



REGULAR MEETING OF THE ABINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Location: Abington Middle / High School Library, Abington MA 02351

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Time: 6:30pm

Dear Visitors:

Welcome to an open meeting of the Abington School Committee. This is the agenda that will be discussed this evening. Please note that the Hearing of Visitors is included; and if you have a statement or question, please be kind enough to wait to be recognized by the Chair and give your name and address.

Chris Coyle, Chair

This meeting may be digitally recorded

I. CALL OF MEETING TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

II. HEARING OF VISITORS

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF RECORDS

January 28, 2025

IV. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT (DR. CHRISTOPHER BASTA)

- a. English Department Update (Dr. Elizabeth Gonsalves, Department Head)
- b. Update on Chet Millett and the Deirdre Volunteer Service Awards (Dr. Basta)
- c. Consideration of the 2025-2026 School Calendar (Dr. Basta)
- d. Abington High School Program of Studies Revision (Dr. Basta)

V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES (DR. JAMES ROBBINS)

2024-2025 Home Education Program Request

VI. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE (ANNA BROWN)

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (DR. FELICIA MOSCHELLA)

- a. Abington High School Consideration of a trip to Ireland / Scotland (Karin Daisy, Global Travel Advisor)
- b. Abington High School Consideration of a trip to Galapagos Islands (Karin Daisy, Global Travel Advisor)
- c. FY26 Budget Update

VIII. NEW BUSINESS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE DATE

Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 6:30pm

IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

• **Dates to Remember**

1. Tuesday, March 11th – SEPAC Meeting @ 6:30pm -AMS/AHS Library
2. Tuesday, March 11th – Substance Use Educational Night @ 6:00pm – AMS Cafeteria
3. AHS Presents Once Upon a Mattress, Thursday March 13th & 14th @ 7pm and Sunday March 15th @ 2pm
4. Wednesday, March 19th - Inservice / Early Release

• **Personnel Administration**

1. The superintendent has accepted the resignation of Jessica Booker, a paraprofessional within Abington Public Schools, effective on February 14, 2025.
2. The superintendent has accepted the resignation of Nicholas Rodriques, BBES/WES team chair within Abington Public Schools, effective on March 7, 2025.
3. On the recommendation of Julie Thompson, Principal of Beaver Brook Elementary School, the superintendent approved the appointment of Ashley Cuomo as a grade 1 teacher within Abington Public Schools effective February 24, 2025.

4. On the recommendation of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, and Peter Serino, Athletic Director, the superintendent has approved the appointment of the following spring coaches:

Ultimate Frisbee	Jason Scott
Head Softball	Jenna Olem
Head Baseball	Steve Perakslis
JV Baseball	Jason Brown
Head Tennis	Jose Andrade
Boys Head Track	Michael Caseley
Girls Head Track	Matt Campbell
Boys Assistant Track	Connor Bennett
Girls Assistant Track	William Caseley
Boys Head Lacrosse	Michael Grafton
Girls Head Lacrosse	Courtney McCabe

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

By roll call vote in accordance with MA G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) for the purpose of conducting strategy session for negotiations with AEA Units A and B and non-union personnel since, as declared by the Chair, to hold this discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee; and not to return to regular session.



SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Location: A regular meeting of the School Committee was held in the Library at 201 Gliniewicz Way Abington Middle / High School, Abington MA 02351

Date/Time: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 6:30pm

Present: Mr. Chris Coyle, Chair; Ms. Danielle Grafton, Vice-Chair; Ms. Heidi Hernandez, Secretary; Ms. Pamela Neely and Ms. Melanie Whitney, Members. Also in attendance were Dr. Felicia Moschella, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Christopher Basta, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Sarah Gainey, Director of Finance & Operations; Ms. Danielle Gaylor Executive Assistant

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL OF MEETING TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

II. HEARING OF VISITORS

None

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF RECORDS

January 7, 2025

VOTED: On the motion of Danielle Grafton (Chris Coyle) The School Committee unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes of January 7, 2025, as presented or amended.

IV. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT (DR. CHRISTOPHER BASTA)

a. Science Department Update (Nicole Corbett, Department Head):

Ms. Corbett updated the Science Department, starting with its progress in their 2024 growth areas and areas for this year. The Department is focusing on assessing data to continue improving instruction, building on common practices, and continuing to

build scientific literacy. Ms. Corbett also shared what the Department has been working on to align with the APS Strategic Plan and AP testing information and recruitment.

- b. **Music Department Update (Tim Leonelli, Director of Music):** Mr. Leonelli updated the Committee on the successes of the Department and shared the areas of growth the Department is focusing on. Mr. Leonelli provided curricular performance-based class enrollment numbers and suggested additional classes that could be added to the program of studies.

V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES (DR. JAMES ROBBINS)

2024-2025 Home Education Program Request

VOTED: On the motion of Pam Neely (Heidi Hernandez) the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the recommended Home Education Program for the 2024-2025 School year as recommended by Dr. Robbins.

VI. PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Program of Studies (Jonathan Bourn, Principal, Abington High School)

VOTED: On the motion of Danielle Grafton (Melanie Whitney) the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the 2024-2025 proposed revisions to the Program of Studies as presented or amended

VOTED: On the motion of Melanie Whitney (Danielle Grafton) the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the 2025-2026 proposed revisions to the Program of Studies as presented or amended.

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (DR. FELICIA MOSCHELLA)

a. Policy Subcommittee

- i. Proposed Policy IMGB – Therapy/Emotional Support Dogs in Schools

VOTED: On the motion of Melanie Whitney (Pam Neely) the School Committee unanimously voted to approve Policy IMGB – Therapy/Emotional Support Dogs in Schools as presented or amended.

- ii. Proposed Amendment to Policy ADDA – Background Checks

VOTED: On the motion of Heidi Hernandez (Chris Coyle) the School Committee unanimously voted to approve Policy ADDA – Background Checks as amended.

- b. **Woodsdale Elementary School Principal Search Update:** Dr. Moschella provided a 2-month timeline that contained an outline of steps involved in the search process for the new Woodsdale Elementary School Principal effective July 1, 2025.

VIII. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS (SARAH GAINNEY)

- a. **Update on Town Meeting and Trash Collection (Scott Lambiase, Abington Town Manager):** Mr. Lambiase provided information about the town's trash collection services. He shared that the town will still offer the service, however, the town is proposing a new plan which includes a gradual fee for service that will help to reallocate funds to other town services. Mr. Lambiase summarized the outline of the Trash Collection plan to be discussed in greater detail at April's Town Meeting.
- a. **FY26 Budget Update:** Dr. Moschella provided an update on the FY26 Budget and shared an updated APS Increase by Major Category FY26 Budget Proposal (Level Service Budget). Dr. Moschella expects us to better understand what the town can offer for all Departments as we move towards the April Town Meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE DATE

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Project 351 Ambassador Announcement – The School Committee recognized Sallie Hernandez and the 2025, 351 Project Ambassador for Abington.
- **Dates to Remember**
 - 1. Tuesday, February 4th - Inservice / Early Release
 - 2. Monday, February 17th – Friday February 21st – Winter Break

- **Personnel Administration**

1. The superintendent has accepted the resignation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of Woodsdale Elementary School, effective on June 30, 2025.
2. The superintendent has accepted the resignation of Bruna Henriques, a paraprofessional within Abington Public Schools, effective on January 16, 2025.
3. On the recommendation of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, the superintendent approved the appointment of Samantha Johnson as a special education teacher within Abington Public Schools effective January 2, 2025.
4. On the recommendation of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, the superintendent approved the appointment of Rachel Collins as a long-term substitute special education teacher within Abington Public Schools (January 6th, 2025 – March 14, 2025)

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:45 p.m.

VOTED: The School Committee, by roll call vote in accordance with MA G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) for the purpose of conducting strategy session for negotiations with AEA Units A and B and non-union personnel since, as declared by the Chair, to hold this discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee; and not to return to regular session 7:23 p.m.

**Yes: Mr. Coyle
Ms. Neely
Ms. Grafton
Ms. Hernandez
Ms. Whitney**



Heidi Hernandez, Secretary

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADES 7-12

SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

BY DR. LIZ GONSALVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2025

STRENGTHS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, 7-12

- **Experienced, skilled teachers**
- **Authentic text set curriculum, written by teachers**
- **Teaching for mastery, at all levels**
- **Vertical planning, in content & skills**
- **Consistent pedagogy**
 - Common essential questions & assignments at grade level
 - Student voice & choice in demonstration of knowledge & skills
 - Focus on writing as a process & practice

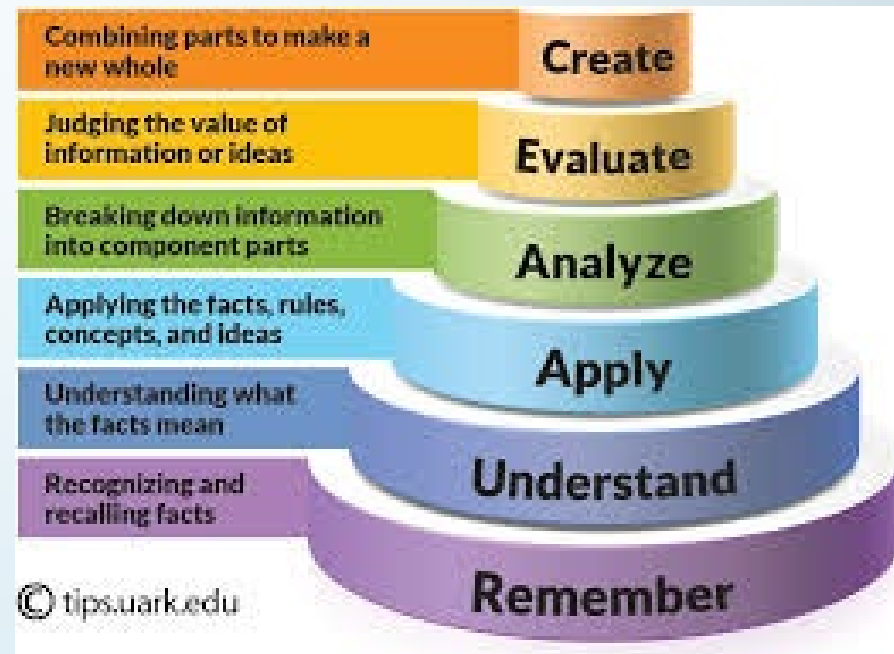
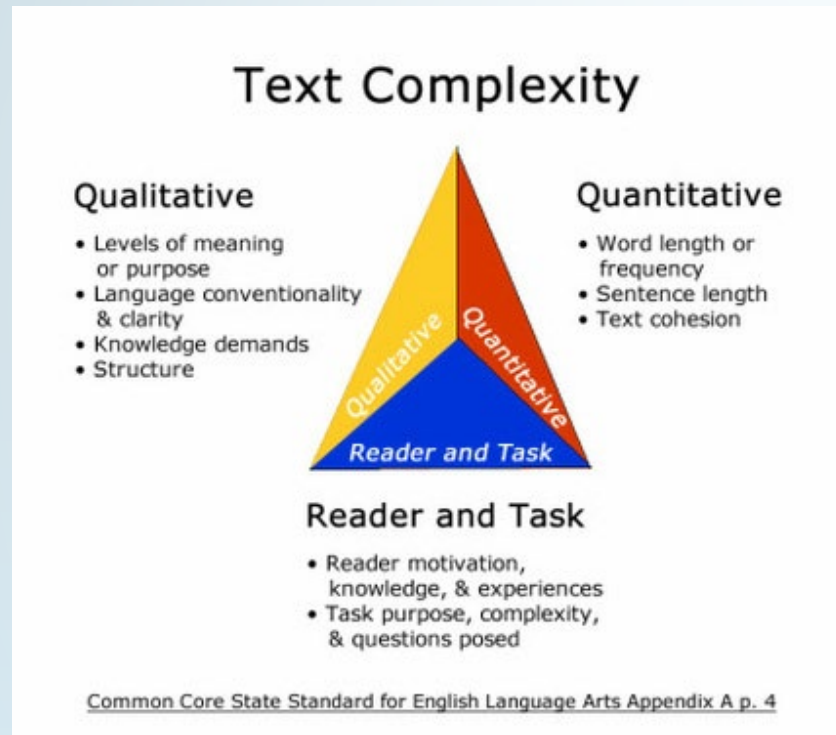
CHALLENGES & AREAS FOR STUDENT GROWTH

Inviting	Inviting students beyond minimal compliance
Engaging	Engaging passive students
Evoking	Evoking inferential reading comprehension skills
Generating	Generating ample supporting evidence
Eliciting	Eliciting attention to craft and style as well as content
Supporting	Supporting English Learners

GROWING READERS AND WRITERS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

- ✓ Engaging students through goal setting & feedback
- ✓ Supporting multi-lingual students
- ✓ Fostering connections: self/texts/world
- ✓ Introducing audio books, graphic novels, manga & ebooks as real reading
- ✓ Featuring film, documentaries & multi-media as texts





ELA GOAL

**INCREASE STUDENT STAMINA
TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY
AS READERS & WRITERS**

COLLEGE ENGLISH COURSES

INDIVIDUAL STAMINA IS CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS

- **Increased volume of reading** → Long texts weekly, personal note-taking, without study guides
- **Decreased number of assessments per course** → 2-4 papers, midterm, final
- **High stakes independent writing, pages assigned** → 2-4, 5-10, 15-20 pages per writing task
- **Increased time in class** → 3 hours per week at 1 hour, 1.5 hours, 3-hour sessions per class
- **In person, hybrid, online** → Not always optional or preference → a forced choice
- **Attendance is crucial** → One or two absences can cause a student to be dropped from a course
- **Fewer assists** → Professor office hours or writing center, no revisions for higher grade allowed
- **Students with IEPs/504s must advocate for themselves** → Accommodations not always available
- **Cheating or use of AI** → Student removed from course or college itself

HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

All students are required to attend HS.

All students take a general course, no major.

Students who score 60 earn credit.

Teachers are focused on all students attaining mastery of state-defined curriculum standards in a content area.

Teachers & students work together for 90 to 180 days

Most HS classes are daily, in person.

Complex assignments are workshopped in class.

Students take 4 years of English.

COLLEGE INDIVIDUAL STAMINA

College is an option.

Students take general course select a major.

Students must earn a C in major for credit.

Professors are focused on measuring students' attainment of skills outlined in their own syllabus & professional standards.

Professors & students work together for 15-17 weeks, 15-45 days.

Sometimes, a professor and student may never meet or speak to one another. Sometimes, professors become mentors & friends.

Students process tasks and assignments on their own.

Students take 1 or 2 English classes in 4 years, usually non-literary.

EXPOSITORY WRITING ACROSS ALL GRADES & LEVELS

SUMMATIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT

- Text Dependent Writing
- Literary Analysis Essays
- Timed Writing
- Persuasive Essays, Speeches, Letters
- Research Paper/ Author Study
- Reflections after Reading, Viewing, and Writing

Teach your students real-world writing purposes, add a teacher who models his or her struggles with the writing process, throw in lots of real-world mentor texts for students to emulate, and give our kids the time necessary to enable them to stretch as writers.

Kelly Gallagher

www.idlehearts.com



SAMPLE WRITING TASKS THAT PROMOTE COLLEGE READINESS

Abington Middle School

**Grade 7: Exploring Refugee Stories
Through Literature Final Exam**

**Grade 8: Exploring Justice and
Empathy in *To Kill A Mockingbird***

Abington High School

9: Creative Writing Vignette Project

10: *All Souls* Summative Essay

11: American Literature Final Exam

12: Malala Documentary Synthesis Response

**AP Language: Celebrity Timed Synthesis
Essay**

AP Literature: Salinger Author Study

WAYS STUDENTS ARE RECRUITED TO AP ENGLISH COURSES



Teachers at AMS recommend students for Level I English in grade 9.



Teachers in grades 10 and 11, both levels, present the AP option to students.



Teachers who plan to teach AP offer an information session during Bridge Block.



Teachers confer with students who express interest, especially aspirational candidates.



Teachers speak to students who demonstrate reading, writing and/or speaking skill about AP options if students do not express an interest.

AP Language 2020-2024

	Total Students	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5	Mean AHS	Mean MA	Mean Global
2020 22%	29/34 85%	7% (2)	28% (8)	34% (10)	17% (5)	14% (4)	3.03	3.24	2.96
2021 25%	39/40 98%	18%(7)	23% (9)	38% (15)	21% (8)	0% (0)	2.62	3.09	2.86
2022 26%	38/40 95%	11%(4)	26% (10)	50% (19)	11% (4)	3% (1)	2.68	3.04	2.83
2023 29%	40/42 95%	15% (6)	35% (14)	40% (16)	10% (4)	0% (0)	2.45	2.98	2.82
2024 24%	28/31 90%	21% (6)	43% (12)	29% (8)	7% (2)	0% (0)	2.21	3.04	2.79

YEAR	Total	1	2	3	4	5		AHS	+/-
2024	15,338	12%	26%	24%	25%	14%	3.04	2.21	- .83
2024	599,296	17%	29%	23%	21%	10%	2.79	2.21	- .58

AP Literature 2020-2024

	Total Students	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5	Mean AHS	Mean MA	Mean Global
2020 32%	21/37 54%	5% (1)	52% (11)	33% (7)	10% (2)	0% (0)	2.48	3.19	2.84
2021 14%	21/45 47%	0% (0)	52% (11)	43% (9)	5% (1)	0% (0)	2.52	2.68	2.47
2022 19%	30/45 66%	3% (1)	27% (8)	33% (10)	13% (4)	23% (7)	3.27	3.52	3.31
2023 31%	26/41 70%	4% (1)	15% (4)	46% (12)	31% (8)	4% (1)	3.15	3.51	3.26
2024 32%	21/41 51%	5% (1)	24% (5)	43%	29% (6)	0% (1)	2.95	3.38	3.16

	Total	1	2	3	4	5		AHS	+/-
2024	11,251	9%	13%	29%	30%	19%	3.38	2.95	-.43
2024	358,463	9%	14%	34%	28%	15%	3.16	2.95	-.21

THANK YOU!

I'm happy to address any questions
about topics in tonight's presentation



English Language Arts Presentation

Dr. Liz Gonsalves

February 25, 2025

Sample Writing Tasks That Promote College Readiness

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Grade 8: Exploring Justice and Empathy *in To Kill a Mockingbird* Final Essay

Grade 9: Creative Writing Vignette Project for *The House on Mango Street*

Grade 10: *All Souls* Summative Essay

Grade 11: American Literature Final

Grade 12: Malala Documentary Synthesis Response

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition: Celebrity Synthesis Timed Writing

Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition: Salinger Author Study

Grade 7: Exploring Refugee Stories Through Literature Final Essay

In *Refugee*, Josef and his family flee Nazi Germany in search of safety, facing discrimination, uncertainty, and life-threatening challenges. Research a real Holocaust survivor's story and compare their journey to Josef's. In a well-organized essay, analyze the similarities and differences between their experiences, focusing on obstacles they faced, the choices they had to make, and the outcomes of their journeys.

Guidelines

I. Introduction

- Begin with a hook about the challenges of refugees and Holocaust survivors.
- Introduce *Refugee* and Josef's story, as well as the Holocaust survivor you are comparing him to.
- Present a clear thesis statement that explains how their experiences are similar and different.

II. Body Paragraphs

- Paragraph 1: Discuss the reasons both Josef and the survivor had to flee their homes (be sure to use evidence from both texts).
- Paragraph 2: Compare the challenges they faced on their journeys (e.g., discrimination, danger, rejection from other countries).
- Paragraph 3: Analyze the outcome of each journey and how these experiences shaped their lives.

III. Conclusion

- Summarize key points and restate the thesis.
- Reflect on why studying historical and fictional refugee stories is important in understanding history and human resilience.

Expectations

- Use formal academic writing (avoid first-person pronouns).
- Include direct evidence from *Refugee* and the survivor's testimony.
- Organize ideas logically with clear transitions.
- Revise and proofread for grammar, spelling, and clarity.

Resources for Research

- Holocaust Centre North Survivor Stories (<https://holocaustcentrenorth.org.uk/stories/survivor-stories/>)
- The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Behind Every Name a Story (<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-reflections-testimonies/behind-every-name-a-story>)

Drafting Graphic Organizer

Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer to support your essay writing. Describe why each individual fled, the challenges they encountered along the way, and analyze the outcome of their journey and its impact on their lives. Additionally, include one quote from each work to support your response. Then, craft your thesis statement!

	Josef	Survivor
Reasons They Fled		
	Evidence:	Evidence:
Challenges Faced		
	Evidence:	Evidence
Outcomes and Experiences		
	Evidence:	Evidence:
Thesis Statement:		

Essay Graphic Organizer

Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer to assist with your essay writing. If you need extra help at any stage of the drafting process, reach out to your teacher or use the available resources (Introduction and Conclusion Guide, MLA Formatting, Writing Context, Deepening Your Analysis, etc.).

- I. Introduction
 - a. Hook:
 - b. Bridge & Background:
 - c. Thesis:

- II. Body Paragraph 1: Reasons They Fled
 - a. Topic Sentence:
 - b. Context:
 - c. Evidence:
 - d. Analysis/Reasoning:

- III. Body Paragraph 2: Challenges Faced
 - a. Topic Sentence:
 - b. Context:
 - c. Evidence:
 - d. Analysis/Reasoning:

- IV. Body Paragraph 3: Outcomes and Experiences
 - a. Topic Sentence:
 - b. Context:
 - c. Evidence:
 - d. Analysis/Reasoning:

- V. Conclusion
 - a. Restated Thesis:
 - b. Summarize Key Points:
 - c. Connect to Real World:

Scoring Rubric

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement
Thesis and Focus (W7.1, W7.2)	Clear, insightful thesis that effectively compares Josef's journey with a Holocaust survivor's experience; maintains strong focus throughout.	Clear thesis that compares Josef's journey with a Holocaust survivor's experience; stays mostly focused.	Weak or unclear thesis; comparison is present but lacks depth; focus shifts at times.	No clear thesis; little or no comparison; lacks focus.
Use of Evidence and Analysis (W7.1, W7.9)	Uses strong, well-chosen textual evidence from <i>Refugee</i> and the survivor's story; analysis is insightful and clearly explains connections.	Uses relevant textual evidence from <i>Refugee</i> and the survivor's story; analysis explains connections clearly.	Uses some textual evidence but may lack depth; analysis is vague or inconsistent.	Little or no textual evidence; analysis is weak or missing.
Organization and Structure (W7.4., W7.3)	Well-organized essay with a strong introduction, logical body paragraphs, and a thoughtful conclusion; smooth transitions.	Clear structure with an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion; transitions are mostly effective.	Some organization, but ideas may be disjointed or transitions unclear.	Lacks clear organization; difficult to follow.
Development and Elaboration (W7.2., W7.3)	Ideas are fully developed with rich details and clear explanations; demonstrates strong understanding of the historical context.	Ideas are developed with adequate details and explanations; historical context is mostly clear.	Ideas are somewhat developed but may be lacking detail or historical context.	Ideas are underdeveloped; little to no historical context provided.
Language and Style (L7.1., L7.3)	Uses sophisticated, varied sentence structure and academic vocabulary; writing is engaging and clear.	Uses correct sentence structure and appropriate vocabulary; writing is clear.	Sentence structure is simple or repetitive; vocabulary is basic; some awkward phrasing.	Frequent grammar errors; weak or unclear sentence structure; informal or inappropriate language.
Conventions (L.2)	Few to no errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; demonstrates careful proofreading.	Minor errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; does not interfere with understanding.	Noticeable errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling that occasionally affect readability.	Frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling that make writing difficult to understand.
Authenticity	Writing is fully original, demonstrating personal voice and critical thinking. No signs of AI-generated content.	Writing is original with clear personal engagement. Minimal concern about AI influence.	Some phrases or ideas appear generic or lack depth, raising questions about originality.	Strong indications of AI-generated or copied content; lacks personal voice and analysis.
Formatting & MLA Requirements (W7.6., W7.8)	Proper MLA formatting throughout (header, title, in-text citations, Works Cited page). No errors.	Follows MLA format with only minor errors (e.g., missing italics, minor citation issues).	Attempts MLA formatting but has multiple errors in citations, structure, or heading.	Does not follow MLA format; missing citations, improper heading, or incorrect structure.

Grade 8: Exploring Justice and Empathy in *To Kill a Mockingbird* Final Essay

In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee explores important themes related to justice, prejudice, morality, and empathy. These themes are expressed through the characters, plot, and setting of the story. In this essay, you will analyze one central theme in the novel and explain how the author develops it through the characters and events of the story. After you compose your essay, you will create a visual representation of your theme.

Your Task:

- I. Choose a Theme: Identify a central theme in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, such as racism, justice, moral growth, or empathy. Consider how the novel explores this theme through the lives of characters like Scout, Atticus, Tom Robinson, and others.
- II. Support with Evidence: Use at least three strong pieces of textual evidence (direct quotes) from the novel to support your analysis. Explain how these examples develop the theme you've selected.
- III. Real World Connections: How does this theme relate to historical events, current social issues, or personal experiences? Why is it still relevant today?

Essay Requirements:

- Thesis Statement: Clearly state the theme you are analyzing and its significance in the introduction.
- Textual Evidence: Include at least three well-integrated pieces of evidence from the novel.
- Analysis & Explanation: Thoroughly explain how each piece of evidence supports your thesis.
- Logical Organization: Organize your essay with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- MLA Formatting: Follow proper MLA format (header, title, in-text citations, and a Works Cited page).

Visual Component:

- Clear Theme Identification: The slide should have a clear and prominent title that states the theme being analyzed.
- Supporting Evidence: Three relevant quotes or examples from the text that support the theme. You must include proper citations.
- Concise Analysis: A brief explanation of how the evidence supports the theme. The analysis should be in bullet points or short sentences for easy reading.
- Visual Appeal: Visual elements like images, icons, or graphs that relate to the theme. The visuals should enhance understanding without overcrowding the slide.
- Minimal and Focused Text: Clear, minimal text that doesn't overwhelm the audience. Key points should be highlighted in short phrases or bullet points.

Thematic Essay Scoring Guide

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement
Thesis & Focus (W8.1, W8.2)	Clear, insightful thesis that effectively presents a theme from the text; maintains strong focus throughout.	Clear thesis that presents a theme; mostly maintains focus.	Weak or unclear thesis; theme is present but lacks depth; focus shifts at times.	No clear thesis; theme is unclear or missing; lacks focus.
Textual Evidence & Analysis (W8.1, W8.9)	Uses strong, well-chosen textual evidence; analysis is insightful, explaining how the evidence supports the theme.	Uses relevant textual evidence; analysis explains the connection to the theme clearly.	Uses some textual evidence but lacks depth; analysis is vague or inconsistent.	Little or no textual evidence; analysis is weak or missing.
Organization & Structure (W8.4, W8.5)	Well-organized essay with a strong introduction, logical body paragraphs, and a thoughtful conclusion; smooth transitions.	Clear structure with an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion; transitions are mostly effective.	Some organization, but ideas may be disjointed or transitions unclear.	Lacks clear organization; difficult to follow.
Development & Elaboration (W8.2, W8.3)	Ideas are fully developed with rich details and clear explanations; demonstrates strong understanding of the theme.	Ideas are developed with adequate details and explanations; theme is mostly clear.	Ideas are somewhat developed but may lack detail or clarity on the theme.	Ideas are underdeveloped; theme is unclear or lacks explanation.
Language & Style (L8.1, L8.3)	Uses sophisticated, varied sentence structure and academic vocabulary; writing is engaging and clear.	Uses correct sentence structure and appropriate vocabulary; writing is clear.	Sentence structure is simple or repetitive; vocabulary is basic; some awkward phrasing.	Frequent grammar errors; weak or unclear sentence structure; informal or inappropriate language.
Conventions (L8.2)	Few to no errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; demonstrates careful proofreading.	Minor errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; does not interfere with understanding.	Noticeable errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling that occasionally affect readability.	Frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling that make writing difficult to understand.
Authenticity	Writing is fully original, demonstrating personal voice and critical thinking. No signs of AI-generated content.	Writing is original with clear personal engagement. Minimal concern about AI influence.	Some phrases or ideas appear generic or lack depth, raising questions about originality.	Strong indications of AI-generated or copied content; lacks personal voice and analysis.
Formatting & MLA Requirements (W8.6, W8.8)	Proper MLA formatting throughout (header, title, in-text citations, Works Cited page). No errors.	Follows MLA format with only minor errors (e.g., missing italics, minor citation issues).	Attempts MLA formatting but has multiple errors in citations, structure, or heading.	Does not follow MLA format; missing citations, improper heading, or incorrect structure.

Slide Presentation Scoring Rubric

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement
Clear Theme Identification	The theme is clearly and prominently identified with a strong title that fully explains the theme being analyzed.	The theme is clearly identified with a relevant title that reflects the main idea.	The theme is somewhat identified but not fully clear or the title is vague.	The theme is unclear or missing from the slide.
Supporting Evidence	Provides multiple, concise, and relevant quotes/examples directly tied to the theme. All evidence strongly supports the analysis.	Provides relevant quotes/examples with clear connection to the theme.	Evidence is somewhat relevant or lacks clarity in how it connects to the theme.	Evidence is vague, irrelevant, or missing.
Concise Analysis	Brief and clear analysis with concise bullet points or short sentences explaining how the evidence supports the theme.	Clear analysis in bullet points or short sentences that explain the connection to the theme.	Analysis is unclear, underdeveloped, or not directly connected to the evidence.	No analysis or unclear explanation of how evidence supports the theme.
Visual Appeal	Visually engaging with relevant images, icons, or graphics that enhance the theme without overcrowding the slide.	Good visuals that relate to the theme, with minimal distractions.	Some visuals, but they may not strongly connect to the theme or are too cluttered.	Poor or no visuals, or visuals that are irrelevant or too overwhelming.
Minimal and Focused Text	Text is minimal and clearly focused on key points, with bullet points or short phrases that are easy to read.	Text is clear and concise, with minimal use of words and easy-to-read points.	Text is somewhat cluttered or wordy, making it harder to focus on key points.	Text is overwhelming or unclear, detracting from the presentation.
Logical Flow	Clear, logical flow from theme identification to evidence presentation, followed by analysis, making it easy to follow the argument.	The slide has a logical flow, but may have slight disorganization between sections.	The flow of the slide is somewhat unclear or disorganized.	The slide lacks logical flow, making it hard to follow the analysis.
Citations	Citations are correctly formatted in MLA style and placed at the end of each quote.	Citations are mostly correct but may have minor formatting issues.	Citations are missing or incorrectly formatted.	Citations are missing or do not follow proper format.
Engagement and Readability	Font is easy-to-read, consistent, and visually engaging; color usage is appropriate and enhances readability.	Font is readable with good formatting, but color usage may not always enhance the slide.	Font may be hard to read, or color choices are distracting or inconsistent.	Font is difficult to read, and color choices make the slide hard to understand.

Grade 9: Creative Writing Vignette Project for *The House on Mango Street*

The purpose of this project is to create your own book which will help you remember what you know, who you are, and people, as well as events, that are an important part of your history, even if you do not quite realize it yet. Have fun!

Your book must have the following items:

- _____ Bound Book (5 points)
- _____ Cover page with title and author's name (your name) (5 points)
- _____ Cover page also contains original art (draw it, no photos) (5 points)
- _____ Dedication & Courtesy page that states that your book is inspired by *The House on Mango Street* (cite the book here) (5 points)
- _____ Biography (written in 3rd person, 50 words or less, with a portrait photo. Your bio should tie to the book and your writing career. Credit the picture [if a personal photo, say that] (10 points)
- _____ Seven typed *vignettes that contain stylistic element components and emulate the style of Cisneros' *HoMS* (70 points)
- _____ You picked your 3 strongest vignettes and proofread them aloud to Miss Slayton (10 points)
- _____ A final page entitled "Stylistic Elements" that explains what literary elements you used to emulate Cisneros.
 - o You must have used a total of ten different elements.
 - o On this page, list your seven vignettes in order. Then, for each vignette state two stylistic elements you used. (ex. Simile, metaphor, assonance, alliteration, imagery, symbolism, connotative words, syntactical choice, allusions, repetition, and so on).
 - o Give textual evidence for each element.
 - o Lastly, for each element state how using the device shaped the overall meaning, purpose, and/or tone in the vignette. (90 points)

Grade 10

All Souls

Summative Essay

Reflect on MacDonald's purpose for writing his memoir. Consider how his purpose influences his stylistic choice of using his full circle technique.

Guiding Questions:

- Why do you think he decides to do this?
- What is the effect of using this “full circle” technique?
- What new insights did you gain from reading chapter one a second time?
- Is this style of writing effective for a memoir? Why or why not?

Your essay should consist of several carefully edited paragraphs. Your introduction should include a strong thesis statement explaining MacDonald's purpose for his memoir and how his structure supports this. Your body paragraphs should each include specific examples/quotes from the book to help support your points. Your conclusion should do more than simply restate earlier points. Try to connect MacDonald's purpose for writing with our Essential Question (posted in classroom on side white board). As always, use a formal tone in your writing.

Grade 11

American Literature Final Exam

At the beginning of the year, we discussed several Essential Questions. Your assignment is to take the following questions and create a poster which demonstrates your opinion and understanding.

- What does it mean to be an American?
- What is the American Dream?
- Is it possible for all people?

On the FRONT of the poster:

- have your definition of "The American Dream"
- have at least three quotes from the year that represent your definition
- have symbolism to represent your quotes or definitions
- optionally include visuals of the authors or texts where you got your quotes

On the BACK of the poster:

- write out your answers to the 3 Essential Questions in full sentences
- provide explanations and analysis for the quotes and symbols you chose
- provide an MLA Works Cited for your quotes

Each student will be required to BRIEFLY share their poster with the class. Try not to talk off the top of your head but speak to your knowledge of your product. You will be graded using the following rubric:

Am Lit Final Exam



Criteria	Ratings					Pts
Visual Appeal Poster is professional in appearance, there are no grammatical errors	4 pts Exceeding Work exceeds the expectations or requirements of the assignment	3 pts Meeting Work meets the expectations or requirements of the assignment	2 pts Approaching Work is approaching the expectations or requirements but lacks depth	1 pts Needs Improvement Work does not meet expectations/ requirements or sections may be underdeveloped or missing	0 pts Missing Assignment is missing	4 pts
Quote and Symbol Selection The ideas match the ideas beyond a surface level, quotes selected are the most relevant to the argument	4 pts Exceeding Work exceeds the expectations or requirements of the assignment	3 pts Meeting Work meets the expectations or requirements of the assignment	2 pts Approaching Work is approaching the expectations or requirements but lacks depth	1 pts Needs Improvement Work does not meet expectations/ requirements or sections may be underdeveloped or missing	0 pts No Marks Assignment is missing	4 pts
Analysis (textual and visual) Demonstrates an understanding of the texts and unifying concepts, displays a depth of critical thinking	4 pts Exceeding Work exceeds the expectations or requirements of the assignment	3 pts Meeting Work meets the expectations or requirements of the assignment	2 pts Approaching Work is approaching the expectations or requirements but lacks depth	1 pts Needs Improvement Work does not meet expectations/ requirements or sections may be underdeveloped or missing	0 pts No Marks Assignment is missing	4 pts
MLA citations Properly formatted according to MLA standards	4 pts Exceeding Work exceeds the expectations or requirements of the assignment	3 pts Meeting Work meets the expectations or requirements of the assignment	2 pts Approaching Work is approaching the expectations or requirements but lacks depth	1 pts Needs Improvement Work does not meet expectations/ requirements or sections may be underdeveloped or missing	0 pts No Marks Assignment is missing	4 pts

Total Points: 16

Grade 12: Malala Documentary Synthesis Response

The work that we've done relating to Malala is multi-faceted - between the history of education & access, the oppressive regime of the Taliban (*both in Pakistan with Malala, and in Afghanistan with the 2001 "Taliban's War Against Women" US Archive Report*) and how activism/ voices can help uplift and spread knowledge.

After watching the documentary, write a thoughtful 2-3 paragraph synthesis response that reacts to one of the quotations below from the documentary *He Named Me Malala* and incorporates the following sources:

- Give specific references from the film (<https://www.documentarymania.com/video/He%20Named%20Me%20Malala/>)
 - Reference from *New York Times* article: [malala opinion piece new york times.docx](#)
 - Tie in research done by your classmates (draw evidence from a **different group's 1-slide jigsaw summaries** <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/6185.htm>), and
 - Your own life experience and knowledge
1. *Malala: "We realize the importance of light when we see darkness. We realize the importance of our voice when we are silenced. We believe in the power and the strength of our words. Today is the day of every woman, every boy, and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights."*
 2. *Malala: "Let us pick up our books and our pens; they are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world."*
 3. *Ziauddin (Malala's father): "If I kept silent, I think, then you lose the right to exist, the right to live. If my rights are violated and I keep silent, I should better die than to live."*
 4. *Malala: "I tell my story not because it is unique, but because it is not. It is the story of many girls. I am Malala, but I am also Shazia, I am Kainat, I am Kainat Sonro, I am Mozoun, I am Amina, I am those sixty-six million girls who are deprived of education. I am not a lone voice, I am many. And our voices have grown louder and louder."*

In your response, you should talk about the things we've discussed in conversation with one another (that's synthesis!) and be sure to explicitly respond to "so what?"... Why should we care and why does this all matter?

Rubric:

~ 2-3 paragraphs: ____/3

~ Explicitly references moments from documentary & quotes provided: ____/5

~ Draw on The New York Times Malala opinion piece and seamlessly incorporate this into response: ____/5

~ Weave together classmate's jigsaw reading from US Archives and response: ____/5

~ Synthesizes personal experience and connects to "so what?"... Response addresses why should we care and why this all matters: ____/8

Grade 11 Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

In preparation for the timed synthesis essay tomorrow, please read and annotate the following readings in the Conversation on pp. 368 - 384 about The Value of Celebrity Activism:

1. C. Wright Mills/*from The Power Elite*
2. Dave Gilson/*Dr. Clooney, I Presume?* (Illustration)
3. Brad Knickerbocker/*West Memphis Three: Internet Campaign, Hollywood Drove Their Release*
4. Andres Jimenez/*Why Celebrity Activism Does More Harm Than Good*
5. Jeffrey Kluger/*Jim Carrey, Please Shut Up About Vaccines*
6. Georgia Cole, Ben Radley, and Jean-Benoit Felisse/*Who Really Benefits From Celebrity Activism?*
7. Joshua Ostroff/*Beyonce and Why Celebrity Activists Matter*
8. Jay Caspian Kang/*Should Athletes Stick to Sports?*

Timed Synthesis Essay

Using the arguments and evidence in this Conversation (**minimum of 3 sources**), answer the following question in an essay:

Should celebrities use their influence and power to work for social change, or should they "just play ball"?

In the interest of saving time, when you use a source you may reference it by number.

For direct/explicit reference, this would look like:

In source 1 the author indicates...

For implicit/in text-citation, it would look like:

Often when professional teams "tackle overtly political issues, it's though selective editing and legacy building" (source 8).

Grade 12 Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

Salinger Author Study

Requirements of the assignment:

- Clear, focused thesis statement articulating an important theme present in several of Salinger's works.
- Thesis should include an additional analysis of the impact of specific elements of style on the evolution of the selected theme.
- Examination of at least four of Salinger's works as part of the analysis (primary sources)
- Use of at least four credible, valid sources (secondary sources)
- MLA format for citations, title page, etc.
 - [MLA Sample Paper](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
 - [Guidelines for Formatting Quotations](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- Two "meetings" with me for the purpose of gauging progress, evaluating thesis, etc.

ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2025-2026
SCHOOL CALENDAR

August and September (23)

M	T	W	TH	F
			13	14
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
*22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

Aug. 20 - New Faculty Orientation

Aug. 25 - All Staff Report

Aug. 26 - Faculty Professional Development

Aug. 27 - Grades 1-12 Report

Aug. 27-28 AEEP/Kindergarten Orientation

Aug. 29 - No School

Sept. 1 - Labor Day - No School

Sept. 2 - AEEP/Kindergarten Orientation

Sept. 3 - AEEP/Kindergarten Report

Sept. 18 - Inservice/Early Release Day

December (17)

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Dec. 8 - Inservice/Early Release Day

Dec. 23 - Early Release Day

Dec. 24 - Holiday Vacation Begins

March (22)

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

Mar. 11 - Inservice/Early Release Day

June (14)

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

June 18 - Tentative Last Day of School (PreK-11) - Early Release Day (includes 5 Snow Days)

June 19 - Juneteenth

Total 185 Days

2025-2026 School Year

October (22)

M	T	W	TH	F
			**1	2
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

Oct. 6 - Inservice/Early Release Day

Oct. 8 - AHS Conferences

Oct. 9 - Conferences, AHS Early Release

Oct. 13 - Columbus Day - No School

Oct. 15 - BBES Conferences

Oct. 16 - Conference, BBES Early Release

Oct. 22 - WES Conferences

Oct. 23 - Conferences, WES Early Release

January (19)

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

Jan. 1-2 - No School

Jan. 13 - Inservice/Early Release Day

Jan. 19 - Martin Luther King Day - No School

Jan. 29 - AEEP Conferences

Jan. 30 - AEEP Conferences

April (17)

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

April 20 - Spring Vacation Begins

November (16)

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

Nov. 4 - Teacher Inservice - No School

Nov. 5 - AMS Conferences

Nov. 6 - Conferences, AMS Early Release

Nov. 11 - Veterans' Day Observed - No School

Nov. 26 - Early Release Day

Nov. 27 & 28 - Thanksgiving - No School

February (15)

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

Feb. 5 - Inservice/Early Release Day

Feb. 16 - Winter Vacation Begins

May (20)

M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

May 25 - Memorial Day - No School

May 28 - Inservice/Early Release Day

*Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown September 22nd - School in session

**Yom Kippur begins at sundown October 1st - School in session

*** Good Friday April 3rd - School in session

School Hours	Early Release Hours	Early Release Days
AEEP - 8:20-10:55am, 11:35am-2:10pm	AEEP - 8:20-10:55am, No PM Session	9/18 10/6 10/9 - AHS
BBES - 9:00am-3:05pm	BBES - 9:00am-12:00pm	10/16 - BBES 10/23 - WES 11/6 - AMS
WES - 8:40am-2:45pm	WES - 8:40-11:40am	11/26 12/8 12/23
AMS - 7:50am-2:22pm	AMS - 7:50-11:10am	1/13 2/5 3/11
AHS - 7:25am-1:57pm	AHS - 7:25-10:46am	5/28 Last Day of School
Teacher Conferences	Open Houses	Progress Reported in ASPEN
AEEP - 1/29 5-7pm, 1/30 8:00-10:45am	BBES - 8/25 3-5pm	BBES & WES - 12/5, 3/20, TBA
BBES - 10/15 5-7pm, 10/16 1-3:15pm	WES - 8/25 3:30-5:30pm	AMS - 10/10, 12/5, 1/22, 3/20, 4/30, TBA
WES - 10/22 5-7pm, 10/23 12:45-3pm	AMS - 8/25 4:30-6:30pm	AHS - 10/3, 11/7, 12/12, 1/23, 3/6, 4/10, 5/15, TBA
AMS - 11/5 5-7pm, 11/6 12:05-2:20pm	AHS - 9/5 5-7pm	Other Important Dates
AHS - 10/8 5-7pm, 10/9 11:45am-2:00pm		AHS Grade 8 Family Night 11/5 6-7pm
		AHS Graduation - May 30, 2026



Scotland - Ireland Adventure

Grand Classroom is a full-service educational travel provider offering teacher-led student trips to National Parks, Historic U.S cities, and international destinations.

Inclusions:

- All transportation - airfare and motorcoach with full time professional driver including inter-trip flight
- Custom-built, private itinerary for AHS
- Full-time local bilingual Grand Classroom guide
- All meals - including lunches
- All lodging - 1 student per bed - 1 teachers per room
- All activity fees with additional local specialist guides as needed and admissions on final itinerary
- Third party vendor gratuities, Grand Classroom guide and driver tips
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- Expert tour planning
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- Full accounting services with custom payment schedules available
- Local, on-call, Grand Classroom consultant for meetings, student presentations, and support as requested by school

Proposal created by Gregg Wachtelhausen - 10/31/24

School: Abington High School

Destination: Scotland and Ireland Adventure

All-inclusive pricing:

February Vacation: \$4,103

April Vacation: \$4,775

(Based on 20 -24 students)

Chaperone Ratio: 1:7

Travelers have the option to enroll in additional "Travel Refund Programs" at registration.
See Terms and Conditions for TRP program details.

Students register online by visiting www.grandclassroom.com
-Click "Find my Trip/Register and search for your school name-

Sample Itinerary

Travel Day:	Day Two:	Day Three:	Day Four:	Day Five:	Day Six:	Day Seven:
• Overnight flight from Boston to Edinburgh, Scotland Day One: • Morning arrival in Edinburgh • Meet Grand Classroom guide • Orientation and city sights to recover from your flight • Visit Palace of Holyrood House and Royal Mile • Welcome dinner • Check into hotel	• Tour Edinburgh Castle and learn about the history of this stronghold • Tour Edinburgh Dungeon • Camera Obscura and the World of Illusions Museum • Go underground and explore Mary King's Close • Dinner as a group • Return to hotel	• Edinburgh city history touring - Surgeon's Hall Museum and more • Climb to the top of the ancient volcano known as Arthur's Seat for exceptional views of the city • Dinner as a group • Night ghost tour of the vaults under Edinburgh • Return to hotel	• Morning flight from Edinburgh to Dublin, Ireland • Dublin orientation and city touring with your guide • City sightseeing with your guide • Dublin Zoo • Dinner as a group • Check into hotel	• Enjoy the Irish countryside with a trip by rail to the harbor village of Howth • Meet the locals and hike along the coastal cliffs • Return to Dublin to enjoy a pub meal with an evening of traditional Irish music and dance • Return to hotel	• Learn about the Irish and American connection at EPIC Irish Emigration Museum • Explore ancient Ireland in the River Boyne Valley - Bru na Boinne and Newrags ruins and tomb sites • Farewell dinner • Return to hotel	• Morning tour the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin • Additional sights around Dublin flights times allow • Say "Goodbye" to your Grand Classroom guides • Fly back home for early evening arrival





/ EDUCATIONAL
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CHARTING THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

9 or 12 days | Quito | Santa Cruz Island | Isabela Island | San Cristóbal Island | Extension to Riobamba

The Galápagos Islands are most famous for the profound discoveries of Charles Darwin. Carry on that scientific tradition as you learn about the unique species that call the islands home. On mainland Ecuador, experience the local culture in Quito, where Independence Plaza and the Intiñan Museum provide social context to the biological wonders of this fascinating country.

YOUR EXPERIENCE INCLUDES



Full-time Tour Director



Sightseeing: 2 sightseeing tours led by your Tour Director; comprehensive sightseeing of natural attractions



Entrances: Compañía de Jesús church; Intiñan Museum; Charles Darwin Research Station; artisan's workshop; *with extension:* Devil's Cauldron Waterfall; community visit in Riobamba; Chimborazo Volcano.



Personalized learning guide: Our personalized learning experience engages students before, during, and after tour, with the option to create a final, reflective project for academic credit.



All of the details are covered: Round-trip flights on major carriers; comfortable motorcoach; internal flights; boat; 7 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms (10 with extension); breakfast and dinner daily; lunch on days 3–6



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And the experience begins long before you get your passport stamped and meet your Tour Director in your arrival city. It begins the moment you decide to go. Whether it's connecting with other travelers on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, or delving deeper into your destinations with our personalized learning experience, the excitement will hit you long before you pack your suitcase.

When your group arrives abroad, everything is taken care of so you can relax and enjoy the experience. Your full-time Tour Director is with your group around the clock, handling local transportation, hotels, and meals while also providing their own insight into the local history and culture. Expert local guides will lead your group on sightseeing tours, providing detailed views on history, art, architecture, or anything you may have a question about.

When your journey is over and you're unpacking your suitcase at home, you'll realize the benefits of your life-changing experience do not end. They have just begun.

@EFtours I attribute my college semester abroad to the love for travel I discovered on an EF Tour in high school #traveltuesday

— MELISSA, TRAVELER



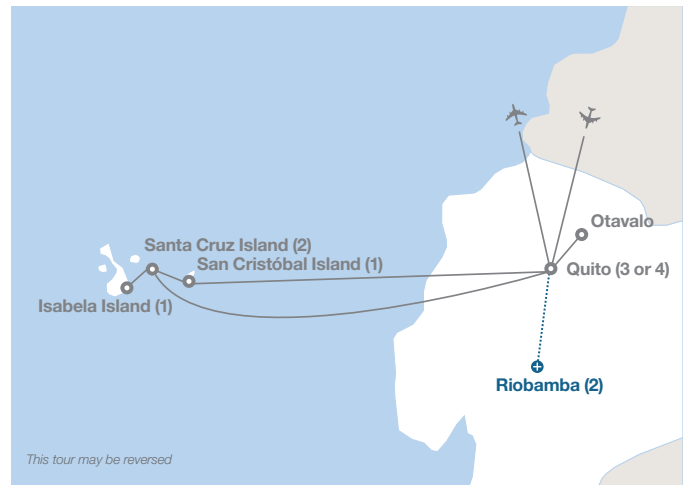
Via Twitter



CHECK OUT WHAT A TOUR IS ALL ABOUT

Watch the videos at
[eftours.com/](https://www.ef-tours.com/)

Your teacher's Tour Website



Learn from your Tour Director
and expert local guides



Via Instagram

What your tour could look like

Day 1: Fly to Ecuador

- Meet your Tour Director at the airport in Quito. The Ecuadorian capital is carved into a narrow plateau high above the Andean valleys, beneath the peaks of the Pichincha Volcano.

Day 2: Quito

- Take a tour of Quito: Independence Plaza; Government Palace.
- Visit the Compañía de Jesús church.
- Take an excursion to the equatorial line. If you've ever wanted to stand in both hemispheres at the same time, this is your chance.
- Visit the Intiñan Museum, where you'll discover how the Incas determined the middle of the Earth.

Day 3: Quito | Baltra Island | Santa Cruz Island

- Fly to Baltra Island.
- Travel to Santa Cruz Island.
- Visit the Twin Craters.
- Visit a tortoise ranch in the Santa Cruz Highlands to see wild tortoises.
- Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and see the breeding center for giant tortoises from which the islands took their name.

Day 4: Santa Cruz Island | Isabela Island

- Continue on to Isabela Island, the largest of the Galápagos Islands. In 1959, the archipelago was declared a national park in order to protect the flora and fauna that Charles Darwin observed while formulating his theory of evolution. Critical to his studies were the islands' iguanas, penguins, flightless cormorants, and 13 species of finches, whose beak sizes and shapes provided invaluable insights into the process he called natural selection.
- Take an excursion to a pink flamingo habitat.
- Visit a tortoise breeding center.
- Enjoy a snorkeling activity where you'll see animals like sea turtles, sea lions, and exotic fish. You'll also participate in a boat excursion that brings you to the Tintorerías Islet, made entirely out of lava. While exploring Tintorerías, you'll view large colonies of black marine iguanas.

Day 5: Isabela Island | Santa Cruz Island

- Travel to Santa Cruz Island.
- Enjoy a hike in Tortuga Bay.
- Visit the Playa de los Alemanes.

Day 6: San Cristóbal Island

- Travel by boat to San Cristóbal Island.
- Visit the San Cristóbal Interpretation Center.
- Hike up Tijeretas Hill.
- Enjoy a snorkeling activity and take a coastal walk on La Lobería beach.

Day 7: San Cristóbal Island | Quito

- Enjoy free time on San Cristóbal Island.
- Fly to Quito.

Day 8: Quito | Otavalo | Depart for home

- Visit the market town of Otavalo. Surrounded by the Imbabura, Cotacachi, and Mojanda volcanoes, Otavalo is a small farming town known for its textiles. Otavaleña women traditionally wear lace blouses with dark skirts and a colored band around their waists. You'll have the opportunity to shop for handmade goods and other souvenirs crafted by the area's local residents at one of the largest craft markets in the country. And don't think that handicrafts are the only thing you'll find here—you can purchase anything from musical instruments to a meal. Plus, the market offers a unique glimpse into traditional Andean culture, as locals have frequented the markets for hundreds of years.
- Learn how local families create ponchos during a demonstration of the craft.
- Travel to the airport for your overnight flight home.

Day 9: Arrive home

3-DAY TOUR EXTENSION

Day 9: Quito | Riobamba

- Travel to Riobamba via Banos.
- Climb the winding staircase alongside the massive Devil's Cauldron waterfall. Be prepared to get wet!

Day 10: Riobamba | Guamote

- Take a day trip to Guamote.
- Participate in cultural exchange activities with the local community.

Day 11: Riobamba | Chimborazo | Quito | Depart for home

- Experience Ecuador's wealth of volcanic history with a visit to the Chimborazo volcano.
- Travel to Quito.

Day 12: Arrive home



This trip made me infinitely more confident about my Spanish speaking and listening capabilities. Seeing Ecuador and the Galápagos like this is truly a once in a lifetime opportunity.

– CAMERON, TRAVELER

“ Tour review

This trip to Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands was unexpectedly amazing. Our Tour Director was excellent and handled all aspects of our trip with grace and expertise. I loved trying new foods thanks to our tour guides who helped us select new fruits and other items.

– KRISTEN, TRAVELER

“ Tour review

TOP THREE THINGS I WILL SEE, DO, TRY, OR EXPLORE

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

— The easiest ways to —

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My daughter has gained such an amazing view of the world and history from this experience. She has not stopped talking since I picked her up at the airport. Thank you for all the organization, helpful hints, flexible payment plan, and knowledgeable tour guides.

—CHARLOTTE, PARENT OF TRAVELER

“ Tour review

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