

# Boston Collegiate Charter School

## Grade 8

### English Course Description

*Emily Mayer*

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**Best time to call: 7:00-7:30am; 4:00-5:00pm**

**Tutoring Days:** The Middle School will continue its targeted tutoring program, designed to provide additional skill support to struggling students. **As a result, tutoring is by invitation only.**

However, ALL students will have the opportunity to sign up and attend tutoring before a test. **My tutoring days are Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00-4:00pm.**

If you have a burning question about homework, email me and I will email you back.

#### Course Overview

In 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, students will focus on reading and "writing about reading" through literature using five fundamental curricular genres: novels, non-fiction, short stories, poems, and plays. During the course of the year, students will increase their ability to read for meaning while incorporating the acquisition of higher-level vocabulary. They will also deepen their understanding of setting, main idea, conflict theme, and character development, as well as author's purpose.

#### Performance Standards

By the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students will have further developed their ability to:

- Identify how authors use characteristics of various genres to accomplish different purposes in drama, non-fiction, fiction, and poetry
- Acquire and use an advanced vocabulary of English words in writing and speech
- Identify and discuss the main idea, characters, facts, and themes of works of literature, non-fiction, poetry, and plays, both read and heard
- Identify and analyze tone, imagery, mood, audience, and literary devices such as simile, alliteration, and metaphor in works of literature, poetry, and plays
- Speak effectively in a variety of settings and environments in making oral presentations and dramatic recitations
- Participate in the creative process of reading and writing
- Identify and analyze elements of setting, plot, and characterization in plays
- Develop and present characters through the use of basic acting skills
- Interpret a character's traits, emotions or motivation and give supporting evidence from a text

- Expand knowledge of text through use of historical background information
- Respond to and analyze the effects of sound, graphics, form and figurative language to uncover meaning in poetry
- Identify and use common textual features and organizational structures in non-fiction

### Units

- Unit 0: Pre-assessment and summer reading assessments
- Unit 1: Short Stories
- Unit 2: *Of Mice and Men*
- Unit 3: *House on Mango Street*
- Unit 4: *Romeo and Juliet*
- Unit 5: *First They Killed My Father*
- Unit 6: Book Clubs (texts include: *The Giver*, *Last Book in the Universe*, *Fahrenheit 451*)

### Assessment

- Quality and punctuality of homework
- Participation in class discussions
- Creative projects reflecting class literature and poetry
- Tests and quizzes
- ANET Interim Assessments
- Essays
- Individual and group oral and written presentations
- Organization of work and supplemental readings/materials in English binder
- Quality of in-class written work

### Grading Policy

- Classwork 20%  
*Includes Do-Now assignments, binder checks, class discussions and notes, and other in-class written and group assessments*
- Homework 20%  
*Includes Daily assignments as well as long-term assignments*
- Minor Assessments 30%  
*Includes weekly quizzes, Interim Assessments, and smaller projects*
- Major Assessments 30%  
*Includes unit exams and major projects*

A cumulative final assessment will be given at the end of the year. It will count as 10% of your final average for the year.

## Texts

- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry/ *The Last Book in the Universe* by Rodman Philbrick/ *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
- *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- *First They Killed My Father* by Loung Ung
- Selected poetry
- Selected short stories
- Selected non-fiction articles and essays

## Class Policies and Procedures

Absences: If you are absent, please arrange for a classmate to collect handouts for you and to advise you of the homework. Additionally, file folders for each class containing handouts for the week are in the classroom. **You must also meet with the teacher before or after school or during lunch to discuss any work or notes you missed.** It is your responsibility to initiate this conversation.

Homework: Late homework is not accepted and will result in a zero. If the homework is part of a larger assignment (e.g., potential thesis statements for an essay), the teacher will likely still require the student to complete the assignment. However, credit will not be given and zeros will be assigned until the student has completed the work.

**Students who hand in major assessments late will be penalized accordingly: 1 day late: - 10 points; 2 days late: - 20 points; 3 days late: - 30 points; more than 3 days late: 0%.**

**Finally, please refer to the BCCS Student and Family Handbook for additional policies regarding attendance, behavior/code of conduct and homework expectations.**

## Class Materials

- A three-ring English binder (or English section within larger binder) with loose leaf paper and four labeled sections: Do-Now, Notes, Vocabulary, and Returned Work.
- Reader's Response Journal (composition notebook)
- Index cards to be used as flash cards
- A blue or black pen
- A red pen for editing

# English 8

*Ms. Mayer*

## Course Description Agreement

*Once you and your family have read the above course description, please sign and comment (if necessary) below. Please return this last page to *Ms. Mayer* tomorrow for your first homework grade.*

**I have thoroughly read the above material and understand the expectations set forth for English 8.**

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Student Name (printed)

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Student Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Best Phone Number

Comments: