

**CORTNEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Course Expectations**  
**2008/2009**

**Course Title** English 8

**Teacher's Name** Mr. Dennison

**COURSE SCOPE/OUTLINE**

**A. Course Description**

Course Scope:

This class will expand students' writing, reading, speaking, listening, and research skills, and will strengthen critical thinking skills. All lessons will relate to the Nevada State English Language Arts Standards. Grammar and mechanics will be taught as essential elements of writing as a process. A variety of literatures will be used for the development of reading strategies, literary interpretation, and appreciation. Literature selections will also serve as models for writing.

Course Goals:

1. To further develop critical thinking.
2. To further enhance the fundamentals of writing as a process.
3. To write for a variety of purposes and audiences.
4. To analyze models of quality writing.
5. To write and speak using standard English grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
6. To employ the common terminology needed for the purpose of discussing correct usage, mechanics, and forms of writing.
7. To use stylistic devices effectively in order to improve writing and begin to develop a personal style.
8. To expand vocabulary and increase spelling proficiency.
9. To read and interpret a variety of literature including fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry.
10. To apply literary terminology in the analysis of literature.
11. To develop effective speaking and listening skills.
12. To apply library, research, and study skills.
13. To respond respectfully to the ideas of others.
14. To develop an understanding of good character and ethics by responding to a wide variety of written and oral communication.
15. To develop an awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

**B. Textbooks and Alternative Curriculum Materials**

1. Lost, stolen, or damaged books will be assessed at replacement costs.
2. Students are expected to purchase a student planner. This will be used for parental communication, hall pass purposes, and to record classroom objectives and assignment information. Since planners are used on a daily basis, students who lose their planners will be expected to purchase another.
3. Supplies
  - a. In order to organize important information as it is presented in class, students will be expected to maintain an English designated section in a 2" three ring binder
  - b. Five notebook dividers
  - c. College-ruled loose-leaf paper
  - d. A one-subject, hole punched spiral notebook
  - e. Two red and two black or blue ball point pens
  - f. One box of tissue (Extra credit points will be awarded for boxes of tissue decorated with literature related quotes)

**C. Course Overview**

1. *First Quarter*  
 Writing Process-Ideas, **Organization, Voice, Conventions**  
 Grammar  
 Vocabulary/Spelling  
 Communication/Study Skills  
 Usage and Mechanics  
 Literature  
 Listening
2. *Second Quarter*  
 Literature  
 Writing Process - **Ideas, Organization, Voice, Conventions**  
 Grammar  
 Vocabulary/Spelling  
 Usage and Mechanics  
 Communication/Study Skills
3. *Third Quarter*  
 Reading Comprehension/Literature  
 Writing Process-Ideas, **Organization, Voice, Conventions**  
 Vocabulary/Spelling  
 Grammar  
 Usage and Mechanics  
 Communication/Study Skills  
 Research Strategies
4. *Fourth Quarter*  
 Study and Research Strategies  
 Writing Process-Ideas, **Organization, Voice, Conventions**  
 Vocabulary/Spelling  
 Usage and Mechanics  
 Literature  
 Communication/Study Skills

**D. Class Routines**

1. Testing
  - a. Vocabulary and spelling tests will be given.
  - b. Quizzes will be given after each unit.
  - c. Assessments will be given each quarter/semester.
1. Extra Credit—Opportunities for extra credit are periodically available. However, it is the student's responsibility to keep up with their regular classroom work since extra credit can increase a student's grade no more than 5%.
2. Classwork/Homework Policy—As a rule, all assignments will be accepted only on their due dates. Assignments turned in one day late will be accepted for half credit. Assignments turned in more than one day late assignments will only be accepted with teacher approval and points will be deducted accordingly.
3. Across the Curriculum Activities
  - Reading/Writing Processes
  - Study Skills Strategies
  - Learning/Reading Strategies
  - Graphic Organizers
  - Technology

## E. Student Assistance

1. Available for extra help before school during opportunity period or after school by appointment
2. E-mail at [jwhitman@interact.ccsd.net](mailto:jwhitman@interact.ccsd.net) is the fastest method of contacting me
3. Call 799-2400 to schedule an appointment
4. Notification will be posted on the classroom door if I am unavailable as scheduled for tutoring/extra help

## F. Grading Policy

1. Grading Scale: **A** = 90–100%, **B** = 80 – 89%, **C** =70 – 79%, **D** = 60 – 69%, **F** = 0 – 59%
2. Grade Determination
  - a. All classwork, homework, quizzes and tests will be given a grade corresponding with the grading scale above. Assignments must be at least 50% complete to receive a grade. Any assignment turned in less than 50% complete will receive an automatic zero (0).
  - b. Quarter grades will be averaged using weighted categories. The following breakdown will apply:
 

Journal/Portfolio/Planner	=	10%
Classwork	=	35%
Tests/Quizzes	=	25%
Vocabulary/Spelling	=	10%
Homework	=	15%
Group/Class Projects	=	5%

Extra Credit can raise a student's grade no more than 5%
  - c. Extra Credit will only be accepted as periodically assigned for the entire class.
  - d. Semester grades will be averaged as follows:
 

Exam:	Worth 10% of the total grade
Each Quarter:	Worth 45% of the total grade

Example: (45%=9 weeks) + (45%=9 weeks) + (10%=semester test) = Semester Grade
  - e. The Board of School Trustees requires that students enrolled in schools of the Clark County School District attend school regularly in accordance with the Nevada Revised Statutes. It is the position of the board that if a student is absent, no learning can take place. The educational experiences lost during an absence are irretrievable as the interaction in the classroom setting can seldom be duplicated through makeup work. Being absent from school will have a negative impact on your learning and may affect your grade. Additionally, total absences (pre-arranged or not) that exceed ten (10) may result in a failing grade and loss of class credit.
  - f. Citizenship Grade
    1. Citizenship grades will be determined by the student's ability to follow school and class rules. Infractions will be recorded/logged by the student in a class citation/infraction logbook for the purpose of determining earned citizenship grades. Infractions may include but are not limited to tardies, chewing gum or eating candy in the class, talking at inappropriate times, etc... The following scale will apply.
 

O = Outstanding Behavior--students who exhibit outstanding behavior in the classroom will have no more than two (2) infractions
S = Satisfactory Behavior--Students who exhibit acceptable behavior in the classroom will have no more than four (4) infractions
N = Needs Improvement—Students who exhibit unacceptable behavior which needs to be improved will have no more than (6) infractions
U = Unsatisfactory Behavior--students who <b>exceed</b> six (6) infractions do not exhibit behavior that follows the class and school rules.
    2. Any infraction resulting in a behavioral referral (counselor/dean's referral) will result in an automatic drop in citizenship, i.e. E to S or S to N.
  - g. Make-Up Procedures
    1. It is the students' responsibility to contact the teacher for make-up work.
    2. Upon returning from an absence, students will write the assignments in their planner and will then ask the teacher for assistance. The following district policy will apply: students will have

three days per excused absence to complete make up work. However, as policy states, absences for which work is not made up will become unexcused.

3. There is no guarantee that the regular classroom time schedule will allow the teacher to spend time updating students regarding missing assignments and class instruction during the regular class. Therefore, students are encouraged to come before school during opportunity period to receive individual assistance regarding missed classwork.

## **G Classroom Behavioral Expectations**

1. Discipline Plan
  - a. Students will enter the classroom, write the day's activities in planners, including homework, and begin warm-up activity.
  - b. Students will conduct themselves in a manner that does not cause a problem for others. With this in mind, students will need to be prompt, prepared, and positive by focusing full attention on thinking, language, and manners. School rules, such as adhering to the dress code and the no gum policy, will be followed.
  - c. The tardy policy, as outlined by Cortney JHS in the student planner, will be followed.
  - d. Students are to have their three-ring portfolio, loose-leaf binder paper, spiral notebook, and required writing implements in class each day. Failure to be prepared with the appropriate materials will result in a classroom infraction and will lower the student's citizenship grade. Continued failure to be prepared will result in a counselor's referral and can ultimately be grounds for a "U" in citizenship.
2. Consequences
  - Verbal warning/Sign classroom infraction book
  - Detention
  - Parent Contact
  - Dean's Referral

## **H. Homework Policy**

1. On average, students will be assigned to complete spelling/vocabulary work each week. Students may also expect to be assigned periodic homework assignments relating to ongoing classwork. In addition, students are expected to complete any unfinished classwork on their own. However, students who use class time productively should have only minimal classwork to complete on their own.
2. Generally, homework will be assigned Monday-Thursday. However, when projects or lengthy assignments are given, students may find it necessary/valuable to use weekend time in addition to the Monday-Thursday homework schedule.

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Teacher's Name Mr. Dennison

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_