

St. Benedict Preparatory School
6th Grade Language Arts
2015-2016 Taught Trimesters 1, 2, 3

Instructor Information:

Mrs. Weiske and Ms. Leen
Room 339
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pleen@stbenedict.com
Phone: 773-539-0066

Office Hours: 7am-7:30am and by appointment

SBPS Mission Statement:

St. Benedict Preparatory School, on the north side of Chicago is a Catholic Preschool-Grade 12 community that utilizes our unique educational resources to provide an innovative and rigorous academic program. To achieve this mission, we:

- **Excel** in educating the whole individual in the Catholic tradition
- **Challenge** students to develop God-given talents
- **Create** a Christian community by sharing our gifts
- **Honor** the gifts and diversity of the community and
- **Serve** the Lord and each other in an ever-changing world.

The SBPS Graduate:

The St. Benedict Preparatory School Graduate enters post-secondary life well-rounded and prepared for learning, achievement, and service in a 21st century global society. Honoring the tradition of St. Benedict, our graduates possess the knowledge, reason, diligence, and perseverance to grow in faith, wisdom, and spirit.

Classroom Expectations and Rules:

In addition to the behavior and dress code policies of SBPS, I expect the following from you as a student in English 6:

- **Participate:** Raise those hands and share what you know with others. I expect to learn just as much from you as you should expect to learn from me. **Remember all of us are still learning.**
- **Be Prepared:** Attending class, bringing all of your materials to class (binder, pen, notebook, textbook, handouts, written work), and completing your assignments on time are all requirements of this course.
- **Exude Respect and Pride:** Respect the opinions, space, and property of those around you. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself. Be proud of what you know and what you will learn. Show others in this class how proud you are of them and what they contribute. Give your best each and every day.
- **Complete your assignments on time and as neatly as possible.** Please see the homework policy section.

SBPS Friendly Reminders:

- Eating/snacking during class is not allowed (Exceptions may be made on special occasions).
- Bathroom breaks are encouraged during passing periods. As needed, our class bathroom passes are to be used. Only one student is allowed to be out of the room in the bathroom at a time.

***Students will receive one warning for any misconduct before being issued a detention. SEE SBPS STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR DETAILS.**

Your freedoms and rights as a student enable you to participate to the best of your ability, to ask questions as often as possible, and to be challenged by the instructor and your classmates to stretch your mind and expand your knowledge. The classroom is not just a room, but also a community. Please remember to treat this space and all those who occupy it with respect and with a listening ear.

This course is taught with an interdisciplinary approach, where all the subjects of Language Arts are reinforced through formative and summative assessments. Students will read various texts, ranging

from classical literature to nonfiction works. As writing assignments will serve as assessments, they will be derived from the texts. In addition, fundamental grammar concepts and the writing process steps will be taught throughout each novel unit, using the *Write Source* text (provided). Also, students will be able to participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations on a variety of topics. Students will continue to expand their vocabulary through *Vocabulary Workshop* and *Vocabulary for Success*. By the end of the course, students will have written at least 4 diverse pieces of writing to be added to their writing portfolios.

Required Texts (with ISBN): provided by St. Ben's

<i>Walk Two Moons</i> by Sharon Creech; 0-590-67409-9
<i>The Pearl</i> by John Steinbeck; 978-0-14-017737-4
<i>Ninth Ward</i> by Jewell Parker Rhodes; 978-0-316-04307-6
<i>The Miracle Worker</i> by William Gibson; 978-0-55324778-7
Creative Unit: Poetry, Drama, Mythology, and Short Stories

Learning Materials: *Model 1st week

- BLUE Spiral/Composition notebook for Journal Entries (in binder-see below)
- BLUE folder for returned tests and final papers (to be organized at end of each trimester, kept in classroom)
- BINDER- Language Arts section will follow the universal organization strategy using BLUE TABS labeled “Notes,” “Work in Progress,” and “Homework.” Notebook will be in notes section.
- NOTES in binder will consist of literature, grammar, and vocabulary/spelling and will be color-coded:
 - a. spelling- pink
 - b. grammar- green
 - c. literature- white
- Loose-leaf paper for daily assignments/notes
- Pen (blue or black ink)
- Designated novel
- Write Source text book- online access with classroom copies
- An open-mind ☺

Technology Expectations: Fully charged laptop used **appropriately** (we’ll demonstrate) and for regular use of teacher-provided internet resources, including PowerSchool and Edmodo. No cell phones should be used to photograph notes or type assignments.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **engage and expand** upon literary comprehension from 6th Language Arts.
2. **compare and contrast** characters and genres while relating to the text.
3. **identify and interpret** how **conflict and challenge** served as character building and growth.
4. **write, react, and dialogue** with works of classical and nonfiction and how the literature applies to his/her own life.
5. **understand, practice, and utilize** proper grammatical constructs.
6. **establish evidence** as support for personal opinions.
7. **implement the writing process** (brainstorming, drafting, writing, editing, and revising) to write a personal narrative, persuasive, compare and contrast, thematic analysis, personal responses, and self-authored poems.
8. **follow MLA** format guidelines; use academic and reputable resources; create a works cited page.
9. **participate** in meaningful class discussions and learning community activities.
10. **actively listen and communicate** with classmates.

Types of Assessment: Grades in this course will be determined by the following criteria:

Homework: 10%

Students will receive supplementary assignments to complete at home. Students may have to write a response, answer questions, or actively read. At times, in-class work will become homework, which will be noted on the homework board and usually posted on Edmodo as a reminder. Please see the homework policy section of the syllabus for details on late homework and absences.

Quizzes: 15%

Various announced and unannounced quizzes will be given during the course of each trimester. The quizzes will assess student progress and act as a feedback tool for the teacher. The teacher will have the discretion to permit reassessments. **If you miss an unannounced quiz, you will not be able to take it at a later date. You will make it up in a different way.**

- Reading quizzes
- Grammar quizzes

Class work/Participation/Journal: 20%

Students should come to class prepared and ready to participate fully in the daily discussion.

Participation not only includes completing the assigned readings and raising one's hand, but being **respectful** of others as they share ideas. Participation is a great way to encourage each other and to learn. Failure to participate not only hurts you, but the dynamic of the class. Remember, you can never ask too many questions!

At various times throughout the year, you will be expected to complete assignments in class. Whether the student is working as an individual or as part of a group, the student is expected to finish and complete the task at hand.

Journal: Students may begin each day with a writing prompt and will be instructed to reflect upon that prompt or free write. Periodically, journals will be collected and you will be able to choose which journal entries will be considered for grading (about four entries will be graded every month). However, the teacher will ultimately choose which prompts to grade. Spelling and grammar do not apply towards the grade for a journal entry, but rather a student's ability to reflect, interact, and draft the 1st step of the writing process.

Writing Assignments: 30%

During the semester the students will be assigned the following types of essays, where the final draft will be weighed at 30%:

- Personal Narrative
- Character Analysis
- Compare and contrast
- In-class prompts
- Self-authored poems
- Final Creative Project: Multi-Genre

****Rough drafts, writing process steps will be weighed as a homework grade***

Each essay will be drafted, undergo peer editing and teach revisions, and handed in for a final grade. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, in 12pt Times New Roman font, and include a MLA heading. Grading rubrics will be distributed with the writing assignment prompt.

Tests/Projects: 25%

Tests will be announced at least one week in advance. Students are expected to take the test on the day it is given. Optional re-assessment is allowed through one additional re-take of any test under the condition that the student reaches out to arrange a before/after school re-take appointment. Such re-assessments can only occur within a week of when the original assignment is returned. Re-assessment will not apply for The Final Creative Project: Multi-Genre.

- Vocabulary/spelling tests
- Novel centered tests
- Final Creative Project: Multi-Genre

****Please note, but subject to change (check Edmodo and agenda), that spelling tests are scheduled for Wednesdays and literature quizzes and tests are scheduled for Thursdays or Fridays.***

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Extra credit will only be offered if homework is consistently turned in. (You don't need anything extra if you can't handle what you've got!). So, try your best (that's all I expect).

Homework/Make Up Work Policy:

All homework is due at the beginning of the class period for which it was assigned. If assignments are not completed on time, the student will have the opportunity to submit it no later than the following day, with a "L" indicating it was late in PowerSchool. Please the SBPS handbook for details on the 50% rule.

Homework assignments and tests announced prior to an absence are due the day the student returns. Homework assignments and tests announced during an absence are due dependent on the length of an absence.

Students are responsible for gathering their missing assignments from the "Turn-In Bin" area in class, as well as seeing the instructor during office hours (or by appointment) to discuss any missing work. According to SBPS handbook, teachers are not required to provide missing work/give assessments early for a planned absence. Most homework will be posted on Edmodo.

Extensions: If an emergency occurs, please contact the instructor BEFORE the due date of an assignment/class. Extensions will not be given for a paper if students do not contact the instructor prior to the class day that the assignment is due.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students who represent another work as his/her own; let another student copy his/her work; or plagiarize materials will receive the appropriate demerits and have a meeting with the student, parent/guardian, instructor, and the dean/principal. Students will be given additional assignments to demonstrate thorough knowledge of plagiarism. DO NOT LET THIS BE YOU!

Grading Policy: Each trimester grade will be based on the student's academic performance. Grades will be updated weekly on PowerSchool.

SBPS Grading Scale:

A+ 99-100%	B+ 91-92%	C+ 83-84%	D+ 75-76%
A 95-98%	B 87-90%	C 79-82%	D 71-74%
A- 93-94%	B- 85-86%	C- 77-78%	D- 69-70%
			F < 69%

August 24, 2015

Dear Parent and/or Guardian,

I am delighted to have your student in my class this year. I guarantee you that this class will challenge your student, but I know that with our support, your student can succeed! Please read over the course syllabus with your student and encourage him or her to seek out help whenever he or she needs it.

I am available before school to help students, as well as to discuss your student's progress with you. Please feel free to call (773-539-0066) or email me (sweiske@stbenedict.com) at any time. As you may know, we will be using Edmodo for accessing our class information such as assignments, rubrics, and reading schedules. You will be provided the parent access code on Parent-Back-to-School-Night. Your child will be given his/her access code this week in class.

Please sign below to indicate that you have read over the syllabus with your student, and you have discussed the expectations and requirements of this course. Students should hand in the signature portion of this letter, but you may keep the top portion as a reference.

Thank you for sharing your student with me! I am looking forward to a great year!

God Bless,

Mrs. Sarah (Kinzler) Weiske
6th Language Arts Teacher

Sign and Return by Friday August 28, 2015.

By signing below, I certify that I have read and understood the classroom expectations.

Student Name (please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Student's Favorite Book/Author: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Phone Number: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Questions/Concerns/Comments:

THANK YOU! ☺