

# In the Beginning...

8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts

Mr. Coia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Since this is the first unit guide, let me explain a few items.

- ✓ Each unit guide will cover anywhere from one-four weeks. You'll have all the information in case you are absent. Share this with your parents immediately. Print off an extra copy to put on the refrigerator.
- ✓ The dates indicate purple and white days. Please cross off the date that doesn't apply to your class.
- ✓ The bulleted points show what we will try to do in class. If we don't get to it, I'll have you move/remove activities.
- ✓ HW=homework. It's due the next class period unless stated otherwise.
- ✓ Items in **bold** show larger items (papers, tests, etc.)
- ✓ I'll try to give all the point values for the assignments
- ✓ Remember, while major tests will always be listed, quizzes can spring up anytime.
- ✓ Write your name on this, and put in your Handouts section now.

## Mon 8/25 (Tues 8/26)

- Select a quotation and explain it
- Create name card with:
  - Adjective
  - Favorite movie
  - Magazine/book that you like
- Introduction to the course
- Review class rules
- Work on C.S. Lewis quote on reading

HW: Parent/student signature; spend 15 minutes on class sites; class supplies; print off LA standards

## Wed 8/27 (Thurs 8/28)

- American Expressions writing
- Mini-lesson: Marking Text
- Read/discuss article on Teen Pop Culture
- Read/discuss Plato quotation on beginnings

HW: Bring in a color picture of you to attach to American Expressions work

## Fri 8/29 (Mon 9/1)

- Read "In a Neighborhood in Los Angeles" p. 158 LOL
- Where I'm From poetry assignment
- Work time on Where I'm From

HW: Work on *Where I'm From* poem

## Tues 9/2 (Wed 9/3)

- Review Lewis, Plato, pop culture article
- In-class essay: Pop Culture meets Plato (see possibilities below)

HW: Work on *Where I'm From* poem

## Thurs 9/4 (Fri 9/5)

- **Typed Where I'm From poem due**
- Poetry Sharing
- Discuss Pop Culture essays
- Create Writing Portfolios to hold all future writing assignments

HW: None

### Unit Assignments:

Parent Signature	10 points
Supplies/Organization	10 points
American Expressions	15 points
Where I'm From poem	25 points
Pop Culture essay	20 points

## **Pop Culture Meets Plato**

This is an in-class essay that will synthesize two articles. The first is an article regarding current teenage popular culture found in USA Today. The second is a quotation from Plato's Republic. You can choose from a variety of topics on which to write. Find something in which you have something to say.

This is a difficult assignment that will help me to see your writing abilities. It will help me to gauge the writing level of each of you to see what is needed to teach persuasive writing.

Here are some possibilities:

- What criticism would Plato or Lewis give regarding popular culture?
- What does this article say about American society?
- What problems do you see, if any, with a "youth-obsessed culture"?
- Do you agree that "kids have more influence over their parents than vice versa"?
- How does this article indicate that America is improving?

Perhaps you have an idea to explore. Let me know and give it a try!

## **Standards Addressed: Or, Why We Are Learning This!**

**E2c:** The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:  
**E2c.4:** includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character  
**E2c.8:** provides a sense of closure to the writing

**E2e:** The student produces a persuasive essay that:  
**E2e.1:** engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;  
**E2e.2:** develops a controlling idea that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment;  
**E2e.4:** includes appropriate information and arguments;  
**E2e.5:** excludes information and arguments that are irrelevant;  
**E2e.8:** provides a sense of closure to the writing.

**E3d:** The student makes informed judgments about television, radio, and film productions; that is, the student:  
**E3d.1:** demonstrates an awareness of the presence of the media in the daily lives of most people;  
**E3d.2:** evaluates the role of the media in focusing attention and in forming opinion;  
**E3d.3:** judges the extent to which the media are a source of entertainment as well as a source of information;