

# GRADE 8 ELA UPDATE

"Today a reader; tomorrow a leader." - Margaret Fuller

March 2017

## MARCH'S CLASSROOM FOCUS

Our 8th grade students will be finishing their argument writing this month. They will be working hard on the editing and revision process to better understand that writing is a process that requires much effort in order to improve. We are providing students with strategies and rubrics to assist them as they reflect on their own writing.

During the week of March 13, our students

will participate in the Reading Inventory assessment that measures the quantitative reading abilities of each student. This assessment is computer based and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. The data from this assessment will help schools determine which students may need further support in reading comprehension next year and will be a factor when scheduling student classes for the

2017-18 school year.

Teachers will take some time this month to introduce students to the new format of the MCAS which requires all students to write text-based narratives and essays. Eighth graders will be taking this assessment on-line, so teachers will also devote some time to introducing students to the digital tools that will assist them in this task.

### Reading Recommendations

<i>The Lions of Little Rock</i> by Kristin Levine	Gr 6
<i>Summer of My German Soldier</i> by Bette Greene	Gr 7
<i>Throne of Glass</i> by Sarah J. Maas	Gr 8

### \*March: MA ELA State Standards

- W.8.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- W.8.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- Concept & Skills Review: Using evidence; theme/central idea; author's craft; use of language and word choice; point of view; narrative techniques; standard English conventions.

Other ELA/Reading standards are addressed during the month of March as well.

## EXTENDING THE LEARNING AT HOME

ELA and Math MCAS testing will take place during April and May. These assessments are aligned to the skills and concepts Westfield Public Schools has been teaching all year. If you would like more information regarding the standards that are taught in English Language Arts, please visit: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>.

Here you will also be able to access curriculum for a variety of other disciplines.

If you are interested in learning more about the new ELA and Math MCAS assessments that students in grades 3-8 will be taking this year, you can find more information and practice tests at: <http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/>

MCAS is only one measurement of a student's academic ability, but it is a source of information that allows us to better support student learning and continuously improve upon our curriculum.

If you have any questions about WPS' ELA/Reading Curriculum, please contact Chris Tolpa, Supervisor of Humanities:

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