

# GRADE 8 ELA UPDATE

"Today a reader; tomorrow a leader." - Margaret Fuller

December 2016

## DECEMBER'S CLASSROOM FOCUS

Our ELA classrooms will be looking at modern works of fiction to determine how they draw upon universal themes, patterns of events, and character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works. Ultimately, students will explain how a contemporary piece of literature was "rendered new" by the author. After studying this concept, students will be asked to apply this learning to a piece

of text and explain the connection to other texts along with universal ideas in literature.

Students will also be revising and editing their work with narrative writing. Since October, students have been experimenting with a variety of writing techniques. They learned how to write engaging leads, how to develop dynamic characters, and how to engage a reader by using

descriptive details and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences. Now our own 8th grade authors will take their selected stories through all stages of the writing process.



## EXTENDING THE LEARNING AT HOME

Many students are unaware of how modern day entertainment is based upon ideas that come from universal themes or replicate the same ideas from a past time. For instance, *The Odd Couple*, an original show from the 1970's, has been resurrected to

reflect modern times. *Full House* is trying to capitalize on its fame from the 1980's, adding a modern day twist. Films such as *Star Wars* and *Lord of the Rings*, clearly draw upon the idea of good vs evil and the Hero's Journey. Talking about these common points

we see in literature, entertainment, and even video games, gives us an opportunity to have conversations with our children about how these ideas play out in our own society. And isn't every parent looking for ways to connect with his or her children?

### Reading Recommendations

<i>The Ranger's Apprentice, The Ruins of Gorlan</i> by John Flanagan	Gr 6
<i>Courage for Beginners</i> by Karen Harrington	Gr 7
<i>The Book Thief</i> by Markus Zusak	Gr 8

### \*December: MA ELA State Standards

- RL.8.9. Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is rendered new.
- W. 8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

\*Other ELA/Reading standards are addressed during the month of December as well.

If you have any questions about WPS' ELA/Reading Curriculum, please contact Chris Tolpa, Supervisor of Humanities:

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