

**Humanities and Communication Magnet Program
Eastern Middle School
300 University Boulevard, East
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901**

June 2020

Welcome 6th Grade Students to a new year of middle school in the Humanities Communication Magnet program. Our team is confident that you made an excellent choice, and are excited that your middle school journey will begin with us. You have a talented set of teachers prepared to deliver an enriching curriculum this year. As a team we work hard to make our ever-evolving curriculum integrated, project-based, and rigorous while supporting you to meet success. We also pride ourselves in being available to help with any questions or concerns you have as you move through your 6th grade year. We want to be helpful in helping your transition to middle school be as smooth as possible, focusing on academics as well as your social-emotional well being. As you read through the bios, copy down the emails and do not hesitate to reach out with any question you have no matter how small. As you read through the assignments and work to complete them this summer, remember you can email us with any questions you have. We look forward to meeting you in the Fall. There will be 6th grade orientation Zooms that you will hear about in upcoming weeks. Please sign up to attend an orientation session to better prepare for your 6th grade year.

Sincerely
Your 6th Grade Humanities Team,

Tanya Rowe
Humanities English/Team Leader
Tanya.M.Rowe@mcpsmd.net



Alicia Hall
Humanities World Studies Teacher
Alicia.M.Hall@mcpsmd.net



Michelle Ray
Humanities Literature Teacher
Michelle.Ray@mcpsmd.net



Nicholas Towson
Humanities Media Teacher
Nicholas_P_Towson@mcpsmd.org



Meet Your 6th Grade Teachers

Alicia Hall

Humanities World Studies

alicia.m.hall@mcpsmd.net

Greetings! My name is Ms. Hall and I will be your World Studies teacher at Eastern next year! This coming fall is the start of my 18th year teaching Social Studies in MCPS and my third year teaching 6th grade Humanities World Studies at Eastern. Our class will trace and analyze the development of several ancient civilizations in the Eastern Hemisphere. We will examine how geographic characteristics, political systems, social systems, and economic systems shape human societies. We will also explore modern events and trends in relation to past patterns in world history. I plan to spend the summer gardening, reading a lot of sci-fi, and tinkering with a sourdough starter. I can't wait to hear about your summer adventures when we meet in a couple months. I am so excited to work with all of you!

Michelle Ray

Humanities Literature

Michelle_Ray@mcpsmd.org

Hello! I'm Mrs. Ray, the Literature teacher. I usually spend my summers traveling, visiting family and friends, and directing musicals at a sleep away camp. This year, I bought a hammock where I hope to watch plays online, and read & listen to great books. I'm an author with several books in print, and I'm in the middle of a few manuscripts, so I look forward to writing, too. I'm learning to bake, which is fun, and actually started exercising. Silver linings! I look forward to reading fantastic books with you and exploring new ways of writing and thinking. I can't wait to meet you all!

Tanya Rowe

Humanities English

Tanya.M.Rowe@mcpsmd.net

Greetings students,

I am looking forward to this 2020-2021 school year. It is a joy to be in my thirteenth year at Eastern Middle School. Sixth grade is such a fun year with many great books and cool projects and opportunities. In English, we will work as teams, have in depth discussions, and analyze literature through writing. Our books and discussions will be integrated within the other Humanities classes providing you an opportunity to really delve into the subject matter. This summer I will spend time re-planning my trips from this year.

Nicholas Towson

Humanities Media

Nicholas_P_Towson@mcpsmd.org

Happy summer everyone! My name is Mr. Towson and this is my 8th year working at Eastern Middle school, and my 13th year teaching. I am excited to be your Media teacher for the 2020-2021 school year. This summer I will be spending a lot of time preparing for our upcoming school year but also spending a lot of time with my wife and two sons Grant and Jake. Grant is six and Jake will be five in September. This summer we are going to go to the beach, hopefully play at the pool, and do all sorts of exciting day ventures, like going to the zoo. I am really excited to get to know all of you this school year. I hope you all have a great summer and are energized and excited for Humanities Media 6!

Summer Assignment
World Studies in the Humanities
Ms. Hall-- Alicia.M.Hall@mcpsmd.net

There are two Humanities World Studies 6 summer assignments. The first can be done at any time this summer. The second should be completed after you finish reading [Gathering Blue](#). Both assignments can be submitted via Google Forms. Google will send you a copy of your answers. Please remember what email address you used to complete the form and do not delete the message from Google as it will allow you to edit your responses. You may edit your responses until the due dates pass.

Assignment 1: (R) My Artifact Project, Part I (9 pts)

Part of the process of forming a learning community will be to get to know each other's backgrounds and philosophies. One of the activities designed to facilitate that process is our "My Artifact" Project. **Artifacts are objects made or modified by people. They provide evidence about past and present societies.** The project task is to select a personal artifact, provide background information about it, explain why you selected it to represent you, and tell what people can learn about present-day life through your artifact.

You will begin this project this summer by selecting an artifact that represents you and answering some background questions about it. Part I of the My Artifact Project is due on the fifth day of class (Friday, 9/4). There will be a reminder on the first day of class (Monday, 8/31) that the completed assignment is due at the end of the week. When work is submitted late, there is a letter grade/10% off penalty. The deadline for this assignment is the first day of the second week of school (Tuesday, 9/8). In addition to avoiding the late penalty, you will want to submit your work on time (9/4) so that you can receive my feedback on Part I before Part II is due.

The (R) in the title means that this assignment is eligible for reassessment. A reteaching activity may be required.

(R) My Artifact, Part I Directions

Step 1: Find an artifact that represents you.

Remember:

- 1) Artifacts are objects made or modified by people. Do not select naturally occurring substances.
Examples: works of art, tools, clothing, furniture, toys
Non-examples: driftwood, a dinosaur fossil, beach sand
- 2) Artifacts provide evidence about past and present societies. Artifacts are not necessarily old. The new objects that we use in our everyday life such as a plastic tortilla press, a hair dryer, or a house key are all artifacts.

The artifact you select must tell your story. It has to do at least one of the following:

- Be evidence from a past or current important event in your life.
- Symbolize a personality trait, “superpower” (special skill or talent), or another key characteristic about you.
- Help you bridge your family’s or community’s past and the present.
- Express your cultural background. Remember, culture can be ethnicity, language, regional, religious, fandom, or other aspects of what makes you part of a larger group

You may use a physical object or an image of your artifact (such as a photograph or hand drawing). If you bring a physical object make sure that it is not a prohibited item in school and that it is not something that you (or your parents) would be upset if lost or damaged. Best practices:

- Ask your parents’ permission before bringing in an item that is expensive, fragile, or irreplaceable.
- Use a photograph of expensive, fragile, or irreplaceable items. Some of the best artifacts the last two years were copies of old photos of objects.

Use this checklist BEFORE moving on to Step 2:

- Yes No The object is human-made or modified by humans.
- Yes No I can bring this object or an image of it to school.
- Yes No The object tells my story.
- Yes No I am comfortable sharing this artifact and the related info about myself with classmates.

If you answered “Yes” to all four questions, move on to step 2. If you answered “No” to any of the questions above, select a different artifact.

Step 2: Answer the Background Questions. Be as specific as possible. It is okay to ask a family member or a trusted expert for some of the answers. You may also estimate and infer. An inference is “a statement about the unknown based on the known.”

ANSWER QUESTION A

A. What is your artifact?

If you do not know exactly what it is called, you can describe it in a general way.

Ex. *It's a Gocomma PS4 Bluetooth Controller.*

Ex. *It is a gele --a traditional Nigerian headwrap.*

Ex. *It's a type of percussion instrument from Rwanda.*

ANSWER AT LEAST FIVE of the following seven descriptive questions (B-I)

B. Dimensions (How big is your artifact?)

Ex. *It's 5"x7".*

Ex. *It's roughly the size of a large chicken egg.*

C. Materials (What is it made of?)

You can be specific (*mudcloth, jade, pine*) or more general (*cloth, stone, wood*) based on the information you have.

Ex. *It is made of plastic.*

Ex. *It is made of silver and turquoise.*

D. Does your artifact have any writing or symbols on it? If so, what do these mean?

If there's no writing or symbols, respond “None.” It's okay to say that you do not know the meaning of any writings or symbols.

Ex. *There's a sankofa bird carved on it. This bird is an Akan symbol that means "go back to the past and bring forward that which is useful."*

Ex. *The Caps logo is printed on the front of the jersey. The back is printed with the name Ovechkin and the number 8. On the 8 is Alex Ovechkin's autograph.*

E. How old is the artifact? How do you know?

Ex. *This kiddush cup is 70 years old according to my grandfather. His parents received it as a wedding gift in June 1949.*

Ex. *A friend made this bracelet for me at sleepaway camp when I was in ES. I don't remember the exact year, but it was either 2017 or 2018 so it might be two years old.*

F. Who made it? Do you know anything about the creator?

Ex. *This doll was made by an unknown craftsperson in my mom's childhood village in the Dominican Republic. Most of the "Faceless Doll" makers are older women using skills passed down from generation to generation.*

Ex. *I made this BTS concert sign with my sister. We were fifth and seventh graders.*

G. Where was it made?

Ex. *This t-shirt was made in a factory in China.*

Ex. *My mom knitted this blanket at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring while I was in the NICU.*

H. What is its purpose?

Ex. *This app beeps to remind me when to pray and shows me the direction to face.*

Ex. *These goggles protect my eyes during a competition.*

Sometimes people repurpose an object (use it for a different purpose than it was originally designed to fulfill.) If your object is repurposed, you may include both an original or intended purpose and why you actually use the object.

Ex. *Before my parents immigrated, my mother used this mortar and pestle to grind dried chili peppers, cardamom seed, cloves, and other spices she cooked with. Now my family just uses it for decoration to remind us of Ethiopia.*

Ex. *Back in the 1960s, NASA engineers would have used computer punch cards to store and access information, but I use it as a bookmark to motivate my dreams of studying computer science in college.*

I. Is there anything distinctive, unique, or surprising about the artifact?

Ex. *This box has the distinctive fragrance of sandalwood.*

Ex. *This penny is unique because of its repunched mint mark.*

Ex. *Although this saree is over seven yards of cotton fabric, it is surprisingly lightweight.*

Click [here](#) to see an exemplar that I made for my own artifact.

Submit your answers for grading using the [My Artifact Project, Part I](#) Google Form (click the hyperlink). There will also be an option to upload an image of the artifact.

If you are unable to do your work online, you may print out [this copy of the form](#) and hand write your answers. Bring your completed hard copy to class on the due date.

Assignment 2: Annotated Glossary (15 pts)

This summer you are reading Lois Lowry's novel [Gathering Blue](#). You can click the hyperlink to access a pdf version of the book. Complete the assignment below in preparation for the first unit of Humanities World Studies 6. It is **due** on the second day of class (Tuesday, 9/1). There will be a reminder on the first day of class (Monday, 8/31) that the completed assignment is due the next day. When work is submitted late, there is a letter grade/10% off penalty. The **deadline** for this assignment is the Friday of the second week of school (9/11).

Annotated Glossary Directions

Gathering Blue illustrates several social studies concepts ("big ideas") that we will study this year. They will be a part of the academic language we use in learning activities and assessments. To help you prepare to work with 10 of these concepts, you will create an annotated glossary.

Step 1: Using a dictionary (online or print) of your choosing, look up the following terms and **write their definitions *in your own words***.

Two tips:

- The terms you are defining may have multiple meanings, even within the context of social studies. For example, occupation has both a political and an economic meaning. A political meaning of occupation is "the possession of an area by a military force." I am looking for the economic meaning. Another example is artisan which can be either a noun or an adjective. A meaning of artisan as an adjective is "a high-quality product that is often made by hand in small quantities using traditional methods." I want you to provide the definition for the noun.
- Be sure to paraphrase sufficiently or you will lose points. I suggest using the free [Plagiarism Checker](#) offered by Grammarly.com to verify that your paraphrased definition is not too similar to the dictionary's.

Step 2: For each term, **provide at least ONE example from *Gathering Blue***. Whenever possible use a direct quote and include the page number(s). However, you may paraphrase rather than quoting and synthesize key information if the related text is lengthy.

Two tips:

- The term will probably not appear verbatim in the text of *Gathering Blue*. Lowry might have used a synonym. You will need to have a good definition to help
- The concept might be implied, rather than directly stated. You may have to dig deep and use a social studies literacy skill called “close reading” to find the concept.

I have provided TWO concepts as an exemplar so you can see what I’m looking for. Your entries for concepts #3-12 will be assessed.

Social Studies Concept	Definition (in my own words)	Example from <i>Gathering Blue</i>
1) natural resource	<i>Something found in nature that can be used by people to make the things that they need or want.</i>	<i>“Bedstraw,” she said, pointing to a tall plant massed with golden blossoms. The roots give good read. Madder’s better for reds, though. There’s my madder over behind.” She pointed again, and Kira saw a sprawling, weedy plant in a raised bed. —p.91</i>
2) technology	<i>The use of knowledge to create processes or tools to solve problems.</i>	<i>The smell of the liquid was terrible. Annabella laughed, a delighted cackle. “Got you a guess?” Kira shook her head. She couldn’t imagine what was in the foul-smelling container or what its origin might be. Annabella replaced the lid, still laughing. “You save it and age it good,” she said. “Then it brings the hue to life and sets it firm. —p.92</i>
3) human geographic features		

<p>4) occupation <i>*Be sure to use the <u>economic</u> meaning.</i></p>		
<p>5) social hierarchy</p>		
<p>6) kinship</p>		
<p>7) government</p>		

8) rule of law		
9) ritual		
10) artisan <i>*Be sure to provide the definition for the <u>noun</u>.</i>		
11) gender roles		

12) literacy		
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Submit your answers for grading using [the Annotated Glossary Google Form](#) (click the hyperlink). If you are unable to do your work online, you may print out the chart and hand write your answers. Bring your completed hard copy to class on the due date.

If you have questions about either of these two assignments, you may email me over the summer (alicia.m.hall@mcpsmd.net).

Summer Assignment
Literature in the Humanities
Mrs. Ray -- Michelle_Ray@mcpsmd.org

The purpose for reading **Gathering Blue** by Lois Lowry and completing this chart is to get you to think about the structure of the main character's society (how people organize themselves so they can live together). Because we do cross-curricular studies (meaning my class is connected to the other courses), I want you thinking about topics you will cover in English and World Studies.

The chart might have words that you don't know. If so, look them up! You might not know what to put in a section or two, and that's okay. Make your best guess. You will notice that the spaces are very small. This is intentional. **Please do *not* try to fit every bit of information in the little boxes. Full sentences are not needed. In most cases, bulleted information is better.**

I will look to see if you've put in some time and effort, and we will use this chart for discussion in groups and as a class upon your return. **Due on the 2nd day of school.**

If you need a copy of the book, click on this link to a [PDF of the book](#).

This chart is **ONLY** for **GATHERING BLUE**

Main characters	Main conflict	What makes the protagonist special?
What makes the antagonist so bad?	Family composition	Living quarters
Occupations – types, how decided	Technology	Rituals
Personal choice/freedom	Communication [How is it done?]	Punishment

Summer Assignment
Humanities English--Tanya.M.Rowe@mcpsmd.net

Integrated Text: This one text will be used for your summer assignment in Literature, English and World Studies: Please purchase the book *Gathering Blue*. Mrs. Ray and Ms. Hall also have links in their assignments that you can use.

1. Write me a friendly letter introducing yourself. I would love to hear all about you in this letter. Make it about a page typed. You can even include a picture, and any information you think I should know about you as you transition to middle school. Send your letter as an attachment to Tanya.M.Rowe@mcpsmd.net before the first day of school.
2. Decorate a composition book to serve as your warm up journal. Cover this journal with clear contact paper or a journal cover. This journal will be used all year in English. Include an original, creative title that represents you and at least five pictures on the cover that show who you are. Write your first and last name and period on the upper right hand corner in permanent marker. We will use these books on the first day of school in a get to know you activity.

Reading Assignment: Read *Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry.

Write an original poem in your poetry journal. Choose a theme that is featured in Gathering Blue. Write a poem that has the same theme. Include in your poem at least three examples of figurative language, a title, five stanzas, and an illustration of your poem (please color.) You can use the computer for pictures. Please label your figurative language with the type. You could use similes, onomatopoeia, metaphors, imagery, personification or other types of figurative language that you know.

All assignments are due on the first day of class and graded as homework assignments. All assignments submitted after the first week of school will lose 10%. The deadline is the Friday of the second week of school.

Summer Assignment
Humanities Media 6--Nicholas.P.Towson@mcpsmd.net

How Does Green Screen Work?



Directions: Answer the following questions accurately in sentence form using the provided link.

<http://www.videomaker.com/article/17026-how-does-green-screen-work>

1. What is the keying process? Explain how it works.

2. Why the color green? What other colors can be used? What is the biggest factor in terms of color?

3. What three basic tools are needed? How is it set up?

4. Why is proper lighting important?

5. Explain how to properly light a subject.

6. Why is it important to lock down your camera?

7. Why is it important to properly frame your subject and keep them in focus?

8. What is the best video footage ratio for keying? Explain.