected, there will be a private conversation in the hall with the teacher.  All incidents are case by case, but any behavior that is not corrected after the teacher/student conversation will result in a call home or email and possibly other means of intervention from either the counselors and/or administrators.

**PPBE (Professional and Positive Behavior Expectations) Rubric** is a form which measures your Responsibility, Respect, and Perseverance in each class. Students will fill out one each semester to evaluate themselves and each teacher will agree with the assessment or state their own assessment. This grade will be posted in the University Prep class.

**Planners** You will be given a planner at the beginning of the year and be expected to have it in class with you **every day**.  To help you organize and keep track of your assignments and learning, I will expect you to have and write in your planner every day in my classes.

**Note to Parents:** Please ask your child to see their planner every night. Planners can be taken home every night for you to review. They should have daily work assignments in the weekly planner, and they should have other important dates, events, days off, etc. in the monthly planner.  We will be doing CURRENT EVENT assignment two (2) times during the year, please ask your child what days they have signed up for their Current Event; this can become a fun family project, as this presentation is done at home.  Also, we encourage your child to read before they sleep EVERY night. It has been proven that reading helps students improve in all areas of school.

**English Language Arts Standards Assessment**

**10%** **Standard 1: Reading Comprehension,** reading and comprehending complex literary and informational text.

**15% Standard 2: Reading Interpretation,** interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating complex literary and informational texts.

**15% Standard 3: Writing Arguments:** writing clear and coherent arguments for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**15% Standard 4: Writing Informative and Narrative texts**.

**10% Standard 5: Writing Process,**  of planning, revising, and editing to develop and strengthen writing. This also includes grammar lessons.

**10% Standard 6: Research,** conducting short and sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem, by demonstrating and understanding the subject under investigation. **5% Standard 7: Speaking and Listening: Academic Discourse,** initiating and participating effectively in a range of discussions, responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives and expressing ideas clearly and persuasively.

**5% Standard 8: Speaking and Listening: Presentation,** of information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective.

Students will be graded on these standards in the Infinite Campus gradebook.  You may be graded on several different standards for one large writing project, so turning in all assignments will be crucial to receiving a great average of your ultimate grade.  There will be a rubric for large assignments with the Standard performance indicators of what you should be learning.  They are assessed on a scale of “Emerging” to “Exemplary”.  Emerging will be a score of “1” and Exemplary will be “4”.  Since Durango 9R is moving towards standards-based assessment, this is how the breakdown for the 0-4 assessment will look like on a 100 point scale:

**New System**

**Exemplary**

4+: 100, 4: 96, 4-: 94

**Proficient**

3+: 92, 3: 88, 3-: 83

**Developing**

2+: 78, 2: 74, 2-: 70

**Emerging**

1+: 67, 1: 64, 1-: 60

**U-Unsatisfactory**

50

**English Language Arts (*ELA)* Content of Study**

**1. *The Giver* by Lois Lowry book study or *Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park book study.**

**2. Wm and Mary Literature Unit Study *Autobiographies and Memoirs*:**

**“In this unit, students in grades 5-6 study the concept of change by reading autobiographies of writers and by looking at change in the lives of writers and other artists.  As they examine life stories and self-portraits, they study literature and examine works of art from various cultures.  In order to gain insight into the development of talent, students are encouraged to explore their own identities as talented learners through discussions, research, oral presentations, and reflective writing.  Autobiographical writings from authors including Beverly Cleary, Eloise Greenfield, Isaac Singer, and Lawrence Yep are explored.  This study received the 1997 Winner of a National Association for Gifted Children Curriculum Division Award for Outstanding Curriculum.”**

**Advanced ELA: consist of in-depth writing and reading.**

**1. *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien book study.**

**2. Wm and Mary Literature Unit Study *Persuasion.  “*This unit for grades 6–7 highlights elements of persuasion, especially as it relates to oral communication. Students must cite passages from literature to defend their points of view in discussion as well as in written arguments. Literature selections such as “The Valiant,” “The Pied Piper of Hamelin,” and the Declaration of Independence frame the basis for exploring the reasoning process through analysis and interpretation. Opportunities are presented for impromptu, informative, and persuasive speeches; debate; small- and large-group discussion; and critical reasoning. Persuasive writing, reasoning, research, and language study are included throughout the unit.”**

**\*Please note:  Students in Adv. ELA must maintain a “C” average or better to remain in this class.**

**Social Studies is the forum for students to analyze, interpret historical sources and to ask and research historical questions unique to the Western Hemisphere up to colonization and exploration. Students will learn map skills, Current Events, Economics, and Civics.**

**Social Studies Standards**

**Standard 1 - History,** applying the tools, thinking, and practices of history to understand and communicate how people view, construct, and interpret history.

**Standard 2 - History,** applying the tools, thinking and practices of history to analyze key historical periods and patterns of change over time within and across nations and cultures.

**Standard 3 - Geography,** applying the tools, thinking,and practices of geography to analyze places and regions across the world, develop spatial understanding and perspectives, make decisions, and solve geographic problems.

**Standard 4 - Economics,** understanding and applying the tools, thinking and practices of economics to make decisions and solve problems related to personal finance literacy and allocation of scarce resources.

**Standard 5 - Civics,** applying the attributes of appropriate civic participation to address a local, state, or national issue.

**Standard 6 - Civics,** applying understanding of origin, structure, and function of governments to analyze their impacts on societies and citizens.

**Assessment**

**20% Current Event Presentation: Standards 1,2,3,4,5,6**

**15% Current Event Responses: Standards 1,2,3,4,5,6 and ELA 7**

**25% Quizzes: Standards: 1,2,3**

**15% Maps: Standard 3**

**30% Projects: Standards: 1,2,3,4,5,6**

**Grading system**

**90-100: A**

**80- 89:  B**

**70- 79:  C**

**60-  69: D**

**59 and below:  F**

Thank you for letting me teach you this year.  I hope you have a great learning year academically, socially, and emotionally.  I look forward to working with you this year and seeing you grow.

Sincerely yours,

Ms. Sheri E. Teeter