



EAGLE MOUNTAIN SAGINAW ISD

Fostering a Culture of Excellence

Dear Families,

Welcome to your first high school English Language Arts (ELA) class! We are excited about our plans for the course, and we look forward to working with you. This year we hope to support our students' development as critical readers and writers by providing multiple opportunities for them to engage with a variety of texts in ways that promote authenticity, choice, and independence. By the end of this year, our students will have acquired many skills that will support their success in and out of the classroom.

In this unit students will be on the lookout for story lines that occur beneath the obvious stream of events; they will do this through an analysis of literary texts, including literary nonfiction and short stories. They will also have multiple opportunities to write original literary nonfiction texts in order to "tell a story that matters." They will use the knowledge they gained from their readings of literary texts to help them craft their own true stories as they grow as critical and creative writers.

During the first six weeks, all ninth grade ELA students in EMS-ISD will take one common reading assessment and two common writing assessments. Teachers will use these assessments to drive instructional decisions and evaluate progress over the course of the year. The writing assessments will be given at the beginning and end of each unit. The first writing assessment will be administered at the beginning of the unit and is designed to provide information for teachers about individual student needs as they plan for instruction. The second writing assessment will be administered at the end of the unit and creates an opportunity for students to demonstrate what they have learned during this unit. The second assessment will be graded using a standards-based rubric. These writing assessments create an opportunity for teachers to evaluate their students' ability to transfer the skills that have been taught over time when students write independently. This approach reflects our goal of nurturing great writers rather than simply producing great pieces of writing.

We encourage you to speak with your students about what they are reading, writing, and learning in class. Please be sure to review your student's performance via Skyward Access, and contact his or her teacher if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to working with you this year!

Respectfully,

EMS-ISD 9th Grade ELA Teachers