



Malone Middle School

September 2011
2011

Welcome To 7th Grade ELA! Mr. Spicer - Room 211

Dear Students and Parents / Guardians,

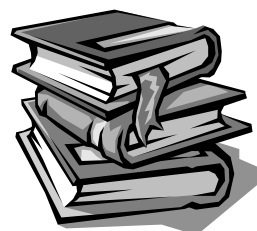
My name is Mr. Spicer, and I will be working with you during English / Language Arts class this year. It is my hope that this year will prove to be both exciting and challenging.

The goal of ELA class is to provide opportunities for students to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through a variety of activities, such as critical and creative writing, formal presentations, and literary analysis.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Middle School (483-7801). I look forward to working with you and your child as we all strive for success this year in ELA 7.

Sincerely,

Marc Spicer



Daily Classroom Procedures

Upon Arrival To Class . . .

1. Quietly sit in your assigned seat.
2. Copy the assignment from the *Homework Board* into your agenda.
3. Complete the *Opening Move* that appears on the *Smart Board*.
4. Have your homework assignment and other required materials on your desk.

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Greetings from Our Student Teacher

Dear Parents and Students,

My name is Miss Amber Gladle, and I will be working with Mr. Spicer from September 1, 2011 until October 27, 2011. I look forward to working with you this year. I would just like to take this time to introduce myself to you so that you have a better idea of who I am and where I am from.

I graduated from Edwards-Knox central school in 2006 with an Advanced Regents diploma with honors. After high school I began college in the fall of 2006. I attended the State University of New York (SUNY) Potsdam. I graduated last May with a Bachelors degree. I completed course work in English Literature and Writing, Psychology and biology. After graduating in May I was accepted in the Master in Science of Teaching secondary English Education program at SUNY Potsdam. I will graduate this December with my Masters degree after completion of my student teaching.

I look forward to working with you and your child throughout my student teaching placement at Malone. If you would like to contact me at any time, please feel free to e-mail me at gladleal190@potsdam.edu. I will be happy to answer any of your questions that you may have regarding anything I do throughout my teaching experience.

Sincerely,
Amber Lyn Gladle

The Student Data Sheet:

The link at MrSpicer.com will take you directly to the Student Data Sheet. Just fill out the sheet and press the "submit" button at the bottom of the page to E-mail it to me. I have paper copies of the Student Data Sheet if you do not have internet access at home.

**The Student Data Sheet is Due by
Monday, September 12, 2011.**



Our Class Has
A Web Site

MrSpicer.com



- Important Notices
- Copies of Notes and Worksheets
- Homework Assignments & Project Due Dates
- ELA Online Progress Report

Keep Informed of Your Child's Progress in ELA 7 at MrSpicer.com



In an effort to keep you even more informed on your child's progress in ELA, I have updated our class's Web Site (MrSpicer.com) and upgraded the software that I use to track your child's progress. Not only can you check his/her online progress report at any time, but I am now able to e-mail progress reports directly to you. My goal is to update the online progress reports every week and e-mail updated reports at least twice a month.

The e-mail reports will feature your child's grades as well as upcoming deadlines, quiz alerts, and other important class information. These reports can be sent to one or two e-mail addresses, but those addresses must be able to view html. If you are unable to receive a report through e-mail, let me know and I will print a copy and give it to your child to take home to you.

You can view your child's *Online ELA 7 Progress Report* by visiting our class's Web Site and clicking on the appropriate link. Select your child's class from the drop-down menu, type his/her last name, and then enter your personalized password. For your convenience, I will print your child's class and personalized password on a newsletter and send it to you within the first few weeks of school.

Materials You Will Need For Class:

- Plenty of Pens (with blue or black ink)
- Three-Ring Binder (filled with plenty of loose-leaf Paper)
- Agenda
- Composition Notebook

Be Prepared For Class

As Seventh Graders, you are expected to be fully prepared for all of your classes on a consistent basis. Over the years, I have noticed a direct correlation between a student's willingness to be responsible for being prepared for class and his/her grade in ELA. Simply put, being prepared for class is essential for success in ELA 7. **Be aware that Mr. Spicer will not loan out or provide any pens or paper. Students are expected to make sure they have a ready supply of both at all times**

Students will be graded on their ability to come to class prepared. Since **all of the materials** listed above are essential for learning in ELA 7, each students will earn a daily preparedness grade of either 0 or 100 for preparedness. The preparedness grades which each student earns in a week will be averaged to produce one weekly preparedness grade. Preparedness will count as 10% of the quarterly average. Arriving to class prepared is an easy task to accomplish. Therefore, all students should regularly earn preparedness grades that will boost their averages.

Homework

Homework is given so that the student may practice and expand upon the concepts studied in class. Unexpected activities, schedule changes, and requests from a teacher for a conference often prevent students from completing an assignment during Morning Time or a Study Hall on the day it is due. By rushing through an assignment in such a manner, the student does not have the opportunity to thoroughly think about the assignment, demonstrate mastery of a concept, or show the effort/work expected of a seventh grade student. In essence, homework must be completed to the best of the student's ability at home.

Mr. Spicer will not accept any late or incomplete work unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as an illness).

The Student Agenda:

Not only is the Student Agenda an important tool for keeping track of assignments, but it is a quick and convenient method for parent / teacher communication. Students are expected and required to...

- write all assignments in the Student Agenda.
- take the Student Agenda home every night.
- show the Student Agenda to a parent / guardian if there is a note or if a signature is required.
- keep all pages in the Student Agenda. The Student Agenda is school property until the end of the school year. Students should not tear any pages out of the Student Agenda.



Did you know?

Our Classroom Has An Advanced Multi-Media Computer Center with a Notebook for each student!



Through a special Technology Grant, our classroom will be equipped with a state-of-the-art computer presentation station with a **Smart Board** and a **set of 23 Net Books**. This technology allows for new and exciting approaches to lessons that add a level of intensity and excitement not usually found in a classroom. As much as possible, students will be invited to use the equipment to revise sentences for grammatical errors, graphically organize information, conduct research, and create presentations of their own that include a variety of digital media.

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Writing Assignments

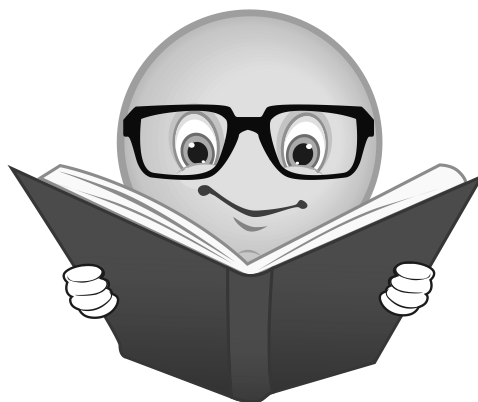
Throughout the year, the students will use the writing process to write several papers. The students will be provided with a "*Green Grading Sheet*" and a "*Meeting Deadlines Sheet*" on the day the papers are assigned. Students will be graded on grammar, usage, mechanics, content, use of the writing process, and presentation (neatness, cleanliness, and attractiveness of the essay).

The Writing Workshop

Writing Workshop is a time set aside when students work on completing writing projects in a variety of genres on topics of their choice. Some of these writing projects will be completed in conjunction with units of study; some will be independent. Throughout this journey, student conferences with peers and their teacher will focus on grammar, content, and craft. This process allows students to take ownership and responsibility for their learning.

Reading Assignments

While reading a novel, short story, poem, or any other work, the students will learn about various literary concepts and will be asked to find examples of those concepts. The students will be provided with an anticipated reading schedule on the day the novels are assigned and will participate in activities to guide their reading. Students can expect a short reading assignment each night during these units.



Literary Works To Be Read In ELA 7:

I Know What You Did Last Summer

by Lois Duncan

Much of the students' excitement over this unit stems from the hype generated by the movies loosely based on this novel. The novel challenges the readers by offering clues to solve a mystery and is unlike the story presented in the movie (many "creative changes" were made for the movie). The novel is about four teens who made a series of poor decisions which led up to a tragedy. One year later, they learn that someone may have discovered their terrible secret, and they have to deal with the unpleasant consequences that are the result of their choices.

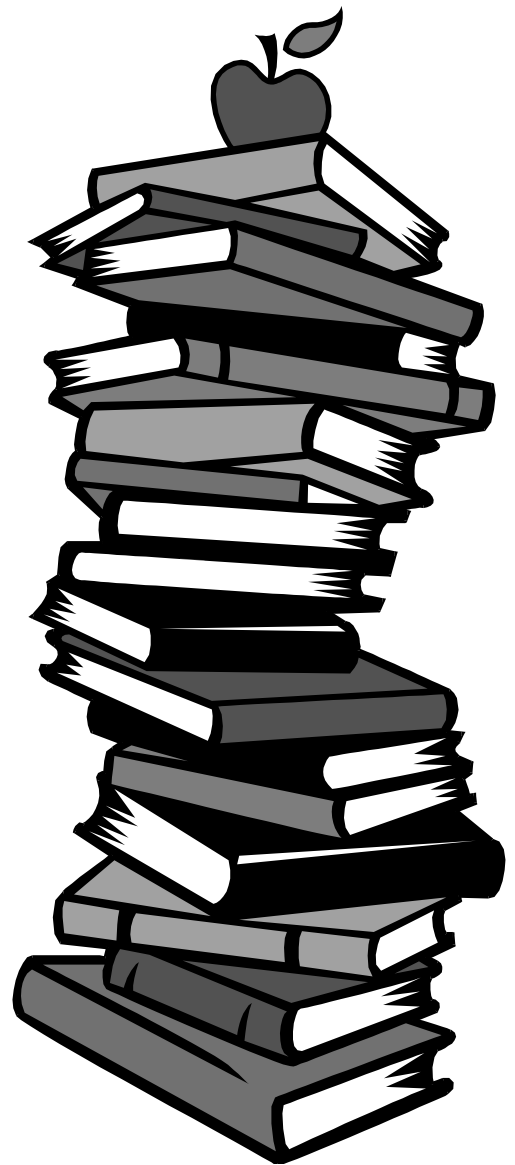
The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer

by Mark Twain

Tom has a hard time abiding by the rules. He quickly learns where mischief can lead when he witnesses a grizzly murder in a graveyard. Will he identify the murderer even if it means jeopardizing his own life? Joined by his best friend, Huckleberry Finn, Tom finds himself in a series of intense adventures and hilarious escapades. The exciting lessons which engage the students in critical thinking make this piece of historical fiction a student favorite!

Other Works Studied In Class

In addition to the novels listed above, the students will read works from a variety of genres, including Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*, a dramatic adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and several other short stories in the 7th Grade ELA textbook. The poetry unit will feature works by a variety of poets, including Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, William Carlos Williams, and Basho.



An Open Door & a Cup of Coffee

Mr. Spicer has an open-door policy for parents / guardians. Set up a time when you would like to sit in on your child's class, and he will have a warm cup of coffee waiting for you!



How can parents contact Mr. Spicer?

Parents / legal guardians are a child's most powerful asset in education, and Mr. Spicer loves to hear from them! Please feel free to email Mr. Spicer at mspicer@malonecsd.org or call him at 518-483-7801. Parents are also invited to call Mr. Spicer at home (483-9061) **before 8:00 P.M.** The more involved parents / guardians remain in their child's learning, the more successful the child will be.

When is Mr. Spicer Available To Students?*

- Home Base
- Periods 4, 8, & 9 (by Appointment)
- After School Until 3:20 P.M. (by Appointment)
- In the evening (by Email: mspicer@malonecsd.org) If you are in a real fix, you can ask your parents to call me at home (483-9061) **before 8:00 P.M.** We can then talk to each other directly if needed.

***Please Note:** This schedule is subject to change. Please visit MrSpicer.com after the school year begins for an updated schedule.

Student Expectations

English / Language Arts classes provide the students with opportunities to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. A classroom environment which is conducive to education is of paramount importance. Therefore, proper classroom behavior and manners are expected at all times.

1. All assignments will be handed in on time and completed to the best of ability.
2. The final copy of all assignments must have a proper heading and be written neatly in blue or black ink only. Students are requested to write on only one side of each page on a formal composition. Any assignment turned in which does not meet these criteria may lose points or be returned to the student for rewriting.
3. All hardcover books assigned to students must be covered. Covers will protect textbooks and novels from damage and boost the student's preparedness grade!
4. Come to class fully prepared every day. The student's ability to come prepared will be reflected in his/her preparedness grade.
5. Students are expected to keep original copies of all handouts in their three-ring binders. In an effort to cut down on our school district's costs and to promote student responsibility, any student who loses his/her first copy will be provided the opportunity to hand-copy the hand-out's information onto a loose-leaf sheet of paper on his/her own time.
6. It is the student's responsibility to make up all work missed due to absence... not the teacher's. Please see the "**While You Were Out**" bulletin board to get missed assignments. Missing work will be added to the student's average as a zero.
7. Students missing class due to band lessons, sports events, field trips, etc. must notify the teacher in advance to get the day's assignments. **Students will still be held accountable for all deadlines.**
8. Students are encouraged to get a drink of water and/or use the bathroom (if necessary) before class.

9. In the event that the students are under the supervision of someone other than Mr. Spicer (i.e. Ms. Gladle, a substitute teacher, other student teacher, or any other teacher), all guidelines, responsibilities, and expectations listed in this newsletter will still apply.

Please Remember:

Mr. Spicer will not accept late or incomplete work unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as an illness).

If A Student Chooses To Break A School Rule or Disrupt Class:

- ◆ If someone causes a problem, I will do something.
- ◆ What I will do will depend on what happened and what the person is willing to do to solve the problem.

Meet Mr. Spicer

Education:

Masters, Reading, SUNY Potsdam

Bachelors, Secondary Ed. / English, SUNY Plattsburgh

Associates, Business Administration, SUNY Canton

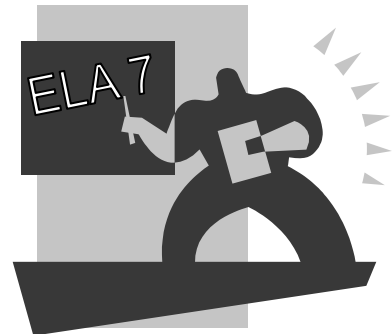
Hometown: Massena

Favorite Musical Group: Metallica

Hobbies: Reading, Writing, Playing Bass Guitar, Spending Time With Family

Did You Know?

Mr. Spicer created and managed a comic book company. He has also been an on-air radio personality, had a cameo appearance on an episode of *Rescue 911*, ring-announced for the WWE, and authored a super hero novel titled Saviors Among Us: Situation Critical.



How Students Choose Their Own Grades!

A Students:	B Students:	C Students:	D Students:	F Students:
Complete homework on time (independently)	Complete homework frequently	Complete most homework but often at last minute and with help	Do homework only periodically	Never do homework
Independently seek out their teachers and make up all work missed due to absence without prompting and notify their teachers in advance when they know they will be absent	Make up all work missed due to absence when prompted by a teacher	Make up most work missed due to absence when prompted by a teacher	Rarely make up missed work due to absence	Never make up work missed due to absence
Study for tests and quizzes until they are confident of their understanding	Study for tests and quizzes until they review everything	Study for tests and quizzes as little as possible	Pretend to study for tests and quizzes	Never study
Ask questions when they are confused and continue to ask until they understand	Sometimes ask questions when confused, but never more than one or two	Ask questions only when desperate	Rarely ask questions	Don't ask questions
Participate in class discussions with frequency and interest	Participate in class discussions when asked a question	Will participate when called upon, but usually respond briefly	Rarely participate in class discussions and usually only under protest	Don't participate in class discussions
Check all their work before handing it in to be graded	Briefly review their work before handing it in to be graded	Rarely review their work before handing it in to be graded	When they do hand in their work, it's never reviewed	Don't hand in work
Show their knowledge and understanding by helping a peer or demonstrating in class	Show knowledge by helping another when asked by the teacher	Will help others when asked, but usually need help	Require lots of help from others	Refuse help
Regulate their own behaviors independently in all circumstances	Regulate their behavior with support of faculty when confronting new or difficult situations	Regulate their behaviors in class and hallways with direct and ongoing support of educational staff	Require specialized interventions / sometimes disruptive / may occasionally need to leave the classroom due to their poor choices regarding behavior	Are unable to regulate themselves in or out of the classroom / are often disruptive in class / are frequently required to leave the classroom due to their poor choices regarding behavior