

Course Description:

In this course, you will read and analyze informational texts. These texts take many different forms, including personal accounts of events, presidential speeches, and persuasive letters. The course's reading selections demonstrate ways to understand explicit and implicit information, central ideas and key details, and claims and arguments, among other ideas and concepts. Throughout the course, you will read the autobiography *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller. You will also examine informational texts to better your understanding of the lives of several important historical figures, including Jane Goodall and Zora Neale Hurston; places like Dubai, the Galapagos Islands, and the Hoover Dam; and the unique features of great white sharks, among other topics.

As you read the selections in this course, you will identify central ideas, make inferences, practice ways to use supporting evidence, identify figurative and connotative language, and analyze word choice in informational texts. In addition, you will learn about basics in grammar, usage, and punctuation, including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences; different types of phrases and clauses; and commas. You will also review context clues to determine word meaning. In addition, you will learn various vocabulary words and more about Greek and Latin prefixes, suffixes, and roots.

In addition, you will learn the elements of informational and argument writing so that you can plan, create, write, revise, and edit your own informational and argument essays. These are valuable skills you will be able to apply to other courses you take during middle and high school.

Through the lessons provided in this course, you will master techniques that help you achieve a deeper appreciation of informational texts.

Suggested Prerequisites: English 6 Honors (1 of 2) and (2 of 2)

Course Objectives:

- Analyze and objectively summarize central ideas and key details in an informational text.
- Identify and analyze implicit and explicit evidence to support analysis of a text.
- Describe and analyze connections between key individuals, events, and ideas in a text.
- Analyze how an author uses perspective and structure to build meaning and style in a text.
- Evaluate and analyze claims and arguments, including reasoning and evidence.
- Identify and interpret figurative, connotative, and technical meanings in informational texts.
- Identify and define common Greek and Latin roots and affixes to determine the meaning of words.
- Define and accurately use a range of grade-appropriate words, using context clues or other methods to gather knowledge.
- Use phrases, clauses, commas, and coordinate adjectives to vary sentence structure and improve clarity.
- Complete writing activities and projects in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Compare the treatment of topics and issues by different authors and across a variety of different informational media.
- Write informational and argument essays using knowledge of writing ideas, concepts, and strategies.
- Prepare for and follow rules for discussions to exchange ideas and gain new understanding.

Required Materials:

- word-processing software
- internet browser

*Additional materials listed in the course.

Course Overview:

Each unit begins with an introduction, which includes a brief description of the content and intended learning outcomes. Following the introduction are these standard activities, which may or may not be present in each lesson:

Vocabulary Words – Includes parts of speech, definitions, and synonyms; contains workbook questions.

Language Skill Instruction – Includes instruction in key language concepts and conventions; contains workbook questions.

Reading Selections – Includes annotated reading selections; is part of the Reading Skill.

Reading Skill Instruction – Includes instruction in reading skills; contains workbook questions.

Writing Skill Instruction and Writing Project – Includes instruction in writing skills, workbook questions, and Writing Projects. The projects are graded by the instructor and require students to apply their knowledge and writing capabilities by writing informational and argument essays that demonstrate mastery of the lesson content. Unit 1 provides instruction in general research and writing skills for students to use during the Writing Projects. The first project appears in Units 2 and 3, and the second project appears in Units 4 and 5.

Checkpoint – Uses 15 questions to assess proficiency of lesson objectives; is a graded activity; may be taken up to three times.

Discussion Board – Is an academic discussion board; gives students a chance to share their thoughts and ideas about a lesson topic.

Apply Your Skills – Is an activity that allows students to demonstrate their knowledge of key reading and writing skills; is a graded activity.

Exam Prep – Presents a summary of the skills covered in the unit and the course.

In the last lesson of each unit, the Checkpoint activity is replaced with a comprehensive assessment:

Unit Exams – At the end of the unit is an exam that assesses mastery of unit objectives. Students may take the Unit Exam only once.

Final Writing Exam – This exam is in the last unit of the course and assesses how well students have learned the concepts covered in the course's Writing Skills and Writing Projects. Students may take the Final Writing Exam only once.

Final Exam – This exam is in the last lesson of the course and consists of questions that test students on the concepts and information learned in the course. Students may take the Final Exam only once.