



# EAGLE MOUNTAIN SAGINAW ISD

*Fostering a Culture of Excellence*

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Dear Families,

Welcome to your junior high school English Language Arts (ELA) class! We are excited about our plans this year, and we look forward to working with you. This year we hope to support our students' development as critical readers and writers through writer's workshop and multiple opportunities for them to engage with a variety of texts. By the end of this school year, our students will be prepared to continue high school with the skills they need in order to be successful in and out of the classroom.

In this unit students will read texts composed from 1855 to 1910 in American history, covering the transitions from Romanticism and Realism to Regionalism and Naturalism. The focus of this unit is for students to make connections between issues explored in texts from the past and in texts from the present. Students will read text sets concerning different themes of significance within these literary movements and relating them to current issues. During the last half of this unit, teachers will support students in writing their own literary nonfiction essays in the form of a feature article, "Oral Histories," that tell an untold story from the local community. After spending the first three weeks reading within this genre, students should have a solid understanding of characteristics of narrative (including literary nonfiction and fiction) and the craft moves that authors use within this genre to create meaning.

During this grading period, our students will have two writing assessments that will be given before and after each writing unit. Teachers will continue using these assessments to drive instructional decisions, measure growth in writing, and to evaluate their students' ability to transfer the skills that have been taught to independent writing tasks. The first writing assessment will be administered at the beginning of the unit and the second writing assessment will be administered at the end of the unit. The second assessment will be graded using a common standards-based rubric. The district common reading assessment will be in the middle of the unit.

We encourage you to speak with your students about what they are reading, writing, and learning in class. Be sure to continually review their performance via Skyward Access. We look forward to working with you this year!

Respectfully,

EMS-ISD 11<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Teachers