

Dear Parents,

Just in case you haven't had a chance to go to my website to view the expectations for each of the classes I teach, I have attached Word documents of the expectations and guidelines. In addition to these being on my website, you can also find daily assignments, information on current units, spelling words, Word Wall words, presentation schedules for literature and religion, and other helpful information. Please use this resource!

As always, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or kudos, please contact me!

God bless,  
Mrs. Opsteen-Van Dyke

Check out my 8th grade website: [www.mrsovd.teach.to](http://www.mrsovd.teach.to)

"When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments; tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become."

--Louis Pasteur

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Independent Reading Program  
Mrs. Opsteen-Van Dyke

There are several components to the independent reading program:

- Independent Reading: You will be expected to read for a **minimum of 1 1/2 hours per week**. All SSR time from the week can be applied toward this hour.
- Silent Reading: On Tuesday afternoons, you will have an SSR period. Use this time and you will have a sizable chunk of your weekly requirement completed.
- Friday English SSR: After taking your DOL quiz on Fridays during English, I will grade your Word Wall individually. When I am done correcting yours, you will have time to work on your review lessons or read silently. You should also log this time.
- Book Analysis: At the end of the week (after you have read for an hour) you need to write a **1-page** analysis of the pages you have read. I will collect these on Mondays. You must staple your time sheets to your analysis. Each analysis will be worth 10 points, based on the following scale:
  - A--10 points --mostly thoughts, feelings, predictions, connections to life; very little summary; full page in length
  - B--9 points--half thoughts, half summary OR not a full page
  - C--8 points--mostly summary OR very short
  - D--7 points--all summary, very short
- Book Sharing Project: Each quarter you will be responsible for preparing a project based on a book that you have read, or are reading, during the quarter. Each student will choose a different project. Prior to the beginning of the quarter, we will have a project auction. Throughout the year, I will give out "Language Arts Loot" for class participation. At the time of the auction, you may use these to "purchase" your favorite activity. If you choose not to participate during class, you will not have any money, and you will get stuck with whatever projects are left over! The date you present your project will be based on a schedule of activities that I make up ahead of time. Some of the projects have examples, which can be found in a binder. All projects are worth 40 points.
- All of these activities count towards your independent reading grade, which is 25% of your final grade.

## Literature Program

Homework	35%
Tests/Projects	25%
Reading Log	25%
Pop Quizzes	10%
Group Work	5%

### **Homework**

This will vary from book questions to study guides for videos and novels, to short written pieces. Homework is always done on loose-leaf.

### **Tests/Projects**

There are very few tests. However, those that you do have will generally be short answer, matching, and essay. Most often, you will complete some sort of project to demonstrate what you have learned in a unit. So, if you are working on a project, take it very seriously as it is essentially your test.

### **Reading Log**

See separate handout.

### **Pop Quizzes**

Periodically, I will give a pop quiz to ensure that you finish reading assignments. These generally are not easy, so make sure you read all assignments and comprehend them. If you are confused--ASK!

### **Group Work**

Often you will be working with others on group questions or brief projects. Most of the time it will fall into this category, and count very little against your grade. Sometimes you will work with others on a large project, and that will fall under the "Projects" category.

**Please feel free to contact me at any time. I would love to hear from you and discuss your child's progress.**

## English Information

Units—alternate between grammar and writing

Persuasive writing	Sentences	Phrases
Personal Narrative	Nouns	Prepositions
Comparison/Contrast	Verbs	Conjunctions
Story Writing	Modifiers	Interjections
Description	Capitalization/Punctuation	
Iditarod—Research (integrated with Literature unit)		

### Grading

Tests/Papers	20%
Notebook with daily assignments	15%
Weekly turn-in assignments	15%
Maintenance	50%
↪ Weekly grammar quizzes	10%
↪ Spelling	10%
↪ Word Wall	10%
↪ DOL	10%
↪ Review Lessons/Tests	10%

**Notebook:** Students must put all of their daily assignments in their notebook. We will correct them each day, but I will not take a grade. Rather, they will correct their mistakes so that they learn from them, and then have the notebook to study for tests. I will collect the notebook 2-3 times a quarter. I will grade the notebook based on the following: all assignments completed, organization, and following directions.

**Weekly Assignments:** Once a week I will collect and grade one of their assignments.

**Weekly Quizzes:** During grammar units, I will quiz the students on the material covered during the week. These will be on Thursdays, so they should review their work from the week, prior to the quiz.

**Spelling:** Each week, the students will get five spelling words. They will have a quiz on Thursdays. Even though five seems like very few words, some kids have difficulty spelling them. Please encourage your child(ren) to study their words on Wednesdays.

**Word Wall:** Each week, students are responsible for choosing two words off of our word wall and filling out a worksheet. They will use it in a sentence as well as write the definition, a synonym and an antonym. Due on Fridays.

**DOL:** Each day the students will write DOL sentences in their notebooks and then correct them together. On Fridays, they will take a quiz based on the skills learned during the week.

**Review Lessons/Tests:** To avoid spending too much time reviewing skills that the students should know, they will work on individual review packets of these skills. This will allow them to review needed skills, but also permit the class to move on to other skills that will be needed in high school. This will be individually paced, and work time will be provided on Fridays. Once the students finish a packet, they will take a test. If they pass the test, they will move on to the next review packet. If they do not pass the test, we will work together to master the areas they are having difficulty with. Then they can take a make-up test. I will be available to work one-on-one with students at any time during the completion of the review packets.

## Sunday Scripture Readings Guidelines 2007/2008

**Objective:** To introduce the students to the upcoming Sunday scriptures and to have them interact with the scriptures to understand their meaning.

Your presentation will include three things:

1. The entire class will read the three readings together (skip the Psalm).
2. You will generate questions to help them understand what has just been read for each individual reading.
3. You will develop an **activity** to help with their understanding of the **overall theme**.

### **Procedure:**

1. Sign up for a Sunday with two or three partners (see sign-up sheet for availability).
2. Read through the 3 scriptures.
3. Discuss the meaning of the scriptures with your partners and develop an understanding of the theme of the scriptures for that Sunday. Write this down. I have several resources to help you with this, including myself.
4. Develop a few key discussion questions for each of the readings, which focus on the meaning of the readings.

Some suggestions are:

- **Large group discussion** – You could ask questions about the scriptures and have them respond to them in a discussion format.
  - **Small group discussion** – You could divide the students into groups of 2 or 3 and have them discuss questions among themselves; then have them come back to the large group and share.
5. Put together an activity to help reinforce what the scriptures mean. Suggestions:
    - a. **Games** – You could invent a game to play whereby the students would be asked questions about the scriptures and they would have to respond. Keep in mind that the questions would have to be about the meaning of the scripture and the theme behind them, not minor details about the readings.
    - b. **Arts and Craft Activity** – Develop an activity that is hands on for the students. Make it something they can keep or take home to their parents.
    - c. **Small Group Play** – Have students develop a skit or short story that mirrors the theme of the scriptures.
    - d. **Word Game or Puzzle**
  6. Talk to me about your ideas if you are unsure of the appropriateness/effectiveness of the activity.
  7. You will present your Sunday Scripture Reading Activity the **last school day** of the week. **You are responsible** for knowing when to present.

**Please keep in mind the following:**

- This is worth 10% of your quarter grade.
- You may want to start thinking about your plans more than a few days before you present.
- I will do my best to remind you when it is your turn, but **you are responsible** for knowing when you signed up.

**Resources available to help you:**

- Books on the back counter. There are many suggestions for activities in these books. They also help you to understand the theme of the readings.
- There is a website that might be helpful:  
<http://www.darientel.net/~schoettl/openwed/>

**What gets turned in:**

- Discussion questions
- Written theme/meaning of the readings.
- Description of the activity and any appropriate materials used for the activity.

**I am here to help you! Please ask me if you are having trouble understanding the readings or if you can't come up with a creative activity.**

## Religion Guidelines Grade 8

**Topic:** Church History

**Events Covered:**

**1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd Quarters:**

- First Christian Communities
- Paul's Contributions
- How our church formed
- Rome's Influence
- Constantine
- The Church in Europe
- Reformation
- Church in the United States

**4th Quarter:**

- Family Life

**Grades:**

Tests/Projects	30%
Homework	25%
Spiral	25%
Bible Bits Journal	10%
Sunday Scriptures	10%

**Course Components:**

**Tests/Projects:** Each unit will culminate with a test, project, or combination of both. Projects are just as important as tests, so take them seriously.

**Homework:** Homework includes any work I ask you to do on loose-leaf and turn in. While much of your work will go into your spiral, I will collect some assignments on a regular basis.

- Reading and analyzing articles from the *Compass* newspaper is one type of assignment you will be doing regularly.
- **Daily Prayer**—at the beginning of each quarter, each student will be responsible for writing or finding two prayers to share. These will be affixed to your spiral so that you have them at all times. Each day of class, I will ask for a volunteer to lead us in prayer, using one of the prayers you found at the beginning of the quarter. After everyone has volunteered once, we will start over. Most of you will need to go twice per quarter.

**Spiral**: Sometimes you will need to take notes in your spiral based on information presented in class. You will also need to put your daily assignments in your spiral. We will correct them each day, and I will check to see that they are done, but I will not take a grade. Rather, you will correct your mistakes so that you learn from them. You can then use your spiral to study for tests. I will collect the spiral 2-3 times a quarter. To receive all five points for an entry, you need to include the date, the questions you are answering, a well-thought out answer, corrections done in red, and sufficient notes for note-taking entries.

**“Bible Bits”**: Once or twice a week, we will be reading from the Bible for 10 minutes during class. We will start with the Gospel of Luke and move into the Acts of the Apostles. Then you’ll respond to a question I give you in your journal for 5 minutes. I will be looking for thought-provoking answers, which search for a deeper, rather than superficial meaning in the scriptures.

**Sunday Scripture Readings**: In groups, you will be preparing a lesson plan for your class to help them understand the readings for the upcoming Sunday. See separate handout.

**Materials Needed for Class:**

Spirals (2) – one for regular class work, one for Bible Bits Journal  
Pen  
Loose-leaf Paper  
Red Pen

**Daily Work must:**

Be done in complete sentences and have complete answers.  
Be neat.  
Have worksheets cut and pasted into them with answers to follow.  
Be corrected in red pen.  
Be finished on time.

**Please feel free to contact me at any time. I would love to hear from you and discuss your child’s progress.**