



***Department of Teaching & Learning***  
***Parent/Student Course Information***

***Core English Grade 8***  
***(LA1123)***

*Counselors are available to assist parents and students with course selections and career planning. Parents may arrange to meet with the counselor by calling the school's guidance department.*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In Core English 8, students engage in reading, writing, speaking and listening through the study of four thematic units: *The A Good Story*, *Learning from the Past*, *Making a Difference in the Present*, and *Learning through the Experiences of Others*. Throughout all the units students read a variety of genres: nonfiction, drama, poetry, short stories, novels, and folklore. They also learn to compare their own experiences and feelings to those of characters in literature and to write about their observations. Through this experience, the students recognize the emotions they share with other young people and adults and identify ideas, opinions, and actions which differ from their own.

Through frequent writing in a variety of forms and from many points of view, the students strengthen their ability to reason and think critically about their own ideas. Grammar, usage, mechanics, and vocabulary skills are addressed within the context of the literature and within the student's own writing. Throughout the year, the students continuously revise and edit their work as they build their writing portfolios.

At this grade level, students take the two Standards of Learning (SOL) tests for grade eight: English: Reading and English: Writing. Specific dates for the SOL tests will be announced by the school.

**PREREQUISITE**

English 7

**OPTIONS FOR NEXT COURSE**

Enrollment for the next English course should be based on student performance, teacher recommendation, and parent input. The courses available are Core English, Grade 9 and Advanced English, Grade 9.

**REQUIRED STUDENT TEXTBOOK**

Hardbound and Online Access for *Holt McDougal Literature, 8*  
Online Access for *Write Source Recharged*

## READING SELECTIONS

In addition to poetry, short stories, dramas, and nonfiction texts, the following is a list of works commonly studied at this level. The literature selections are provided by the school, and the individual teachers select the most appropriate titles for the students

*The Acorn People*, Ron Jones  
*Across Five Aprils*, Irene Hunt  
*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain  
*And One For All*, Theresa Nelson  
*April Morning*, Howard Fast  
*Code Talker*, Joseph Bruchac  
*Crispin*, Avi  
*The Contender*, Robert Lipsyte  
*The Daybreakers*, Louis L'Amour  
*Deathwatch*, Robb White  
*The Diary of Anne Frank*, Anne Frank  
*A Family Apart*, Joan Nixon  
*Farewell to Manzanar*, Jeanne W. and James D. Houston  
*The First Woman Doctor*, Rachel Baker  
*Freak the Mighty*, Rodman Philbrick  
*The Giver*, Lois Lowry  
*Good Night Mr. Tom*, Michelle Magorian  
*Home Before Dark*, Sue Ellen Bridgers  
*The House of Dies Drear*, Virginia Hamilton

*Last Shot*, John Feinstein  
*A Light in the Forest*, Conrad Richter  
*A Long Way from Chicago*, Richard Peck  
*No Promises in the Wind*, Irene Hunt  
*Nothing But The Truth*, Avi  
*The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton  
*The Pearl*, John Steinbeck  
*The Pigman/The Pigman's Legacy*, Paul Zindel  
*The Sea of Trolls*, Nancy Farmer  
*Shane*, Jack Schaefer  
*Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, Jennifer Armstrong  
*The Skin I'm In*, Sharon Flake  
*Waiting for the Rain*, Sheila Gordon  
*Walkabout*, James Vance Marshall  
*When a Hero Dies*, Anne Schraff  
*Won't Know Till I Get There*, Walter Dean Myers  
*The Year Without Michael*, Michael Pfeffer  
*Z for Zachariah*, Robert C. O'Brien

## 8TH GRADE VIRGINIA BEACH STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### COMMUNICATION: SPEAKING, LISTENING, AND MEDIA LITERACY

**ELA 8.1 The student will contribute to and participate in small-group discussions, including using interview techniques to gain information. (SOL 8.1; SOL 8.2)**

ELA 8.1.1 Ask probing questions to seek elaboration and clarification of ideas. (SOL 7.1b)

ELA 8.1.2 Use a variety of strategies to listen actively. (SOL 8.2h)

ELA 8.1.3 Analyze and synthesize information throughout group discussions.

ELA 8.1.4 Respond appropriately to the ideas of others and determine the validity of differing views.

ELA 8.1.5 Synthesize ideas and make new connections in order to create a shared plan of action or to convey ideas generated through group consensus.

ELA 8.1.6 Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work. (SOL 8.2g)

ELA 8.1.7 Analyze the effectiveness of participant interactions.

ELA 8.1.8 Prepare and ask relevant questions for the interview. (SOL 8.1a)

ELA 8.1.9 Make notes of responses. Compile, accurately report, and publish responses. (8.1b; 8.1c)

ELA 8.1.10 Evaluate the effectiveness of the interview. (8.1d)

**ELA 8.2 The student will present, listen critically, and express opinions in oral presentations individually and in collaboration with peers. (SOL 8.2)**

ELA 8.2.1 Give planned descriptive, narrative, explanatory, or persuasive presentations using visual aids (e.g., overhead projector, multimedia player, LCD panel, laser disc, video, charts).

ELA 8.2.2 Choose topic and purpose appropriate to the audience. (SOL 8.2a)

- ELA 8.2.3 Choose vocabulary and tone appropriate to the audience, topic, and purpose. (SOL 8.2b)
- ELA 8.2.4 Use appropriate verbal and nonverbal presentation skills. (SOL 8.2c)
- ELA 8.2.5 Differentiate between standard English and informal language. (SOL 8.2e)
- ELA 8.2.6 Respond to audience questions and comments. (SOL 8.2d)
- ELA 8.2.7 Critique oral presentations, including self-evaluation. (SOL 8.2f)

**ELA 8.3 The student will analyze, develop, and produce creative or informational media messages. (SOL 8.3)**

- ELA 8.3.1 Evaluate the persuasive/informational technique being used in nonprint media including television, radio, video, and Internet. (SOL 8.3a)
- ELA 8.3.2 Examine how values and viewpoints are included or excluded and how the media can influence beliefs, behaviors, and interpretations. (SOL 8.3b)
- ELA 8.3.3 Evaluate the impact of language on the intended audience.
- ELA 8.3.4 Evaluate sources for relationships between intent and factual content. (SOL 8.3d)
- ELA 8.3.5 Use media and visual literacy skills to create products that express new understandings. (SOL 8.3c)

**READING AND RESPONDING TO LITERATURE**

**ELA 8.4 The student will apply knowledge of word origins, analogies, and figurative language to extend vocabulary development within authentic texts. (SOL 8.4)**

- ELA 8.4.1 Identify and analyze an author's use of figurative language. (SOL 8.4a)
- ELA 8.4.2 Use context, structure, and connotations to determine meaning and differentiate among multiple meanings of words and phrases. (SOL 8.4b)
- ELA 8.4.3 Use roots, affixes, cognates, synonyms, and antonyms to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and technical vocabulary. (SOL 8.4c)
- ELA 8.4.4 Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to determine definition, pronunciation, etymology, spelling, and usage of words. (SOL 8.4d)
- ELA 8.4.5 Discriminate between connotative and denotative meanings and interpret the connotation. (SOL 8.4e)
- ELA 8.4.6 Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing. (SOL 8.4f)

**ELA 8.5 The student will read and analyze a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry presented in a variety of media and formats. (SOL 8.5)**

- ELA 8.5.1 Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process. (SOL 8.5m)
- ELA 8.5.2 Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning. (SOL 8.5l)
- ELA 8.5.3 Make inferences, draw conclusions, and recognize bias based on explicit and implied information using evidence from text as support. (SOL 8.5b)
- ELA 8.5.4 Identify an author's organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases. (SOL 8.5j)
- ELA 8.5.5 Summarize a text by identifying the main idea and referencing supporting details. (SOL 8.5h; SOL 8.5i)
- ELA 8.5.6 Identify and ask questions that clarify various viewpoints. (SOL 8.5g)
- ELA 8.5.7 Explain how authors use characters, conflict, point of view, voice, and tone to create meaning. (SOL 8.5c)
- ELA 8.5.8 Identify cause and effect relationships. (SOL 8.5k)
- ELA 8.5.9 Describe inferred main ideas or themes, using evidence from the text as support.
- ELA 8.5.10 Describe the universal themes and human conditions that recur in literature (e.g., the hero in conflict with society, oppression in society).
- ELA 8.5.11 Compare and contrast the author's use of word choice, dialogue, form, rhyme, rhythm, voice, and tone in different texts. (SOL 8.5e)

- ELA 8.5.12 Compare and contrast authors' styles. (SOL 8.5f)
- ELA 8.5.13 Explain the use of symbols and figurative language. (SOL 8.5a)
- ELA 8.5.14 Understand the author's use of conventional elements and characteristics within a variety of genres. (SOL 8.5d)

**ELA 8.6 The student will read, comprehend, and analyze a variety of nonfiction texts presented in a variety of media and formats. (SOL 8.6)**

- ELA 8.6.1 Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process. (SOL 8.6l)
- ELA 8.6.2 Draw on background knowledge and knowledge of text structure to understand selections. (SOL 8.6a)
- ELA 8.6.3 Make inferences and draw conclusions based on explicit and implied information using evidence from text as support. (SOL 8.6b)
- ELA 8.6.4 Summarize a text by identifying the main idea and referencing supporting details. (SOL 8.6g; SOL 8.6h).
- ELA 8.6.5 Identify an author's organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases. (SOL 8.6i)
- ELA 8.6.6 Analyze the author's use of text structure and word choice. (SOL 8.6d)
- ELA 8.6.7 Identify cause and effect relationships. (SOL 8.6j)
- ELA 8.6.8 Differentiate between fact and opinion. (SOL 8.6f)
- ELA 8.6.9 Analyze the author's qualifications, viewpoint, and impact. (SOL 8.6c)
- ELA 8.6.10 Analyze details for relevance and accuracy. (SOL 8.6e)
- ELA 8.6.11 Analyze the validity of variety of viewpoints on the same topic.
- ELA 8.6.12 Identify and evaluate misconceptions, conflicting information, and bias from a variety of resources (print and electronic).
- ELA 8.6.13 Describe the effects of texts, images, and sound in an electronic text on the reader.
- ELA 8.6.14 Evaluate, organize, and synthesize information for use in written and oral formats. (SOL 8.6k)

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

- ELA 8.7 The student will write in a variety of forms, including narration, exposition, persuasion, and informational. (SOL 8.7)**
- ELA 8.7.1 Write multi-paragraph informative/explanatory text to elaborate upon complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately. (SOL 7.7f)
  - ELA 8.7.2 Write multi-paragraph persuasive pieces to convince an audience to accept a point of view or to take action. (SOL 7.7f)
  - ELA 8.7.3 Write narratives to develop real and imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
  - ELA 8.7.4 Writing multi-paragraph essays that describe the social, cultural, and civic concerns of historical and modern life.
  - ELA 8.7.5 Write to summarize and critique fiction and nonfiction text.
  - ELA 8.7.6 Employ figurative language, sound devices, and poetic structures *in various forms of writing*.
  - ELA 8.7.7 Identify intended audience and purpose. (SOL 8.7a)
  - ELA 8.7.8 Use a variety of prewriting strategies including graphic organizers to generate and organize ideas. (SOL 8.7b)
  - ELA 8.7.9 Organize details to elaborate the central idea and provide unity. (SOL 8.7d)
  - ELA 8.7.10 Distinguish between a thesis statement and a topic sentence. (SOL 8.7c)
  - ELA 8.7.11 Use appropriate and varied transitions across paragraphs to link the major ideas of the text, achieve unity, and clarify the relationships among ideas.
  - ELA 8.7.12 Select specific vocabulary and information for audience and purpose. (SOL 8.7e)
  - ELA 8.7.13 Use interview quotations as evidence. (SOL 8.7f)
  - ELA 8.7.14 Revise writing for clarity of content, word choice, sentence variety, and transitions among paragraphs. (SOL 8.7g)

- ELA 8.7.15 Expand and embed ideas by using modifiers, standard coordination, and subordination in complete sentences.
- ELA 8.7.16 Apply verbals in order to clarify and illustrate relationships between ideas.
- ELA 8.7.17 Use computer technology to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing. (SOL 8.7h)
- ELA 8.7.18 Use a Works in Progress folder to compose and strengthen writing in various stages of development.
- ELA 8.7.19 Use reflection as a tool to demonstrate growth as a writer and to self-evaluate the writing process and product.
- ELA 8.7.20 Publish a portfolio that emphasizes the student's ability to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products.

**ELA 8.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing. (SOL 8.8)**

- ELA 8.8.1 Use a variety of graphic organizers, including sentence diagrams, to analyze and improve sentence formation and paragraph structure. (SOL 8.8a)
- ELA 8.8.2 Use and punctuate correctly varied sentence structures to include conjunctions and transition words. (SOL 8.8b)
- ELA 8.8.3 Choose the correct case and number for pronouns in prepositional phrases with compound objects. (SOL 8.8c)
- ELA 8.8.4 Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.
- ELA 8.8.5 Maintain consistent verb tense and point of view across paragraphs. (SOL 8.8d)
- ELA 8.8.6 Use comparative and superlative degrees in adverbs and adjectives. (SOL 8.8e)
- ELA 8.8.7 Use quotation marks with dialogue and direct quotations. (SOL 8.8f)
- ELA 8.8.8 Use correct spelling for frequently used words. (SOL 8.8g)

**RESEARCH**

**ELA 8.9 The student will apply knowledge of appropriate reference materials to produce a research product. (SOL 8.9)**

- ELA 8.9.1 Collect and synthesize information from multiple sources including online, print and media. (SOL 8.9a)
- ELA 8.9.2 Evaluate the validity and authenticity, including credibility, origin, potential bias, and overall quality, of both print and online texts. (SOL 8.9b)
- ELA 8.9.3 Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information. (SOL 8.9c)
- ELA 8.9.4 Make sense of information gathered from diverse sources by identifying misconceptions, main and supporting ideas, conflicting information, point of view or bias. (SOL 8.9d)
- ELA 8.9.5 Publish findings and respond to feedback. (SOL 8.9f)
- ELA 8.9.6 Cite primary and secondary sources in a Works Cited page using Modern Language Association (MLA) or American Psychological Association (APA) style. (SOL 8.9e)
- ELA 8.9.7 Use in-text parenthetical citation within the body of the report.
- ELA 8.9.8 Define the meaning and consequences of plagiarism and follow ethical and legal guidelines for gathering and using information. (SOL 8.9g)

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CHARTING THE COURSE

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