

MR. WECHSLER'S 8th GRADE SAS ENGLISH CLASS

In this class, the school year is divided into eight units, each lasting about five weeks. The California Grade 8 Language Arts Standards will play an important role in each lesson. We will read key selections from the Prentice Hall textbook *Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes* plus many thought-provoking books, including classics by Mark Twain, Helen Keller, Frederick Douglass, and Willa Cather. Writing assignments based on these rich texts will include essays, research reports, journal entries, and poems.

Homework — Students will complete at least one significant writing assignment each week. Frequent vocabulary and grammar exercises will dramatically enhance language skills. New words and concepts are added almost every week, and students must take time to learn them in preparation for the frequent pop quizzes.

Student Rules & Responsibilities — Every day, students are expected to arrive with their reading and writing assignments completed so that they will be fully prepared for the new lesson. They must be in their seats and ready to work when the bell rings or they will be marked tardy. They must bring their copy of the book the class is currently reading, their color-coded vocabulary cards, and a three-ring binder specifically designated for this class. This binder must have five section dividers and a see-through storage pouch containing at least two sharp pencils with erasers, two black and two red ballpoint pens, and one yellow highlighter.

Academic Integrity — As stated in Revere's student handbook, "Students must rely on their own talents and abilities to complete academic work at the level in which they take pride. Academic dishonesty usually involves an attempt by students to show a level of knowledge or skill that they do not possess at this time. . . . It is the responsibility of the teacher to determine whether or not a violation has occurred and to take the

appropriate action." Students must read *all* required texts themselves, and they must not cheat by providing pre-quiz briefings to classmates who haven't done the reading. Cheating on quizzes and plagiarism on writing assignments will not be tolerated and will trigger an automatic "U" on the next grading report and a zero for the activity in question.

Late Work — Work must be submitted **on time** to earn points. Exceptions to this rule are granted only when students have a valid absence or if special arrangements have been made. Even though late work does not earn points, it still must be completed and submitted. Any missing assignment will result in an automatic "U" for work habits on the next report card.

All assignments are clearly posted on the syllabus, so there should be no question as to what is due or when it is due. It is the *student's* responsibility to make up any missing work. *At the end of each grading period, any empty spaces on the grade roster will be filled in with zeroes.*

Grading Policy for Subject Achievement — Each activity is worth a set number of points with a detailed rubric to guide student performance. Truly outstanding work can earn extra points at the discretion of the teacher. Over the course of each grading period, the total number of points a student accumulates will be converted to a letter grade based on a percentage scale:

- A = 90% – 100+%
- B = 80% – 89.75%
- C = 70% – 79.75%
- D = 60% – 69.75%
- F = Less than 60%

Please refer to the chart below for the criteria used to assign grades for Work Habits and Cooperation.

WORK HABITS	"E" (Excellent)	"S" (Satisfactory)	"U" (Unsatisfactory)
HOMEWORK	Always on time and complete	Always turned in, but late one or more times	One or more assignments not turned in at all
MATERIALS	Always on hand and accessible	Almost always on hand, with few exceptions	Often or always missing something or other
ATTENDANCE	No tardies/unexcused absences	One, two, or three tardies/unexcused absences	Four or more tardies/unexcused absences
COOPERATION	"E" (Excellent)	"S" (Satisfactory)	"U" (Unsatisfactory)
COURTESY	Always courteous, never disruptive	Rarely disturbs others, usually courteous	Frequent disruptions and disrespectful actions
CONDUCT	Promotes the general welfare	Supports the general welfare	Opposes the general welfare
IMPROVEMENT	Rarely or never needs correction	Accepts corrections with a positive attitude	Makes little attempt to improve