



**INTERNATIONAL
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL**

English Language Arts Handbook: 2026-2027

Department Chair: **Geeta Tupps**



"Wanderer Above a Sea of Fog", Casper David Friedrich, 1818

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Introduction to ELA

Welcome to the English Language Arts Department at ICS. This Subject Handbook is designed to provide an overview of the English Language Arts Department's policies, procedures, and curriculum. It serves as a guide for teachers, students, and parents to ensure a cohesive and effective learning environment.

ELA Department Vision and Mission

Vision

To instill within all students a love of reading and writing, an appreciation for the stories unique to different peoples, places and cultures, and a belief in the power of literature to help shape ourselves, each other and the world around us.

Mission

To grow within each child an awareness of themselves, others and the world around them so that, when they leave ICS, they do so with the ability to read, write, listen, and speak with clarity, authenticity, integrity, open-mindedness, and purpose.

Secondary Department Faculty by Course

Middle School Courses	Grade	Teacher
Grade 6 English Language Arts	6	Cora Mak, Denny Yau
Grade 7 English Language Arts	7	Denny Yau, Elizabeth Bennett
Grade 8 English Language Arts	8	Cora Mak

High School Courses	Grade	Teacher
English Language Arts I	9	Ji Eun Chung
English Language Arts II	10	Ji Eun Chung, Amos McIntosh
College Writing	11	Ashley Nation
English Language Arts III	11, 12	Geeta Tupps
AP Eng. Lang. and Comp.	11, 12	Amos McIntosh
AP Seminar	11, 12	Ashley Nation
English Language Arts IV	12	Geeta Tupps
AP Eng. Lit. and Comp.	12	Geeta Tupps

ICS Teaching & Learning Philosophy

ICS Standards

ICS has a standards-based approach to education. This means we have clear and objective targets (standards) for learning in every subject, at every grade level. In the liberal arts (Math, Science and the Humanities) we emphasise the importance of knowledge, which is the basis for much of what we call 'skills'. In the creative arts (Music, Art and Drama) we emphasise the quality of both technique and interpretation. In Physical Education and Health we develop standards of physical capacity and skill.

Assessing learning of these standards is achieved by the use of proficiency rubrics, which clearly delineate a continuum from 'below standard' to 'approaching standard' to 'meeting standard' to 'exceeding standard'. Both formative and summative assessments are appropriate to the subject-specific standards.

Theology is the "Queen of the Sciences", and so the Bible has the pre-eminent place in our curriculum, training students in a Biblical worldview and understanding of the 'whole counsel of God'.

ICS Teaching & Learning Principles

- The Bible is our final authority in all matters of faith and conduct
- We use evidence-based practice founded on good cognitive science
- Optimal learning is knowledge-based and teacher-directed
- The teaching cycle: explicit instruction, modelling, practice, feedback
- The essence of a liberal arts education is deep reading, thinking, writing and discussion, in pursuit of goodness, truth and beauty, through Socratic dialogue
- We prioritise the known benefits of physical reading and handwriting
- We prepare students to operate effectively in a dual-modal society: departmental handbooks outline where digital technology is effective in enhancing learning, and our curriculum policy details education in digital literacy
- ICS partners with parents in mitigating the harms associated with screen-based childhood and learning, including our policies on homework and device-use

ICS Assessment

Formative assessment refers to a variety of methods teachers use to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their teaching and of students' academic progress over time. Formative feedback to students aims to help students understand where they are at with their learning, where it is they should be aiming for, and how to take next steps towards mastery of particular learning.

Summative assessments are assessments used to evaluate students' proficiency against ICS Standards in a particular unit, semester, or course. These assessments 'count' towards final grades on which ICS reports in Semester One and Semester Two.

English Language Arts Curriculum

The English Language Arts' (ELA) curriculum at ICS is dedicated to cultivating students into thoughtful readers, compelling writers, and articulate critical thinkers. We believe ELA is essential for understanding the human condition, grappling with complex ideas, and communicating with clarity and power. Our purpose is to provide a high-quality, rigorous education, building foundations for understanding the world through profound literature, sophisticated literary analysis, and guided research.

Our learning standards across every grade level are backward-designed from the Advanced Placement (AP) framework, ensuring that students are prepared for the highest levels of collegiate study. Our foundational work deliberately leads toward success in the AP English Literature and Composition and AP English Language and Composition exams.

Beyond these core disciplines, we offer specialized courses in High School, including English Language Arts III, English Language Arts IV, and College Writing, all designed to further hone the skills necessary for lifetime learning and effective citizenship.

Through the study of diverse voices, challenging texts, and the craft of writing, ICS ELA equips students not just to pass exams, but to read between the lines, think beyond the surface, and shape the conversation.

For a copy of the scope and sequence documents for any of the courses below – which outline in detail the content, timing, and assessment of each course – please speak to the department chair or class teacher for a copy.

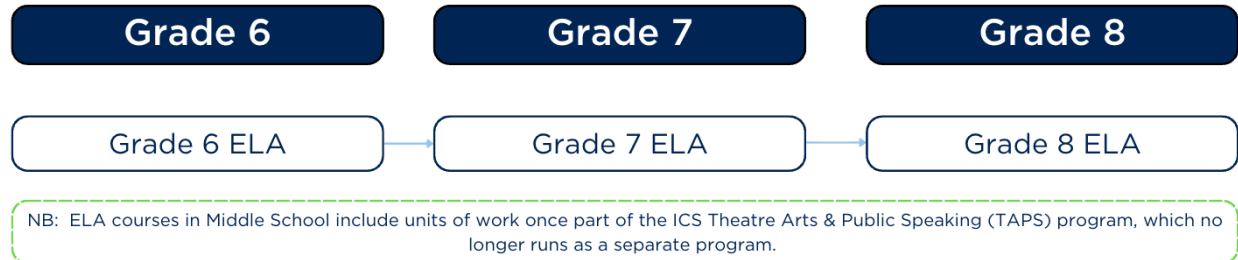
Middle School Courses	Grade
Grade 6 English Language Arts	6
Grade 7 English Language Arts	7
Grade 8 English Language Arts	8
High School Courses	Grade
English Language Arts I	9
English Language Arts II	10
College Writing	11
English Language Arts III	11
English Language Arts IV	12
AP Eng. Lang. and Comp.	11, 12
AP Seminar	11, 12
AP Eng. Lit. and Comp.	12

Note: For more information about each course in the ELA Curriculum, please read the following:

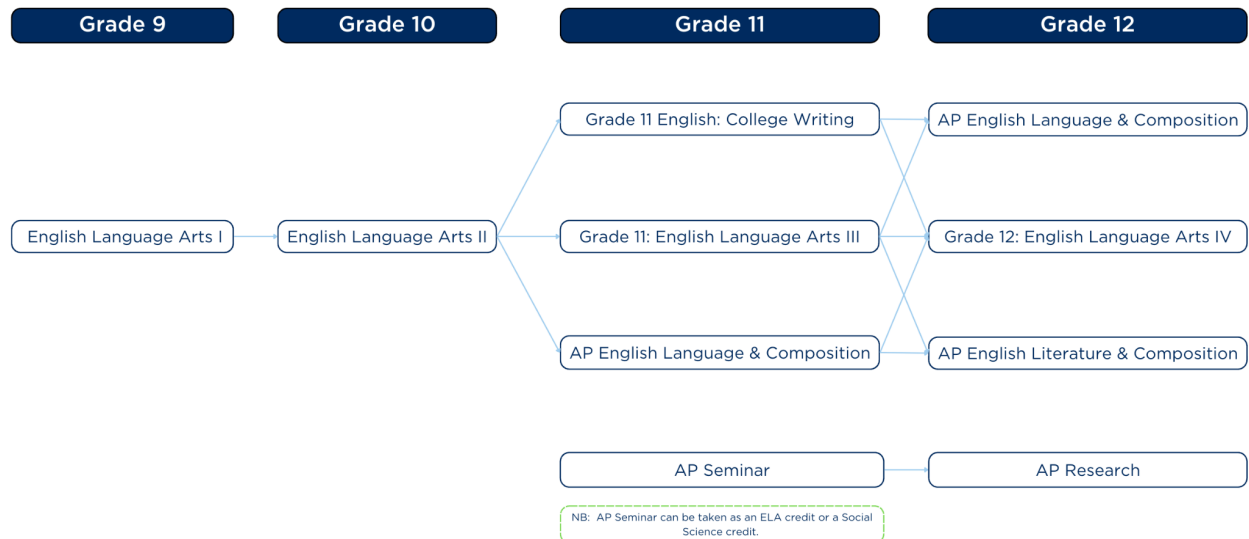
1. MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE GUIDE 2026/27

ELA Course Pathways Grades 6 - 12

Middle School Course Pathways



High School Course Pathways



School & ELA Department Policies

General Classroom Practice

Hard-copy course textbooks and novels are maintained in the library and classrooms.

Students maintain ELA notebooks which must be brought to every lesson.

Teachers are responsible for communicating Unit Rubrics at the beginning of every unit to students and parents; teachers will provide formative feedback on every formative assessment relevant to the Unit Rubric.