

Syllabus for 7th & 8th grade Gifted Program

Overview: The middle school gifted program is designed to extend the regular curriculum and challenge the students by improving their fluency, flexibility, elaboration and originality (P.Torrence’s taxonomy of Creative thinking). All of the “communication arts”, (reading, writing, speaking and listening) are emphasized. Students participate in quarterly thematic units that will extend the various curricular areas. Critical reading and thinking skills are enhanced through novel reading and vocabulary work.

Textbook(s) and other Resources used:

Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit. New York: Random House, 1980.

Paulsen Gary. The Giver. New York: Dell Yearling, 1999.

Hickman, Homer. October Sky. New York: Dell, 1999.

Collier, James & Collier Christopher. My Brother Sam is Dead. New York: Scholastic, 1974.

Outline of Content:

First Quarter:

Topics: History of language, Role of Philologist, Map Making, Poetry

Projects, papers, tests-schedule and types:

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the novel and it’s critical analysis through tests, quizzes and student projects; both individual and group. Students will research the history of runes and create a dictionary of creating their own set of runes to share with the class. Students will create a 3-D map of the hobbit’s magical land. Students will investigate different types of poetry and write and illustrate their own poetry book.

Novel: The Hobbit

Second Quarter:

Topics: Euthanasia, Utopian Society, Family Traditions, Underground Railroad

Projects, papers, tests-schedule and types:

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the novel and it’s critical analysis through tests, quizzes and student projects; both individual and group. Students will create their own society. Students will research their own family traditions and compare them to family traditions from other cultures. Students will have a debate on the topic of euthanasia. Students will research the Underground Railroad and compare the slave’s journey to that of Jonah’s in the book.

Novel: The Giver

Third Quarter:

Topics: Historical Fiction

Projects, papers, tests-schedule and types:

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the novel and it’s critical

analysis through tests, quizzes and student projects; both individual and group. Students will design a brochure of a historical figure. Students will create a photo story using historical fiction as a narrative. Students will create a newspaper clipping related to the events and conflicts in the book. Students will create or recreate an artifact from the book. Students will write a monologue in the persona of colonists they have imagined.

Novel: My Brother Sam is Dead

Fourth Quarter

Topics: History of rockets,

Projects, papers, tests-schedule and types:

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the novel and it's critical analysis through tests, quizzes and student projects; both individual and group. Students will design and test a rocket, pop can hero engine, and a rocket racer while examining Newton's Laws of Motion. Students will use problem solving skills to simulate the development of a commercial proposal to design, build, and launch a rocket.

Novel: October Sky

*Students will continue to develop their vocabulary through Thematic Units.

Students will be assessed on their knowledge and usage of the vocabulary covered in each unit.