



FIND YOUR VOICE. SPEAK YOUR MIND.

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8th grade English is an examination of some of the issues around race in America. Our reading of *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Ellen Foster* and *Letter from Birmingham Jail* offers differing perspectives from different time periods and, therefore, ample opportunity to learn how to discuss these ideas both in lively discussion and in formal essay writing. This is in conjunction with daily vocabulary study and regular work on fundamental usage rules of formal English. The second semester centers on reading and writing about *Twelfth Night* and beginning work on *The Killer Angels*, upon which the three day trip to Gettysburg depends. We continue with daily vocabulary study as well as weekly writing assignments as we examine the role of character and leadership in Shaara's novel. After the class trip each student chooses a figure from the Harlem Renaissance period and then writes a five page biographical paper, a five page analytical paper, teaches a class on that person and explains a creative project influenced by that figure. This precedes our day trip to Harlem at the end of May. Our continued grammar study involves increasingly sophisticated usage rules and the mechanics necessary to punctuate correctly.