

# OMAHA NORTH HIGH MAGNET SCHOOL



## English 7-8 Course Syllabus

**Instructor:** Ms. Gutierrez  
**E-mail:** [Amanda.Gutierrez@ops.org](mailto:Amanda.Gutierrez@ops.org)  
**Plan Periods:** N/A  
**Classroom:** Room 308  
**Phone Number:** 531-299-7187

### Course Description

English 7-8 focuses on the English Language Arts skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening through a study of British and global literature. Students will use a variety of conceptual lenses to gain command of essential skills in written and oral communication and the reading of narrative and informational text. Students will produce a variety of writing samples in the following modes: descriptive, narrative, analytical, expository, persuasive, argumentative, and technical.

### Content Standards

**Reading:** Students will learn and apply reading skills and strategies to comprehend text.

**Writing:** Students will learn and apply writing skills and strategies to communicate.

**Speaking/Listening:** Students will develop and apply appropriate speaking and listening skills and strategies to communicate for a variety of purposes.

**Multiple Literacies:** Students will apply information fluency and practice digital citizenship.

### Major Units of Study

In addition to covering the skills and standards described in the Nebraska State Standards for Language Arts, this class will examine common themes within American literature.

### English 7-8

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Collection 1: Chasing Success <i>*The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i>	Collection 2: Gender Roles <i>*Things Fall Apart</i>	Collection 4: Seeking Justice, Seeking Peace <i>*Kite Runner</i>	Collection 5: Taking Risks <i>Sunrise Over Fallujah</i>

**\*Indicates sensitive material.**

The ELA & Reading Departments of the Omaha Public Schools encourages students to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction. All supplementary materials have been reviewed and approved by practicing teachers who consider the literature to be valuable and pertinent to the themes and ideas addressed within the content of the class. Because some reading material is considered 'sensitive' due to content (e.g. language, violence, sexuality), a parent may request that an alternative selection be offered to the students.

Synopses and reviews of reading material can be accessed on a variety of websites. Possible websites are [www.sparknotes.com](http://www.sparknotes.com), [www.bookrags.com](http://www.bookrags.com), or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Questions regarding the supplementary materials used in ELA, Reading, or Drama should be directed to Shelley Erikson, ELA Supervisor, at 531-299-9587.

If a parent/guardian does not feel the supplemental, sensitive novels provided to the student are acceptable, they must directly email the teacher ([amanda.gutierrez@ops.org](mailto:amanda.gutierrez@ops.org)). An alternate assignment will be provided for the student to complete independently of the class. When appropriate, he/she will participate in class activities and discussion about the content as it applies to curriculum standards.

## Course Expectations

- Read several novels by diverse authors, and complete a set of assignments and discussions related to the reading.
- Complete a research paper and class presentation on an original research idea.
- Complete at least 5 writing projects/papers that are portfolio-quality.
- Work on grammar regularly.
- Read in and out of class to keep up with assigned reading.
- Explore U.S. history as we examine the literature selections.
- Read 15 or more short stories, sermons, poems and non-fiction passages from the textbook.

## Class Rules and Expectations

Rules and guidelines set forth in the student handbook will be followed in this class. Any student who distracts other students or the instructor interferes with the learning environment and should expect consequences.

- **Tardy Policy:** The student is expected to be in their seat when the bell rings. A daily warm-up activity will be provided and must be completed within the first 5 minutes of class. The school-wide tardy policy is enforced.
- **Hall Passes:** Hall passes are not permitted during the first and last 15 minutes of class. The student is allowed passes from class at the teacher's discretion during independent work time. Pass allowance will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- **Electronic Devices:** The student is expected to put away all electronic devices, including cellular phones and music players. The school-wide electronic policy is enforced.
- **Class Materials:** The student is required to attend class (**face-to-face and virtually**) with the appropriate textbook/novel, electronic device and charger, a spiral notebook, and a writing utensil. The student will need to provide collateral to borrow materials from the classroom. Additionally, an agenda is highly recommended for this course.
- **Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at Omaha North High Magnet School. Therefore, acts or attempts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification will not be tolerated. If an academic integrity violation takes place, the policy outlined in the Code of Conduct handbook.

## Assessments

- Course grades will be determined by planned assessments such as tests, quizzes, and projects scored with rubrics.
- Major tests and/or writing projects are to be expected at the end of each major unit outlined below.

## OPS Secondary Grading Practices

All coursework and assessments are judged based on the level of student learning from “below basic” to “advanced.” This course will provide multiple opportunities to achieve at the “proficient” to “advanced” levels. Students are evaluated based on a proficiency scale or project rubric. Proficiency scales for this course are available upon request (teacher will identify location such as portal, teacher website, attached, etc.)

### There are three types of coursework:

- ***Practice*** – assignments are brief and done at the beginning of learning to gain initial content (e.g., student responses on white boards, a valid sampling of math problems, keyboarding exercises, and diagramming sentences, checking and recording resting heart rate). Practice assignments are not generally graded for accuracy (descriptive feedback will be provided in class) and are not a part of the grade. Teachers may keep track of practice work to check for completion and students could also track their practice work. Practice work is at the student's instructional level and may only include Basic (2) level questions.
- ***Formative (35% of the final grade)*** – assessments/assignments occur during learning to inform and improve instruction. They are minor assignments (e.g., a three paragraph essay, written responses to guiding questions over an assigned reading, completion of a comparison contrast matrix). Formative assignments are graded for accuracy and descriptive feedback is provided. Formative work may be at the student's instructional level or at the level of the content standard. Formative assessments/assignments will have all levels of learning – Basic (2), Proficient (3), and Advanced (4), which means that for every formative assessment/assignment, students will be able to earn an Advanced (4). Teachers will require students to redo work that is not of high quality to ensure rigor and high expectations. The students score on a formative assessment that was redone will be their final score.
- ***Summative (65% of the final grade)*** – assessments/assignments are major end of learning unit tests or projects used to determine mastery of content or skill (e.g., a research paper, an oral report with a power point, major unit test,

and science fair project). Summative assignments are graded for accuracy. Summative assignments assess the student's progress on grade level standards and may not be written at the student's instructional level. Summative assessments/assignments will have all levels of learning – Basic (2), Proficient (3), and Advanced (4), which means that for every formative assessment/assignment students, will be able to earn an advanced (4).

OPS Grading Scale	
A	3.26 – 4.00
B	2.51 – 3.25
C	1.76 – 2.50
D	1.01 – 1.75
F	0.00 – 1.00

### Missing Coursework

Work not turned in at all will be recorded in Infinite Campus (district grade book) as an M for missing which calculates to a score of zero.

### Redoing/Revising Coursework

Students may be allowed redos and revisions of coursework for full credit during that unit of study based upon the teacher's professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Scores for student work after retaking, revision or redoing work will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework or assessment, but will replace the original student score.

### Late Coursework

Students are expected to complete coursework on time. Late coursework may be accepted for full credit until the end of the unit based on the teacher's professional judgment and evidence collected throughout the unit. Accepted late work will not result in a reduction, and the M (missing) will be replaced with the score earned by the student. The teacher or school may make exceptions depending up on student circumstances (such as prolonged absences due to illness).

### Weighting Assignments (Using a Multiplier) \*Secondary only

When entering grades in the grade book, teachers may assign greater weight to some assignments. For example, the final exam may impact a student's summative grade more than a unit test. Teachers will have the option use the multiplier to weight both formative and summative assessments to a maximum of 4. If a weight of 2 or more is applied to an assessment, this information will be communicated to students at the time the assessment is announced.

### OPS Secondary Proficiency Scale

<b>Advanced</b>	<b>4</b>	The student consistently demonstrates a thorough understanding of course content/grade level standard by making in-depth inferences and showing extended applications of the course content/grade level standard(s). The student performs consistently at a high level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is above the expected course content/grade level standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceeds expected course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Applies skills and strategies in new and unfamiliar situations</li> </ul>
<b>Proficient + (Approaching Advanced)</b>	<b>3.5</b>	The student demonstrates partial success at showing a thorough understanding of course content/grade level standard by making in-depth inferences and applications of the course content/grade level standard(s). The student performs with partial success at a high level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is above the expected course content/grade level standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates success toward exceeding course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Applies skills and strategies consistently in familiar situations, and at times, in unfamiliar situations</li> </ul>
<b>Proficient</b>	<b>3</b>	The student demonstrates a proficient understanding of the expected course content/grade level standard(s). The student performs at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is at the expected course content/grade level standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets expected course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Retains information and applies skills and strategies in familiar situations</li> </ul>

<b>Basic + (Approaching Proficient)</b>	<b>2.5</b>	The student demonstrates an adequate understanding of the information for the course content/grade level standard(s). The student performs with partial success at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency that is at the expected course content/grade level standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially meets expected course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Retains information and at times applies skills and strategies in familiar situations</li> </ul>
<b>Basic</b>	<b>2</b>	The student demonstrates a basic understanding of the information expected for the course content/grade level standard(s). The student performs the skills required for the course content/grade level standard at a basic level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially meets expected course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Retains information and simple processes in familiar situations</li> </ul>
<b>Approaching Basic</b>	<b>1.5</b>	The student demonstrates some basic understanding of the information expected for the course content/grade level standard(s). The student struggles to perform the skills required for the course content/grade level standard at a basic level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially meets some of expected course content/grade level standard</li> <li>Retains some information and simple processes in familiar situations</li> </ul>
<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>1</b>	The student demonstrates difficulty in understanding the information and performing the skills expected for the course/grade level standard(s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performs below expected course content/grade level on the standard.</li> <li>Has difficulty retaining information and applying skills and strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Failing</b>	<b>0</b>	The student demonstrates little or no evidence of understanding the information or skills required for the course content/grade level standard(s).

NOTICE: This syllabus sets forth a tentative course of study. However, the instructor may adjust this schedule because of weather, unplanned events, or curricular adjustments based on students' needs. Any modifications will not substantially change the objectives or grading in this course and will conform to the policies and guidelines of Omaha Public Schools.