WILLOWS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

**LANGUAGE & LITERATURE
GRADE 6**

Syllabus

About the Course

Description and Purpose

Language & literature is a course about understanding the many ways people share their ideas, thoughts, and beliefs through writing and talking. In the IB, "6th grade" is the very first year of the Language and Literature Middle Years Programme (MYP). This means it will introduce young readers and writers to more complex ways of thinking and writing about literature to create a strong foundation for future MYP courses.

Students will read various texts ranging from sci-fi novels to myths and short stories. They will learn how to think about and break down the elements of what they read; how to understand and express existing and original ideas with support; how to write essays using their own voice and proper references; and, finally, how to revise their own work.

Goals

By the end of the year, L&L students will emerge open-minded, globally conscious, perceptive, and ready for the academic challenges of middle school. This course aims to help students grow as critics, writers, and readers by exposing them to various forms of writing to critique and by having them analyze their own writing in like fashion!

Course Outline and Topics

UNIT & TEXT	KEY CONCEPT	RELATED CONCEPT	GLOBAL CONTEXT	STATEMENT OF INQUIRY	ASSESSMENT
(WHAT WE ARE READING)	(WHAT WE'LL KEEP IN MIND WHILE READING)	(HOW WE WILL TALK ABOUT THE READING)	(HOW WE WILL EXAMINE THE READING'S ROLE IN THE WORLD AND OUR LIVES)	(HOW WE WILL STUDY EVERYTHING RELATED TO THE READING)	(HOW STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE SUMMATIVE LEARNING)

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER **1: Essays, Documents, and Digital Media** *Emails* *Word* *PowerPoint* *Canva and Piktochart* *Nonliterary texts:* *Informative, inspirational, personal histories*	Communication	Purpose & Audience Imperatives	Orientation in Time & Space (Social histories, constraints, and adaptation)	*We can help people understand our ideas by writing with precision and clarity.*	**Projects**: Poster, MLA essay, report, presentation
OCTOBER - DECEMBER **2: Science Fiction, Ethics, and Innovation** Anchor text: *The House of the Scorpion* *Literary readings: E.M. Forster, H.G. Wells, Isaac Asimov, Daniel Keyes, Ray Bradbury* *Nonliterary readings: Sci-tech articles, essays*	Perspective	Genre & Setting	Scientific & Technical Information (Ingenuity and progress, consequences and responsibility, modernization)	*The science fiction genre shows us different ways of visualizing and understanding the potential impact of our choices.*	**Analysis**: Character analysis essay **Presentation**: Science & ethics
JANUARY - APRIL **3: Elements of Literature** *Literary texts: Katherine Patterson, Gary Soto, Ray Bradbury, Gary Paulsen, Lewis Carroll, Robert Frost, Aesop, Huynh Quang Nhuong, Amy Tan, Tupac Shakur, Donna Washington, Sara Teasdale, O. Henry* *Nonliterary texts: Plot diagrams, informative guides, figurative language posters*	Creativity	Style & Intertextuality	Personal & Cultural Expression (Artistry, craft, belief systems, critical literacy)	*The way we use language shapes the way we choose to express ourselves.*	**Project**: Author or writer infographic and analytical summary **Project**: Literary device in the real-world
MAY - JUNE **4: The Ties of Culture** Anchor text: *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora* *Literary texts: José Martí, Mary Oliver, Hans Christian*	Connections	Setting & Context	Identities & Relationships	*We can understand different heritages and cultures by reading first-person narratives.*	**Narrative**: Personal story **Analysis**: How do our cultures and environments

					affect who we become?
Andersen, Julia Alvarez, Sandra Cisnero, Celia Cruz *Nonliterary texts:* *Biographies, essays, music, photography*					

WPS Language & Literature Core Skills

All skills taught in a language and literature class target progressive growth in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting.

To ensure comprehensive development in L&L, the following skills will be practiced this year (and every following year) in increasingly complex, varied contexts:

- **Vocabulary** with roots, written in context
- **Grammar**, weekly drills
- **Argumentation**, logic, audience imperative
- **Expository writing** - nonliterary and creative
- **Narrative writing** - nonliterary and creative
- **Citation** with examples and explanations
- **Discussion** with examples and elaboration; may involve use of media
- **Presentation** with argumentation, improvisation, and use of media

Common Core and IB Standards

In both the IB Middle Years Programme and the Common Core, the courses of English language arts and language and literature, respectively, present students with the far-reaching opportunity to understand language as a multimodal tool of communication.

ELA Anchor Standards - *At the end of each grade, students should be able to do all the following at increasing levels of complexity*	**MYP Learning Objectives** - *In IB, studying language and literature should focus on the following aims or "macroskills of language", each having subskills called strands*

KEY IDEAS:
 	
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3
Analyze how and why individuals, events, or
	ANALYZING:
	
	   i. analyze the content, context, language, structure, technique and style of text(s) and the relationships among texts
	  ii. analyze the effects of the creator's choices on an audience
	 iii. justify opinions and ideas, using examples, explanations and terminology
	 iv. evaluate similarities and differences by connecting features across and within genres and texts
	
	ORGANIZING:

ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE:

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4](#)
  Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5](#)
  Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6](#)
  Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS:

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](#)
  Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.[1]
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.8](#)
  Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9](#)
  Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

RANGE OF READING & LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY:

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10](#)
  Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

i. employ organizational structures that serve the context and intention
ii. organize opinions and ideas in a sustained, coherent, and logical manner
iii. use referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style suitable to the context and intention

PRODUCING TEXT:

i. produce texts that demonstrate insight, imagination and sensitivity while exploring and reflecting critically on new perspectives and ideas arising from personal engagement with the creative process
ii. ii. make stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary, and visual devices, demonstrating awareness of impact on an audience
iii. iii. select relevant details and examples to develop ideas

USING LANGUAGE:

i. use appropriate and varied vocabulary, sentence structures and forms of expression
ii. write and speak in a register and style that serve the context and intention
iii. use correct grammar, syntax, and punctuation
iv. spell (alphabetic languages), write (character languages) and pronounce with accuracy v. use appropriate non-verbal communication techniques.

Texts

Assigned Readings

This is a list of the books we're going to read throughout the course. They can be acquired through Amazon or any other online bookstore. <u>PDFs or e-books are also acceptable</u>. **All other readings will be provided for students during the course of the year.**

1. [<u>"The House of the Scorpion"</u>](#) by Nancy Farmer
2. [<u>"The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora"</u>](#) by Pablo Cartaya

 It is recommended that students have these texts <u>by the end of the second week of school</u>.

What to Expect

Classroom & Communication

Email Communication
Students are very much encouraged to email the teacher with any worries or questions about the course. ☺ Please use polite, professional language!

Participation
Participation in class is essential for success. Participation **in-person** includes eye contact during lessons and speaking up during discussions. Participation **virtually** includes speaking up or writing responses in the chat as well as being involved in the collaboration space for necessary classwork.

Each week, students will receive a participation grade. The grade will depend on the following aspects:

1. Successfully completing <u>all</u> daily classwork in complete, detailed sentences;
2. answering questions when asked or collaborating as needed,
3. being involved in classroom discussion at least once a day,
4. speaking respectfully to teacher and classmates, and
5. raising a hand before making a question or relevant comment.

<mark>Failure to participate in **any** of these aspects will result in a lower weekly formative score, which may impact overall class GPA.</mark>

Ground Rules
In L&L, we will do lots of talking about books and about how we can improve our own writing. We might also have student-led discussions called "literature circles."

- **<u>HOW DISCUSSION WORKS</u>**
  - In discussion, which will happen every day, we will talk about literature—usually a specific book or story and its author, history, themes, setting, words, sentences, characters, and just about anything that is relevant!
  - **It is the student's job to find something in the book or story to discuss.** Did you like the chapter? Did something interesting happen? Did it remind you of something else? Anything is fair game!

- o <u>Remember</u>: The tenet (big idea) of discussion is that individual opinions are unique and valuable, and hearing different ideas helps us all become stronger critical thinkers.

- **<u>HOW LIT CIRCLES WORK</u>**
  - o In a literature circle, students take on different roles and responsibilities as they respond to a book or story.
  - o There are discussion leaders, summarizers, illustrators, connectors, and luminaries. Each of these roles involves completing a specific task to help other students understand some aspect of the reading.
  - o In "lit. circles", we put our desks in a circle and each student takes turns sharing their role and taking ownership over events in a reading.
  - o The teacher is usually listening or watching—it is very much a student-led activity!

Turning in Work

Most classwork and homework will be completed through **OneNote** or on paper depending on the assignment. The teacher will check for completion.

Summative assessments such as papers, presentations, and posters are to be turned in through **ManageBac only**—unless otherwise instructed.

Late Work Policy – Important!

Formative assessments, such as classwork or homework, will be immediately marked down or as a zero if it is not completed by the deadline. However, work can still be turned in up to **two weeks** past the due date with a late penalty of 25% of the original mark.

<u>Please let the teacher know via EMAIL if you are interested in making up work as well as when it has been turned in</u>! In the headline, use the words: Late Work.

Summative assessments **must be turned in within 24 hours of the posted deadline**. Teacher will evaluate late summatives on a case-by-case basis. **Late summative work submission may result in lower summative score, which may <u>severely</u> impact final course GPA.**

How Grading Works

Formative assessments, such as classwork or assignments designed to help students practice a certain skill, are graded based on the weight of the individual assignment, which may vary from 0-8 or higher.

Summative assessments, like exams, presentations, projects, or essays, are scored depending on how the student performs in individual criteria or skills. For L&L, there are four "skills" total: **analyzing (A)**, **organizing (B)**, **producing text (C)**, and **using language (D)**. Performance on these criteria is evaluated based on achievement levels from **0 to 7.** The score of 8 is commendatory—it is a way of *recognizing* especially outstanding levels of independent achievement in projects or papers.

NOTE: Most summative assessments (exams or essays) will test the student's performance on *more than one* of these skills at a time. For example, an essay graded on criteria A, B, and D, could receive scores of 6, 4, and 7 respectively, meaning that the essay did well to analyze points (A) and use language aptly (D), but it lacked proper organization (B).

The table below gives a quick example of the levels of achievement:

Achievement Level	Performance Description
1 to 2	The student is achieving standards of completion on this criterion or skill that <u>do not show understanding</u>. Work significantly lacks detail, organization, or other crucial elements. Grammar and spelling are so poor that the writing is unsuited to the task and the meaning of sentences is unclear.
3 to 4	The student is achieving <u>good</u> levels of completion on this criterion or skill. Work may lack crucial detail and organization. Grammar and spelling are accurate enough to understand.
5 to 6	The student is achieving <u>very good</u> levels of completion on this criterion or skill. Work has detail, organization, and incorporates crucial elements. Grammar and spelling are accurate enough that it doesn't interfere with understanding.
7 (to 8)	The student is achieving <u>excellent</u> levels of completion on this criterion or skill. Work has plenty of detail, ideas are well-organized and supported, and other elements of writing are well-incorporated. Grammar and spelling are accurate, and there is a varied use of vocabulary.

Formative work will receive an independent score from 0-8, or 0-16, 0-32, etc., depending on the complexity of the assignment. The <u>general</u> formative work rubric is attached below. Please note scores may change according to the **weight** of the assignment!

Score	Performance Description in Classwork or Mini-Projects
0	Task is not attempted.
1-2	Task is majorly incomplete. Not written in complete sentences. Generally lacks detailed responses. Work shows little evidence of understanding.
3-4	Task is partially complete. Sentences are inconsistently complete. Somewhat detailed responses. Work reflects some effort and some gaps in understanding.
5-6	Task is mostly complete or complete and late. Detailed responses in complete sentences. Work reflects good thought, understanding, and/or effort.
7-8	Task is complete and on time. Uses complete and thoughtful sentences. Highly detailed and thorough responses. Work reflects a very good understanding of assignment purpose, original thoughts, and/or effort.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge by signing below that I have reviewed the information in this syllabus. Furthermore, I understand the course expectations, including grading and late work policy. I am aware of my teacher's contact information, and I know how to reach out to her for help with and/or clarification of course contents or procedures.

Student Signature: _____   Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____   Date: _____

Print Name: _____