Dear seventh grade students and parents,

Welcome to a new school year. I am very excited to begin the year and I look forward to an enriching experience for all involved. I look forward to working with each student so that we may create a year filled with growth, learning, and accomplishments. I will encourage all students to set goals and focus on organization so that they may do their best. Please remember that it takes the effort of the entire team: students, parents, community, and teachers to fulfill these experiences. All students are expected to be honest and take responsibility for their own learning.

Overview:

The Humanities program will include the elements of language arts and social studies. Students should report to class with the necessary supplies - pencil, paper, books, assignments, etc. - each day. Assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are due.

Language arts will include: reading, grammar, writing, etc. All formal writing will be completed using M.L.A. style format, which students will be introduced to. We will be using the "Writer's Workshop" as the basis for our writing work this year. Novels that will be read this year, in no particular order, will include: Nothing but the Truth, The Outsiders, and The Giver. Additionally, an abridged version of Homer's Odyssey will be read when the class starts the section on ancient Greece. I am asking that students NOT read the novels (or watch any available movies) outside of class or in advance (unless assigned) as it causes problems with lessons and forces students to keep "secrets" about the story, which never works out.

Social studies will include: history, geography, citizenship, economics, etc. Students will start the year with a short unit that covers local history - how the area was settled and grew. We will then cover early river civilizations, ancient Greece and Rome, Medieval Europe, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and the Renaissance and Reformation. Specific guidelines for each assignment, novel, or project will be explained fully in class and any appropriate rubrics provided.

We will be using internet resources as much as possible. Web Quests will be used in language arts and social studies to instruct students on ways to identify reliable resources (just because it's on the internet doesn't mean it's true), gain access to a broader range of information, and to sharpen students' technical skills.

Web site:
The class website can be found at: https://sites.google.com/site/mrbehrenslanguagearts/
I will try to keep it up to date. A copy of this document as well as school forms for emergency consent and medical orders can also be found on the page.

There are five basic classroom rules:

1. Please respect each other, the teacher, yourself, and the classroom.
2. Please raise your hand when you would like to speak.
3. Please have all materials ready to use and homework completed at the beginning of each class. (All work is to be completed in an acceptable way; sloppy writing, partially done assignments, work that shows little effort will receive little or no credit and may be returned to be redone. Any plagiarized work will receive a zero grade, be ineligible for correction, and may involve other disciplinary action.)

4. Please keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.

5. Please be kind, polite, and helpful during class.

* Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines plagiarism as: "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; use (another's production) without crediting the source. To commit literary theft."

Daily Schedule:
Our class each day will consist of 60 to 80 minutes - depending on the daily schedule we are following - of instructional time. While we will fully integrate the language arts and social studies curriculum, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will be primarily devoted to language arts and Thursday and Friday will focus on social studies.

Progress Reports:
Progress reports are sent home by the school every three weeks.

Absences:
We need students to be in school every day! If you are absent, you will be responsible for making up any missed work. I will NOT find you and give you your assignments. It is the student's responsibility to check for missed assignments immediately upon returning to class after an absence. All students have one day to complete missed work for each day they were absent. If a project is due during an absence, it will be due the day you return to school. NO EXCUSES. Any work missed due to an unexcused absence will be accepted at the discretion of the teacher and will receive a minimum twenty-five percent reduction if it is accepted.

Grading:
Homework, class work, worksheets, projects, binders, tests, quizzes, and class participation will all factor into each student's grades.

Late work is UNACCEPTABLE and will receive a grade of 0, but all assignments must be completed.

Basic Daily Supplies:
Please secure these items as soon as possible:
(1) 2" to 3" inch 3 ring binder with 5 divider tabs - this will stay in the classroom
(1) Journal notebook - This notebook MUST be 8 1/2" x 11" college lined (NO 8 x 10's allowed)
Loose-leaf, 8 1/2" x 11" college lined paper
(1) Two Pocket solid color folder with grommets for clasping permanent data.
#2 Pencils
Post-It notes
I am asking each student to bring at least one box of tissues for use in the classroom. Any other school related consumable supplies are always welcome.
Syllabus Receipt Confirmation Form

Please sign and return this sheet to indicate that the 2013-14 Seventh Grade Humanities Syllabus for Mr. Behrens’ class has been read and understood. It must be signed and returned by Friday, August 24, 2013 to receive 5 bonus points.

Please remove and keep the syllabus portion.

Students Name: ___________________________________ ______

Please Print

_________________________________    ______________ _

Student Signature                Date

_________________________________    ______________ _

Parent/Guardian Signature                Date