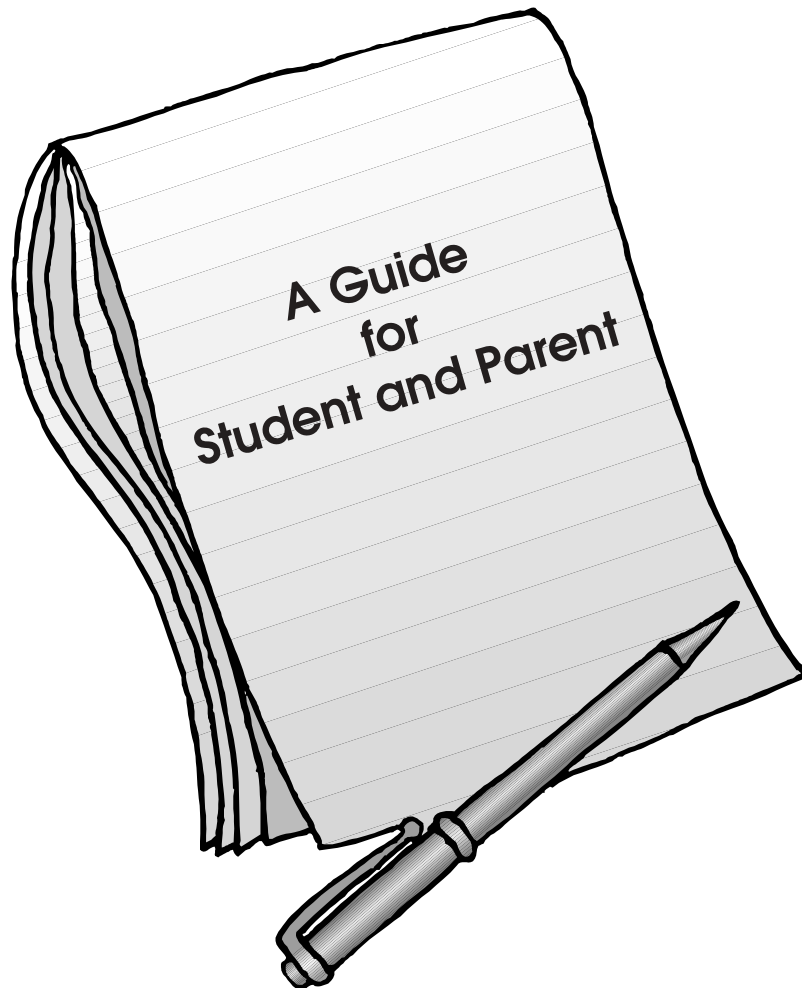




Central School Literacy

Grades 7 and 8



prepared by

Central School Language Arts Teachers

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7. Do not use personal pronouns (me, my, I, our, us, you, we, your) which refer to you, the writer or the reader unless such pronouns appear in quotations.
8. Eliminate contractions unless one appears in a quotation you insert into your paper.
9. Correct common usage errors.
10. Instead of *this shows* use This (insert noun such as example, description, statement, image, comparison, reveals, suggests, exemplifies.
This example demonstrates....
This statement reveals.....

Writing Expectations for all Disciplines

What are the KEY features grades 7/8 teachers will be looking for in student work?

- appropriate writing and sequential order for stated purpose
- mature and discipline-specific vocabulary
- varied sentence beginnings
- sentence variety (simple, compound, complex)
- correct punctuation
- absence of clichés, taboo words, and phrases
- precise and efficient use of language - no wordiness
- descriptive and figurative language as appropriate
- clear, concise analysis (lecture notes, literature)

Grades 7 and 8 Reading Curriculum

In addition to the ongoing independent reading program, which requires students to read a number of books outside of required curriculum, the following novels are read in Elements of Writing, Literature Connections, and Social Studies.

Grade 7

<i>The Pearl</i>	<i>John Steinbeck</i>
<i>Our Town</i>	<i>Thornton Wilder</i>
<i>Tom Sawyer</i>	<i>Mark Twain</i>
<i>Slave Dancer</i>	<i>Paula Fox</i>
<i>April Morning</i>	<i>Howard Fast</i>
<i>Cyrano de Bergerac*</i>	<i>Edmond Rostand</i>
<i>Stargirl*</i>	<i>Jerry Spinelli</i>
<i>Much Ado About Nothing*</i>	<i>William Shakespeare</i>

Grade 8

<i>The Streets of Gold</i>	<i>Marie Raphael</i>
<i>When the Legends Die</i>	<i>Hal Borland</i>
<i>There are No Children Here*</i>	<i>Alex Kotlowitz</i>
<i>The Things they Carried*</i>	<i>Tim O'Brien</i>
<i>Black Boy</i>	<i>Richard Wright</i>
<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	<i>Lorraine Hansberry</i>
<i>Fahrenheit 451*</i>	<i>Ray Bradbury</i>
<i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>	<i>Erich Maria Remarque</i>
<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	<i>John Steinbeck</i>
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird*</i>	<i>Harper Lee</i>
<i>Animal Farm</i>	<i>George Orwell</i>

*Taught by some teachers, but not a requirement

How to Annotate Novels and Texts

- I. Use circles, underlining, arrows, highlighting, post-it notes
 - A. Circle key words
 - B. Underline or highlight helpful information
 - C. Use arrows to connect information
 - D. Write short notes either on post-it notes or in the margin of the text

- II. Identify and code main themes
 - A. Look for repeated ideas, images, symbols, and themes
 - B. Code themes with initials or abbreviations, or flag them with post-it notes.

Examples: F for freedom
H for hatred
P for peace

Working with Quotations

Introduce a quotation in one of three ways:

Use a colon. Only use a colon if introducing a quote after a complete sentence. The quote should explain or add to the sentence that introduced it. **Wearing a red fez turned out to be a bad idea for Michael: “Presently one of the bigger fellow walked up to me and knocked the fez off my head” (26).** Do not use a colon after something other than a complete sentence. He said: “I do not agree with your statement.” **This is incorrect.**

Use a comma. This is true especially with dialogue. It is also true when the writer is not using a complete sentence to introduce the quotation. **I should have said, “Not with me you won’t.”**

Use no punctuation. This is true when the quotation is an integral part of the sentence. **Shelly thought poets”...the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794)**

Avoid the following constructions:

Pupin, in “The Hardships of a Greenhorn,” states, “Presently, one of the bigger fellows...” (26). Instead, the reader will know what author and title to which you are referring either by the author’s last name in the parenthetical reference, or by virtue of the fact that only one author and work are the subject of your paper.

It was amazing when he said this. “Not with me you won’t.” With this construction it is unclear if the two sentences are linked.

Ellipses:

Use ellipses when omitting a portion of a quotation from the beginning, middle or end: “A quotation should never be presented in a way that could cause a reader to misunderstand the sentence structure of the original source. If you quote only a word or a phrase, it will be obvious that you left out some of the original sentence” (Gibaldi 85).

Beginning: “...one of the bigger fellows walked up to me and knocked the fez off my head: (26).

Middle: “Presently one of the bigger fellows...knocked the fez off my head: (26).

End: “Presently one of the bigger fellows walked up to me...” (26).

None needed: John F. Kennedy spoke of the “new frontier.”

Parenthetical references:

If your paper only deals with one source, after the quotation space one time and then put the page number in parentheses. **spent” (56)**

If your paper deals with two or more sources by different authors, include the last name of the author as well. **spent” (Green 56)**

If your paper deals with two or more sources by the same author, put the author's last name, a comma, a shortened version of the title, a space, and then the page number.

spent" (Chopin, "Story" 7).

If your paper deals with a work that is missing the author, use a shortened version of the title and the page number.

spent" (Blue 34).

Square brackets:

When using a comment or explanation that goes inside the quotation, you must use square brackets: He claimed he could provide "hundreds of examples [**of court decisions**] to prove his point."

Similarly, if a pronoun in a quotation seems unclear, you may add an identification in square brackets: "Despite the damaging evidence that had been brought to light [**by Simpson and his supporters**], Fernandez continued to believe in his friend's innocence.

Quotations within quotations:

When using quotations within quotations, use single rather than double quotation marks: "I'm not sure what he meant when he said, 'I consider you a fairly close friend.'"

Long quotations:

If a quotation runs more than four lines in your text, you must use a different format. You will introduce this quotation with a colon, indent 10 spaces (2 tabs), and continue double spacing, but do not use quotation marks. When finished with the quote, add a period and write the author's name (if needed) and the page number. Keep in mind that you should not have too many of these lengthy quotations.

At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake (186).

Writing Assignments

Student papers are often graded with specific rubrics to match skills taught in conjunction with a particular assignment or to assess criteria previously established. In general, however, the expectations for writing assignments are as follows:

Exceptional

- Meets all aspects of assignment guidelines
- Has few, if any spelling, grammar, punctuation errors
- Demonstrates independent/original vs. imitative thinking
- Has a “way with words”, employing a wide use of vocabulary
- Clearly comprehends and analyzes material
- Clearly organizes main ideas and supporting details
- Presentation is neat and thoughtful

Satisfactory

- Meets most of the assignment guidelines
- Shows some spelling, grammar, punctuation errors
- Demonstrates imitative thinking
- Uses repetitive vocabulary to express ideas
- Comprehends and summarizes material, but does not show consistent ability to analyze findings/evidence
- Presentation is acceptable
- Writing meets most exceptional guidelines, but is dreamy and flowery, or shows only thoughtful minimalism.

Unsatisfactory

- Does not follow assignment guidelines
- Has many spelling, grammar, punctuation errors
- Has a very limited vocabulary
- Shows a general understanding of material without specific evidence/details to support comments/opinions
- Ideas are randomly/poorly organizes
- Writing appears immature compared to other student examples
- Presentation is sloppy and careless

Seven Steps to Writing the First Draft of an Essay

1. Pre-writing
Create an outline or use a graphic organizer such as a web, tree, chart, Venn diagram, double bubble chart.
2. Write a thesis statement.
3. Create a vocabulary work bank.
4. Write topic sentences for each body paragraph.
5. Select appropriate evidence; examples, details, quotes for each body paragraph.
6. Organize evidence into pre-writing guide.
7. Write rough draft. Double or triple space to allow room for revisions.

Note: Always revise using a “hard copy” - an actual print copy of your essay rather than revising on the computer.

Ten Tips to Edit and Improve Rough Drafts

1. Delete repeated ideas, comments, etc.
2. Vary sentence types (simple, compound, complex).
3. Use transition words/phrases to connect ideas.
4. Limit “to be” verbs.
5. Eliminate “taboo” words and clichés.
6. Use a dictionary and thesaurus to vary/expand vocabulary.
7. Vary short sentences and long sentences.
8. Check for accuracy of all information.
9. Proofread and edit.
Read rough draft aloud to catch errors.
Have a peer read over your paper.
Spelling counts! Read your paper backwards to catch ALL errors and be sure to use spell check.
10. Double check guidelines for the assignment as established by the teacher.

The Rule of Three

- Always include three pieces of evidence per paragraph in papers, speeches, projects, etc.
- Edit paper three times before turning in your final draft.
- For test, quizzes, discussion answers, check reading material three times to make sure your comprehension is solid.

In Case of a Printing Emergency

All of us suffer from technological issues from time to time: printers jam, ink runs out, or computers freeze. No need to panic. There are a few strategies you can utilize to overcome these issues and still submit your assignment in on time. Keep in mind, however, that technological problems do **not** affect your paper's due date, which is still due on the same day as everyone else's. Use one of these strategies:

- Use a friend's computer/printer.
- Go to Kinko's and print it there.
- If you have a PC, save the file as an "RTF" file on a disk and bring it to school to print it out. (Simply go up to "File," click "Save As," and then select "RTF.")
- Bring the rough draft to school and type it in the LLC before school starts.
- Type it in the Glencoe Public Library.
- If all of these options fail, write the paper by hand (double space and only use one side of the paper).