

# English Language Arts

*Berlin Brothersvalley Middle School*

*Mrs. Smith Room 005*

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**2019 - 2020**

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## A Word to Parents and Students

### Dear Parents,

Gaining useful communication skills will give your child confidence to achieve in his or her future endeavors. Are you familiar with the saying, "Knowledge is power"? Without the ability to clearly communicate, all the knowledge in the world is useless. Using language effectively to communicate while reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing is real power and we (teacher, student, parent) will strive towards this year.

Your child's learning is the most important to me. I will take the time to get to know your child. I will be there to give him or her a helping hand with language arts when he or she needs it, as well as the "eye" when he or she is trying to slide by without doing his or her best. My class will be hard at times, but I will be there to give support. I do expect students to do their best work all the time. This doesn't mean everything has to be perfect all the time,

but their ability should match their work product.

As a parent myself, I like to know how I can help my child at home. Parents can help their child by establishing a homework and bedtime routine. Yes, even middle schoolers still need a bedtime. Teens these days have many distractions, such as cell phones, Internet, video games, and television. Keep these distractions to a minimum while your child completes his or her homework. Lastly, please do help your child with homework, but do not simply give your child the answer. Ask leading questions that push your child to think for himself or herself. However, if your child becomes too frustrated, send me an email or have your child come see me in the morning.

I look forward to working with you this year. Your involvement in our class is appreciated and encouraged. Feel free to call, e-mail, or schedule a meeting at any time. See page 4 for contact information.

Mrs. Smith



### Dear Students,

Welcome to 8th grade! Get ready for a challenging but awesome year. I am excited to get to know you and to help you grow as a reader, writer, editor, and speaker, as well as prepare you for high school and for your life beyond. What you do today matters and will shape the choices you have tomorrow.

I am looking forward to our year together. Let's make it the best!

Mrs. Smith

THE MORE THAT YOU **READ**,  
 THE MORE THINGS YOU WILL **KNOW**.  
 THE MORE THAT YOU **LEARN**,  
 THE MORE PLACES YOU'LL **GO**.  
 --Dr. Seuss



## 40 Book Challenge

The 40 Book Challenge is for all students. It is not an assignment. This is not graded in any way. It is not a contest or competition, but a personal challenge. The challenge is meant to expand a student's reading life and their love of reading, which matters to me. One of my goals is to foster a love of reading in my students.

If students want to participate, they can challenge themselves to read 40, 30, 20, or even 10 books this year. The goal should be more than the number of books read last year.

Students will be able to choose their own books. Students will be able to give book talks about their favorite books, which will help others to find books to read.

## Course Work

### Scrapbook: (2-4th Nine Weeks)

\*Keepsake project

### Fictional/Informational Reading:

\*Scope Magazine

\*Novel Studies, Short Stories, Articles

\*Learning Stations

\*Independent Reading (Students choose reading material.) This book must be brought EVERY day to class.

### Writing/Grammar:

\*Textbook: Writing with Power

### Exact Path: (most weeks)

## ELA Supplies & Binder

Your child will need the following supplies for English language arts class:

-pencils, pen, highlighter

-2 inch 3-ring binder

-flashcard holder

-dividers

-\*thumb drive (not necessary but helpful)

\*\*These supplies should be brought to class along with textbook(s) and an independent reading book **EVERYDAY**.

\*\*\***Class supplies should be brought by the second week of school.**

Since your child will be completing a year-long project (Scrapbook), he or she will need the following supplies:

-a 1 inch 3-ring binder

-bordered and/or decorative scrapbook paper (8 1/2 by 11 size) (about 14-15 pages)

-stickers

-1 pack of 25 sheet protectors

\***More information about the Scrapbook Project will be sent home at the second nine weeks.**

# Classroom Expectations, Rules & Consequences

*The expectations, rules, procedures and consequences of my classroom are intended to keep the classroom environment safe, orderly, and productive. Please respect the rules so that we can maximize learning time together. The rules are not hard to follow nor are any of them "out of the ordinary." They are simply expected behaviors for middle school students in this classroom. If you have any questions about any of these rules, please ask me as soon as possible. All rules and expectations have a purpose! Thank you for your cooperation!*

## Expectations & Rules:

### 1. **Be respectful.**

Show respect for the teacher, yourself, and others at all times. (1)Respect others' property. Avoid touching or writing on anything that does not belong to you (including desks, textbooks, walls, teacher's belongings, etc.). (2)Don't expect that others will clean-up your messes. Please pick-up after yourself. (3)Respect yourself and the rest of us by using appropriate language and wearing appropriate clothing. (4)Please do NOT have side conversations during class. (5)Raise your hand when you want to speak. Be a kind person.

### 2. **Put forth your best effort at all times.**

Always do your own best work. Put learning first. Also, put quality ahead of just getting work done.

### 3. **Be prepared for class each day.**

Come prepared with the following items: pencil, highlighter, binder, textbook(s), agenda, independent reading book, thumb drive.

### 4. **Listen and Follow directions.**

When directions are given, listen to them and do your best to follow them the first time. If you do not understand the directions, ASK.

### 5. **Pay attention, participate, and ask questions.**

Engage in what is going on in the classroom. Be proactive about your learning by not being afraid to ask questions or to ask for help.

**Therefore, keep your cell phones off and away at all times.**

### 6. **Preserve a positive learning environment.**

Student actions (talking, sleeping, doing nothing, grooming, texting, doing work for another class, etc.) that interfere with teaching or learning in the classroom will NOT be tolerated. Do NOT judge a person, book/story, or assignment too soon.

### 7. **Take responsibility for your actions.**

Take responsibility for missed or late assignments or rule infractions. Don't deny it, lie about it, or blame someone else. Then, take the consequence that is given.

## Consequences:

In any order that I may see fit.

1. verbal warning (only one)
2. move seat
3. loss of a privilege
4. lunch detention
5. contact home
6. behavior assignment
7. conference
8. after-school detention
9. principal's office



### Getting Help

There's more than one way.

1. Before homeroom (8:00-8:20)
2. Beginning, during, or end of class
3. During Activity Period (8th)

## Academic Honesty Policy

**Do NOT cheat!** This means sharing, copying, plagiarizing, copy/paste or downloading from the Internet. You are expected to do your own work! Students caught cheating will be given a zero and a phone call home will be made. Both the student who shares his work for an assignment and the student who copies will receive the same consequence.



**CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**

**Heading of Papers:**

\*Name, Date, and Periods on ALL papers

**Entering the Classroom:**

\*Please wait until everyone in the class exits the room before entering for your class. Please enter the room in an orderly way.

**Independent Reading/Bellwork:**

\*First class: Begin reading from your book by the time the late bell rings. We will usually begin this way. We will read for approximately 10 minutes every day.

\*\*Second class: Begin the Bellwork assignment by the time the late bell rings. You should work independently on the assignment. The work should take approximately 5-8 minutes. We will go over the answers. You should correct your own paper. Every week a quiz will take place.

**Binders**

\*Respect the binder by...

- writing neatly and legibly

-keeping your binder neatly organized by filing all papers.

- no doodling or scribbling in it. (Relevant and thoughtful artwork, diagrams, etc. are encouraged; meaningless marks are not allowed.)

- follow the rules of grammar, mechanics, and punctuation because all writing is practice.

\*Do NOT use your binder for other courses.

**My Desk and Computer:**

\*Off limits to you unless I give you permission.

**Getting Around the Classroom:**

\*You do not need to ask to throw away garbage, sharpen a pencil or get a tissue, but you need to be polite.

\*This classroom is not a basketball court.

**Classroom Dismissal:**

\*The clock doesn't dismiss you, nor do you dismiss yourselves.

\*Do not gather your materials and stand by the door when the end of class is near.

\*Please wait until I dismiss you when you hear me say, "Have a nice day!" or something similar.



**Hall Passes**

\*Try to use the restroom or get a drink between classes.

\*Do NOT leave the room without permission.

\*If you are given permission to leave, complete the sign-out sheet. Do NOT make a habit of asking to leave the room.

**Tardies:**

\*Being on time means that you are in your seat before the second bell rings.

\*Three tardies will result in a detention.

**Computer Problems**



\*If you do not have access to a computer to either do word processing or

Internet research, then you need to use your time at school wisely.

\*If your printer is out of ink or not working, the assignment can be e-mailed to me or save it to a thumb drive to print out at school.

**Checking Out a Reading Book:**

\*The books are there for you to borrow.

\*Sign all books in or out from Mrs. Smith's Book Binder.

\*Please read and return books promptly, so others may read them as well.

**Missing Class:**

\*You are responsible to find out missed work.

\*If you know ahead of time that you will be absent, ask me for your work.

\*You have as many days as you were absent to turn in work or make-up tests/quizzes and homework.

\*Turn in any assignments that may have been due when you missed class.

**Homeroom Business: (1st Period Only)**

\*We will begin promptly at 8:20. Three tardies will result in a detention.

\*While I read the student bulletin and take lunch count, the class will be respectful and quiet.

\*We will say the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Snow Day(s):**

\*If we have a snow day, we will resume our planned due dates as quickly as possible. For example, if we were supposed to take a quiz/test on the cancelled day, then it will happen on the next possible school day.

\*If an assignment was due on the snow day, then it will be due the next school day.

\*If we have a snow day on the day before a test or due date, then the normal test or due date will still happen on the originally scheduled date. Assessments will not be pushed back for extra study/homework time!



## Grading

No Name on an assignment - 2 points will be deducted

**Homework:** Homework is NOT punishment, but it is given as reinforcement of a skill that was taught that day. Most days students may have some time at the end of class to begin, if not finish the homework, but they should use 8th period to complete any homework. Students should use their time wisely at school. All assignments are due the following day at the beginning of class unless stated differently.

\*Homework will be awarded points. Most will be given up to 2 points unless otherwise stated: full credit for full completion; partial credit for partial completion, and no credit will be given for less than half or no completion of homework. If students begin a pattern of not completing homework, parents will be notified. If incompleteness of homework continues, other consequences may follow.

**Late Work:** Late work is any work not submitted on the due date and class period or by the end of the day, depending on the assignment with the exception of make-up work.

\*10% will be deducted from work turned in one day after the due date.

\*15% will be deducted from work turned in from day 2 through day 5.

\*No late work will be accepted after 5 days and not to exceed the end of the 9 week grading period.

\*If late work becomes a habit, parents will be notified, and other consequences may follow.

\*If you feel unable to make a due date, an extension may be granted, but you (student) must speak to me at least one day before it is due. Do not give excuses the day the assignment is due. Take responsibility for it being late.

### Tests/Quizzes/Essays:

\*You may retake certain failed tests or quizzes; however, you cannot have any zeros.

\*If you wish to raise a grade on a piece of writing, you may have **ONE** chance to raise it. Revise the writing, even after the final grade, and turn it in within THREE SCHOOL DAYS.

### Vocabulary:

Each week flashcards will be completed and a quiz given. \*Bonus points can be earned through our vocabulary study. A vocabulary word that is found in a student's independent reading book and presented to the class will earn a bonus point.

### Extra Credit:

\*"Extra" means "more than or beyond what is usual, normal, expected, or necessary." Extra credit is not given often, so listen for them and take advantage. Moreover, extra credit will not be accepted until all original work has been completed.

## Sign-off Box



After reading and discussing this newsletter with your child, please sign and date below. Signed copies by both parties will receive 5 points by Friday. The newsletter should remain in the binder all year for reference.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(student signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

## Contact Information

**Mrs. Vanessa Smith**

School phone: 267-6931

E-mail: [vsmith@bbsd.com](mailto:vsmith@bbsd.com)

\*Please feel free to contact me with any question(s). I will respond back as soon as I can.