



JOSEPH KUSHNER HEBREW ACADEMY

RAE KUSHNER YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL

A LOOK AT LITERACY AND LITERATURE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Through a unit on non-fiction, students are delving into ways they can find relevant information and collect details to provide literary evidence for an analytical textual response. This week, students read about Malala, a crusader for the right to an education, and have been hard at work crafting a response using the Writing Revolution outline incorporated throughout all Humanities classes in the Middle School, from grades 5-8. With this unit as the framework, students incorporate Writing Revolution's careful, delineated steps in writing as they learn to develop strong topic and concluding sentences. In addition, students are practicing sentence expansion by recognizing and creating appositives and using "but," "because" and "so" to develop the sophistication of their writing. We will continue reading non-fiction pieces about important figures, such as Rosa Parks, MLK Jr., Anne Frank, and basketball player Damian Lillard; these pieces will serve as the basis for analysis for our written responses.

In seventh and eighth grades, students have started the school year ready to delve into the rich literary complexity of narrative arcs. Through the lens of selected short stories, students in sixth and seventh grade Language Arts explored the writer's craft in weaving literary tools into the evolution of a story. Building on prior exposure, students develop a deeper understanding of the commonalities among all stories and their impact on the reader. Specifically, in sixth grade, students analyzed the components of plot and how they work together. By identifying the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and denouement, the students prepared for their first novel study while practicing their inferencing and predicting skills. In seventh grade, through the study of theme, point of view and the impact of the author's employment of literary tools, the students cultivated an appreciation for the sub-text and the intricacy of language. We will continue to build on these foundational skills as we delve further into our rich literary and writing units throughout the year.