

Ms. Johnson's



Language Arts Class 2014-2015

Dear Parents:

What can you and expect this year? We will read, write, and speak in order to learn to communicate effectively, and when possible, we will enhance our work with technology. Curriculum will include grammar and (especially) vocabulary. We will work hard, and we will have plenty of fun along the way!

To contact me:

The best way is email:
kjohnson1@ttsd.k12.or.us

(Note the "1" after my name)



School phone:

503-431-5234

Website:

<http://johnsontwality.weebly.com/>

Who am I? This is my 4th year at Twality, but I've been around our district for a while. After teaching 7th and 8th grade language arts in Central Oregon, I moved here where I began teaching at Fowler. After that I was an Instructional Improvement Specialist for the district, followed by two years as the Prevention Specialist at Tualatin High. I am currently the President of the Oregon Council of Teachers of English, and I co-chair the Oregon Spirit Book Award. **I am passionate about literacy and about middle school!**

TAG: I love working with TAG kids. My expectation is that they learn to advocate for themselves and tell me when/if they are not being challenged. Oftentimes if they propose a sensible alternate assignment (an extension of what we are doing for instance; or doing it a different way), I will gladly help make it happen. Occasionally I allow alternative projects.

Grading and Late Work: Please see the separate handout about this.

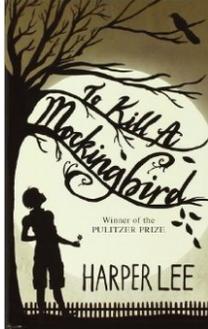
No late work is accepted the last week of the grading period. (Have mercy!)

Redoing Assignments and Extra Credit: Please see the separate grading handout about these also.

Absences: **Students are responsible** for checking the assignment calendar or website for missing work; I will not remind them to do so. Long-term assignments (that the student knew about before the absence) will be due the day the student returns.

Behavior: I expect students to come to class prepared and to work hard, and to be kind, respectful, and safe. A complete list of procedures and expectations will be given to students to keep for reference. **Electronic devices in the classroom will be confiscated and turned in to the main office according to school policy.**

Perfume and scented lotions: *I have asthma and am allergic to most fragrances, so my classroom is a fragrance-free zone. Fragrance is a problem for certain students as well. Thank you!*

Classroom Supply List	
<i>It would be great if those who can afford it would donate extra to help those who can't.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition notebook And an ample, on-going supply of • Pencils #2 • Pens (blue or black ink) • Paper (loose, not in a spiral) • Correction tape (rather than liquid) 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Things I'd appreciate (not required)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kleenex (you'd be surprised how much we use) • Pretzels—Costco large bags (we go through three bags a week) • Smarties candies (for my smartie students) • <i>If you would prefer that I purchase these, donations of money will be put to good use.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Also Optional:</p> <p><i>To Kill a Mockingbird (If you want your child to have a copy at home to read and possibly mark up.)</i></p> <p><i>Colored markers and/or pencils, highlighter, glue stick, sticky notes.</i></p>	

Various FYIs:

- **School tardy policy will be enforced, as will all school rules, including dress code.**
- *Legible handwriting, and correct spelling and punctuation are expected on all assignments. Formal assignments should be typed (default font and margins) or written in blue or black ink, on one side of the paper only. Although not required, I gladly accept papers turned in via Google docs. That way you have a record of what has been turned in – no “lost” papers.*

Planners: *8th grade is an essential time developmentally for students to take responsibility for themselves and their learning. This will help them transition successfully to high school. I will put assignments on the board each day and students should copy them into their planners. I also put assignments on my website.*

Homework: *Your child will always have homework for my class, even if it's just reading. You can expect him/her to regularly have:*

- **vocabulary to study each week,**
- **a vocabulary sheet due each Monday, and**
- **regular entries on a reading they log.**
- *At the end of each quarter students turn in one fill-in-the-blank **book report** (Book Events Sheet), although this can be completed at any time during the quarter when a book is completed. Students will read multiple books, but only one BES is required quarterly. Additionally,*
- **one literary analysis paragraph is due each quarter.**

Videos: *Occasionally I show videos with a rating of PG or PG 13. If this is a concern, please let me know on the returned portion of this letter or via email so I can make other arrangements for your child. (To Kill a Mockingbird, and Anne Frank are two I will show for sure. It is possible I will show Remember the Titans and/or October Sky as well.*

Reading Program: Besides in-class activities, students will be expected to **read at home at least 3-4 times a week**. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this, because to be successful in high school and college, students **must** be able to focus on reading for extended periods of time. They will keep track of it on a Reading Log that is to be kept in their binder. See the grading policy handout for more information.

Students are expected to bring their independent reading book to class each day, but especially on Fridays. Their grade will be affected if they don't have it for SSR or if they consistently read below grade level. I also need to see regular progress for full credit.

Your child should finish and report on a book they've read outside of class **EACH** grading period. **At the end of each quarter you will sign both the reading log and the book report form.** Because the reading is student choice, I don't assign individual books (other than TKAM). Students may get books from the library, the store, Scholastic orders, or from my personal library. I just ask that they reimburse me if they damage or lose one of my books.

I usually order from Scholastic **each month, and you can purchase these online if you'd prefer.** I'm okay with the old-fashioned way too (sending checks or money orders to school with the order).



Class code for ordering:

JD7ZH

<https://orders.scholastic.com/JD7ZH>



Snacks: I usually give snacks—generally pretzels—during SSR on Fridays. I also give Smartie candies. If your child has allergies, or if you prefer I not share snacks with them, please let me know.

Can you help with snacks you ask? Yes, please!

I could really use help buying Pretzels and Smarties. **Monetary donations** are welcome, as ☺ We easily go through 3 Costco sized bags of pretzels a week (about \$60 a month).

Please do NOT feel obligated to do this, especially if it would not fit easily into your budget.

This is a lot of information—thanks for hanging in there. ☺ I'm looking forward to a terrific year!

Warm Regards,

Karen Johnson

Please keep the letter for reference, but **return this page to me.** Thank you!

Parent Homework:

Complete this and have your student bring it back to Ms. Johnson's class by Monday, September 8.

Student Name _____

Parent Name(s) _____

Phone #'s

(Please identify if work/home/cell, and put an asterisk by the number(s) you prefer I use.)

_____ : _____
_____ : _____
_____ : _____
_____ : _____
_____ : _____

Parent email addresses _____

(Please print clearly, and if none, please indicate "none")

Would you like to be included on the class newsletter email list? YES NO

Put an asterisk * by the email address(es) that you would like included on that list.

Signature

Date

Please add any other information you think I should know about your child, including snack/treat restrictions, and/or video restrictions, if any, Thanks!