



Sarah Sansbury

English teacher
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Dear parent or guardian,

Imagine for a moment if Edison had been content to dine by torchlight, or if Bell had been resolved to forever correspond by post. What if the Wright brothers had found travel by train to be good enough, or if Salk had counted polio among one of life's certainties?

Education played a significant role in each of these men's lives—it expanded their toolboxes. It enabled them to produce more elegant solutions to their problems, and all of humanity has reaped the benefits.

This is why I teach. For my students, I seek to add to their toolbox, so they may be successful in whatever they endeavor in life.

Course description

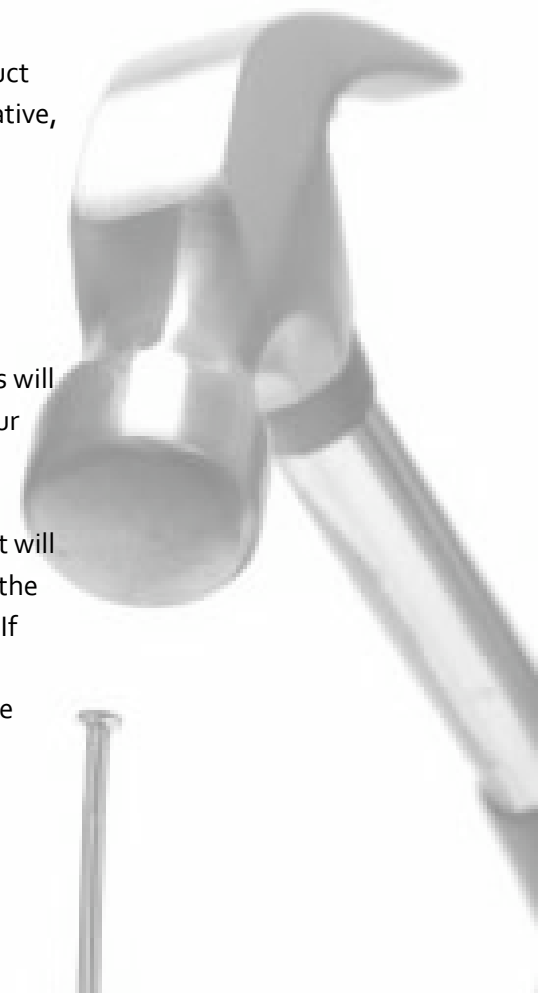
Critical to the eighth grade year is preparing students for the more independent studying required in upper school. Therefore, heavy emphasis will be placed on the development of analytical reading and writing skills. In addition to the study of major literary genres, students will read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Odyssey*, *The Pearl* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Students will learn how to construct and support an argument in a five-paragraph essay, and they will write creative, expository, and analytical essays related to their readings. They will also complete a unit on research to teach them MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation and research techniques.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an integral part of the English curriculum. Generally, students will be assigned vocabulary on a weekly basis. On Wednesdays, we will have our vocabulary quizzes, and homework for the week is due every Thursday. Students are to keep track of missed words from their quizzes on their vocabulary word error chart because vocabulary is cumulative and the chart will be an excellent resource for future quizzes. Students can earn back half of the points missed by writing three sentences in context for each word missed. If there are multiple definitions for a word, the student is to make sure that his/her sentences demonstrate he/she understand more than just one of the definitions. Vocabulary remediation is due on Tuesdays.

*If the only tool
you have is
a hammer,
you tend to see
every problem
as a nail.*

ABRAHAM MASLOW





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Grading System

See the school policy regarding grading scale.

Here below is how categories are weighted in this class.

Essays	25%
Tests/Projects	25%
Quizzes	20%
Homework	10%
Final Exam	20%

Required texts

Textbooks	Literature: Grade 9 (Prentice Hall) Writing and Grammar (Prentice Hall)
Supplemental literature	Romeo and Juliet To Kill a Mockingbird The Pearl

Rules and expectations

General

1. Always show respect for teachers, other students, and yourself.
2. Be on time and ready to work when the bell rings. Students will be tardy if they are not seated AND QUIET in their assigned seats when the bell rings. (See student handbook for school policy on the consequences of tardiness.)
3. Be prepared every day. This includes the following: binder, loose leaf paper, and pen/pencil. You will receive an academic deficiency every time you forget any of your materials. (See the handbook for more information about academic deficiencies.)