



## 2014-2015 English 8 Accelerated Course Syllabus

### Course Description

The 8th grade Language Arts curriculum at Mar Vista Academy is based on Common Core Standard. *SpringBoard*, the CollegeBoard’s official Pre-AP program, is our foundation. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and collaborative strategies are used purposefully to build knowledge and skills and to help students become independent critical readers, writers, and thinkers. A yearlong thematic investigation of “CHALLENGES” drives reading, writing, and thinking:

Unit	Texts	Embedded Assessments
Unit 1: The Challenge of Heroism	Novel excerpts, short story, narrative poem, poetry, articles, autobiography, and essays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing a Hero’s Journey Narrative</li> <li>• Writing a Definition Essay</li> </ul>
Unit 2: The Challenge of Utopia	Essays, short story, a complete novel ( <i>The Giver</i> or <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> ); and assorted articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing an expository essay</li> <li>• Writing an argumentative essay</li> </ul>
Unit 3: The Challenge to Make a Difference (Holocaust focus)	Autobiography, poetry, film clips, novel excerpts (with option of reading the complete novel), obituaries, speeches, informational texts, and assorted articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenting Voices of the Holocaust</li> <li>• Presenting a Multimedia Campaign</li> </ul>
Unit 4: The Challenge of Comedy	Essays, articles, novel excerpts, Shakespearean Play (“Midsummer Night’s Dream”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing an Analysis of a Humorous Text</li> <li>• Performing a Shakespearean Comedy</li> </ul>

### Materials/Supplies Required Each Day:

- 3-Ring binder for all classes, with a divider/section devoted to English 8;
- An assignment calendar (on paper or an iPad app) or planner;
- At least FIVE sheets of notebook paper;
- 2 pencils, 2 pens;
- 1-3 highlighters of varying colors;
- CHARGED iPad in district-provided case;
- iPad stylus (Optional, but **HIGHLY recommended**)

### Portfolio Requirement:

Students will keep a wide range of work in a classroom portfolio (hardcopy or electronic). This portfolio will include:

- **Embedded Assessments** that comprise all steps in the **writing process**; student **reflection** on process and product; teacher assessment; and student reflection on assessment.
- **Unit Reflections** that demonstrate development as a reader, writer, speaker, and/or listener.
- **Global revision and reflection** that reveals one’s growth as a writer
- Assignments that demonstrate a variety of **learning strategies**, various stages of the **writing process**, and reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

(Continued...)

## Grading Policy

SpringBoard assignment grades and descriptors emulate CollegeBoard expectations:

### **Grades assigned to coursework:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Exemplary</b> Student work exceeds expectations as outlined in the rubric or task requirements.
<b>3</b>	<b>Proficient</b> Student work meets expectation as outlined in the rubric or task requirements.
<b>2</b>	<b>Emerging</b> Student work is <i>developing</i> into a product that meets expectation, <i>but is missing elements and/or requires some revision.</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Incomplete</b> Student work is in the <i>beginning stages of developing</i> into a product that meets expectation, <i>but is missing key elements and/or requires extensive revision.</i>

### **Course grades:**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Weights</b>
<b>Standards Mastery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Includes tests, essays, major projects, district performance tasks, district final exams, etc.</i></li></ul>	<b>60% of overall course grade</b>
<b>SpringBoard Embedded Assessments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>All Embedded Assessments <b>must be completed</b> in order to PASS the class;</i></li><li><i>All Embedded Assessment scores lower than a "3" <b>must be revised to a proficient by end of each semester</b> (specific competency at each grade level required)</i></li></ul>	<b>20% of overall course grade</b>
<b>Standards Practice/Academic Enrichment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Includes classwork, homework, independent reading tasks, and student's class preparation/participation.</i></li></ul>	<b>20% of overall course grade</b>

### **Note to Students and Parents About Monitoring Grades:**

You can monitor academic progress through **Jupitergrades.com** and/or through student iPads using the **Jupiter Grades app**. Periodic emails will be sent home regarding progress; we strongly encourage you to provide a current email address to the school if we don't already have one on file.

### **Academic Support for All Students:**

We believe that all students can and will meet minimum academic competencies at Mar Vista Academy. To strive for this, every two weeks, students will be assessed on the skills and knowledge (concepts) taught in English 8 and an after school re-teaching/re-learning/re-assessing session will be provided to students who need additional support in meeting minimum competencies and to improve their academic grade in English 8.

In addition, because daily instruction is structured to increase students' reading, writing, and thinking skills that can be assessed on Embedded Assessments, **ALL Embedded Assessments are required for a passing grade in English 8 at Mar Vista Academy**. In order to ensure students can achieve this, periodic Saturday Academies structured around Embedded Assessment completion will be scheduled each quarter. Additional Saturday Academies to help students revise their graded Embedded Assessments to meet minimum competencies (Proficient or Exemplary scores) will also be scheduled.

Please refer to our school's website <http://mva.sweetwaterschools.org> for specific grade reporting dates and more information about after school academic assistance for students.