

# Russell O. Brackman Middle School Accelerated ELA Program

## Course Guide for Grade 8



The following guide delineates the expectations for the Accelerated ELA program in Grade 8. Please maintain contact with the classroom teacher for more specific details regarding assignments, tests, etc.

**Textbook:** *Mirrors & Windows*. EMC School Carnegie Learning, 2020. Students will be given instructions for online access from home.

**Homework:** In the Accelerated class, homework assignments are given on a regular basis; in particular, students are expected to frequently complete independent reading tasks outside of class. Any student who struggles with reading comprehension or written work on these assignments is strongly encouraged to seek extra help. Please see the teacher for details of the dates/times for extra help, or other extra help opportunities within the school.

### Assessment & Grading:

- Students will be given a variety of major and minor assessments to measure their mastery of the skills described below. (Please see the next page for detailed expectations.) These assessments include tests, projects, research activities, prose-constructed response timed writings, formal presentations, reports, Socratic seminars, quizzes, reading comprehension checks, and many other types of formative and summative assessments.
- Students are encouraged to use their textbook, class notes, worksheets, and other supplemental instructional materials for preparation, as a *study guide will not necessarily be provided* for each assessment.
- Benchmark tests (cold assessments to measure reading and writing skills) will be administered multiple times throughout the year. Teachers and the Curriculum Department use these tests to inform instruction and assess individual student needs. *These Benchmark scores are also one of the criteria used to determine student placement for the subsequent year.*
- Please note, no extra credit is given in this class. Students are expected to be self-motivated and complete all assignments in accordance with the due dates assigned.

**Remaining in the Accelerated Program:** Students must maintain a grade of 85% or higher to remain in the Accelerated course. Students falling below the 85% requirement by the interim will be placed on probation and a letter will be mailed home. If a particular student's performance does not improve by the end of the marking period, he/she will be removed from the class and placed in the on-grade level ELA course.

**Skills & Expectations:** Please see the chart below for a detailed analysis of the expectations for students' reading and writing skills in an Accelerated ELA course. These descriptors are based directly on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and reflect the increased rigor that an Accelerated course requires.

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Standard	On-Grade Level ELA Expectations	Accelerated ELA Expectations
<b>Reading Literature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students determine the theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details. Students also provide an objective summary of the text.</li> <li>• Students explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students determine the theme or central idea of a text and <i>analyze its development</i> over the course of the text. Students also provide an objective summary of the text.</li> <li>• Students analyze how an author develops <i>and contrasts</i> the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Informational Texts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students cite evidence from the text to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</li> <li>• Students integrate information presented in different media or formats (such as visually or through numbers) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students cite <i>several</i> pieces of evidence from the text to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</li> <li>• Students <i>compare and contrast</i> a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (such as how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).</li> </ul>
<b>Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students introduce a topic and develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information.</li> <li>• Students provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.</li> <li>• Students organize ideas, concepts, and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect.</li> <li>• Students use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</li> <li>• Students use precise language and subject- specific vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students introduce a topic <i>clearly, previewing what is to follow</i>, and develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information.</li> <li>• Students provide a concluding statement or section that follows from <i>and supports</i> the information or explanation presented.</li> <li>• Students organize ideas, concepts, and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect.</li> <li>• Students use appropriate transitions to <i>create cohesion</i> and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</li> <li>• Students use precise language and subject- specific vocabulary <i>to inform about or explain the topic</i>.</li> </ul>

*Retrieved from  
[CommonCoreWorks.org](http://CommonCoreWorks.org)*

The following links and resources are provided for your reference.

- <https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/>
- <https://resources.newmeridiancorp.org/>