

**Honors by Contract Pilot Program**  
**Department of Curriculum and Learning**  
*Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **English Language Arts**

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Honors by Contract** is embedded in a regular course curriculum and provides multiple opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for their learning. This deeper understanding of the course curriculum will help to prepare students for the advanced and rigorous course work offered in high school.

**Honors by Contract Components:**

1. **Honors by Contract Portfolio**- *During parent-teacher conferences, students will have a chance to share their work and accomplishments with their parents/guardians. Students will keep an HBC portfolio to share at conference time.*
2. **Individual Scholarly Quarter Projects**- *These projects are designed to give students rich experiences that will lead to problem seeking and problem solving. Students will personalize their learning by expressing and defending ideas, becoming reflective thinkers, and by using their creativity and imagination while implementing research skills.*
3. **Discovery Workshops**- *Through in-class writing and reader workshops, students will gain essential skills to be well-versed and well-crafted individuals. These workshops are opportunities to explore various writing modes and read advanced supplemental selections.*
4. **Socratic Seminars**- *This is a catalyst for lively discussion that lends to a deeper understanding of issues, themes and ideas. The seminar will provoke student's thoughts, promote dialogue and foster reflective and critical thinking.*
5. **Experiential Learning Opportunities**- *Students will seek and participate in at least one outside learning experience such as: competitions; contests; field experience; and/or written submissions for publication.*

**Curriculum based instruction throughout the course of the year will have differentiated, tiered lessons/assignments with rubrics that will have honors level expectations. Students will be expected to challenge themselves with this level of instruction. The classroom teacher will provide guidance and skill instruction with support from the Gifted and Talented Facilitator.**

*Explanation of component requirements on the back of this contract.*

**I am enrolling in the HONORS BY CONTRACT option for English Language Arts for the 2009-10 school year.**

***Student Expectations:*** I understand that Honors by Contract (HBC) will require rigorous and relevant work beyond grade level expectations. I will invest my time and energy into this class. I agree to complete the required components per quarter at a proficient or advanced level.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Parent Expectations:*** I agree to provide support for my child as they complete the requirements for the Honors by Contract (HBC). I will maintain positive communication with my child and the teacher.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Teacher Expectations:*** I agree to challenge and support the HBC student by providing meaningful, relevant and rigorous assignments and to provide the necessary instruction for success.

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Gifted and Talented facilitator support will be provided by: *Mrs. Linda Severin*

## English Language Arts Explanation of Component Requirements

### Honors by Contract Portfolio -

*The products produced in HBC via the following four components, will be kept and maintained by the students in a portfolio. During Parent-Teacher conferences, students will share examples of their work, demonstrate their accomplishments, and review the rubric feedback they have received.*

#### 1. Individual Scholarly Quarter Projects:

*\*Oral Presentation: (Quarter 1) Students will give an oral presentation to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the curriculum theme. This speech will introduce research skills and maximize their public speaking abilities to an authentic audience.*

*\*Multimedia Presentation/Exhibitions♦: (Quarter 2): Students will create a multi-media presentation. This visual product and/or interactive project will utilize current technology and research skills to show mastery of the quarter's theme.*

*\*Research Paper ♦: (Quarter 3)) Students will complete a research paper. This paper will require students to locate and retrieve information from a variety of primary and secondary sources. The topic will be agreed upon according to the curriculum based theme and student interest. The culmination of the research will be a written, structured paper that presents information gained through research. Skills learned through this paper will align with high school research expectations.*

*\*Project Design ♦: (Quarter 4) Students will integrate their talents, skills, and knowledge to design their own product exploring the current curricular theme.*

#### 2. Discovery Workshops:

*\*Writers' Workshop: Students will improve their writing craft by writing additional assignments in different modes, including: Descriptive, Narrative, Persuasive, Critical review, Creative (short story, poetry), Technical, and Expository (How To papers, problem/solution, compare/contrast, cause/effect). Throughout each quarter, HBC students will share and discuss their writing and revisions of the particular piece. Students will build and maintain a writing portfolio throughout the year. Writing outside of class will be an essential part of this component. The writing will be scored using rubrics and will focus on the 6-traits of writing.*

*\*Readers' Workshop: Students will select advanced supplemental reading to further explore content themes. The in-class workshop provides opportunities to share reciprocal reading strategies, explore themes, and evaluate individual reading progress. During the workshop, students will respond to their reading verbally and in writing. The workshops serve as sounding boards for students to discuss literary techniques, vocabulary, authorial intent, and universal ideas expressed in the reading selection. Students will be required to read and prepare for readers' workshop outside of class.*

#### 3. Socratic Seminars ♦:

*Students will participate in a discussion technique that will allow for rich analysis of a common text assigned by the teacher. Students will read and prepare open-ended high-level questions based on the text assigned. In a round-table format, students will pose questions and discuss elements to explore the text. Students will share different view points, support their opinions, and identify areas to agree and disagree. The seminar closes with a written reflection based on the discussion.*

#### 4. Experiential Learning Opportunities:

*Throughout the year competitions, contests, and opportunities will be made available for students to consider. Students will need to conference with the classroom teacher and GT facilitator for updated information.*

*♦ Strategies that provide rigor and relevance as identified in the International Center for Leadership in Education*