**Allyson Daly Spring 2016**

**Seventh Grade English Language Arts** **allysondaly@wcps.org**

*“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” ~American inventor Alan Kay*

Thank you for being the supportive students and parents who have helped build our school community. Among many skills we will be refining this semester, we will focus particularly on the following:

**As readers, students:**

* Will answer the 15 book challenge
* Will read nonfiction and fiction
* Read texts with varying levels of complexity
* Will be asked to memorize passages and poems of great literature
* Will be asked to bring meaning to literature and weigh in with the great minds through the ages.
* Will study the elements of fiction, drama, and poetry as well as literary terms
* Will act out plays in class

**As writers, students:**

* Will write to learn, including low-stakes writing like journaling where they can explore what they think about a topic.
* Will practice varied types of writing, including descriptive essays, arguments, evaluations, etc.
* Consider a range of audiences, tasks, and purposes
* Use evidence to support their claims
* Write clear, organized, well-documented essays
* Practice the writing process, including drafting, revising, and re-visioning their writings
* Practice standard grammar and spelling

**As speakers and listeners, students:**

* Will participate civilly and productively in group discussion
* Give a short speech to the class
* Use standard English when presenting in class
* Listen well enough to understand and build upon what another student says

**Journals, Quizzes and Classwork**: Students prepare to read and respond to reading and prompts through a journal. Responses will vary, but students should demonstrate understanding of the text assigned and connect the reading to other material read for this course, another course, or any other experience that seems pertinent. We will go over criteria in class using student samples. Excellent responses show thoughtful, clear thinking and support for their claims from the text. Journals are not summaries to prove that you read; they are places to explore what you think. This category is weighted 30%

**Projects, Papers and Tests:** All papers and projects are designed to build upon the student’s writing and critical thinking skills. Shorter, skill specific assignments will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. Some will be creative, other projects will emphasize critical thinking. Students will be given tests periodically as we complete units. This category is weighted 70%.

**Class participation and attendance**: Students are expected to be in their seats on time, turn in all assignments on time, read all material prior to coming to class, do their own work, attend class regularly, and most importantly, participate. In other words, put forth your best effort! Since students work on papers over time, and often begin them in class, they are due on or before the due date. If you know you will be absent, turn in your assignment ahead of time.

**Academic honesty**: Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty, and is defined as “the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own” (Alexander Lindey, Plagiarism and Originality , [New York: Harper, 1952} 2). When in doubt, be sure to give credit. Your reputation and your character are important; they follow you everywhere, so make sure that you are completely honest in all that you do!

**Devices:** There will be set times when electronic devices are welcome and needed in the classroom; however, in order to protect learning most of the time it will be necessary to have a space free from electronic distraction. These are tools that are as good as their users. Let’s respect this privilege by keeping them away until invited to use them.

Let’s have a fine, productive semester together. I know I look forward to having you in my course.

**Student’s name (printed) and signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent’s name (printed) and signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent’s email and phone# \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**