



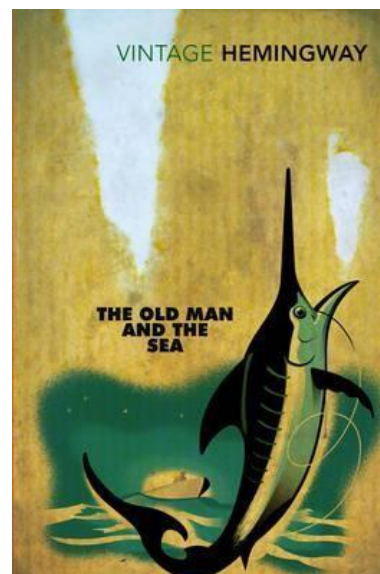
Middle School
Matina B. Stergiopoulos, Ed.D., Principal

May 2026

Dear 8th graders,

Summer is a wonderful time to read without the pressure of time!

It should also be fun and enjoyable. The 8th Grade Language Arts Team asks you to fulfill the following requirements for next year.



You will read ***The Old Man and the Sea***, by **Ernest Hemingway**, which you will need to purchase or use the pdf. [LINK](#) The book does not have chapters, split the reading into 5 sections, approximately 20 pages for each section.

You will also need a 50 page, B5-sized notebook to complete the following: The first part of the notebook will be dedicated to the **Notice & Note Signposts Journal (30 pages)** and the second part will be dedicated to the **Vocabulary Vault (20 pages)**

Task 1: Notice & Note Signposts Reading Strategy

Authors leave "signposts" in their stories to help readers understand the characters and themes.

Review the 6 different types of signposts on the following page. As you read, identify at least **twenty signposts** in total, and answer the corresponding questions.







Your journal entries will look like the template to the right.

██████████ About 20 pages each section

Signpost: *ex. Memory Moment*

Evidence :
"I remember the first time I heard the piano..." (p. 15)

Question: *Why might this memory be important?*
(your answer)

Signpost	What to look for...	The Question to Ask Yourself
 <p>CONTRASTS & CONTRADICTIONS</p>	A character acts in a way that is the opposite of how they usually act.	<i>Why is the character doing that?</i>
 <p>AHA! MOMENT</p>	A character suddenly realizes, understands, or finally figures something out.	<i>How might this change things?</i>
 <p>TOUGH QUESTIONS</p>	A character asks themselves a very difficult or confusing question.	<i>What does this make me wonder about?</i>
 <p>WORDS OF THE WISER</p>	An older or wiser character gives the protagonist serious advice.	<i>What is the life lesson, and how will it affect the character?</i>
 <p>AGAIN & AGAIN</p>	A word, phrase, or situation is repeated throughout the story.	<i>Why does the author keep repeating this?</i>
 <p>MEMORY MOMENT</p>	The author stops the action to tell you about a memory (flashback).	<i>Why might this memory be important?</i>

Notes:

- Try to keep your journal as neat and organized as possible, with clear handwriting.
- **Optional:** feel free to add drawings to your journal, to help you visualize the characters and themes.

Task 2: Vocabulary Vault

As we explore *The Old Man and the Sea*, we will examine Hemingway's spare yet deliberate prose language shaped by the rhythms of the sea, the weight of exhaustion, and the dignity of struggle. To deepen your understanding of his craft, you will build your very own **Vocabulary Vault**.

Select at least 20 words that strike you as powerful, unfamiliar, or essential to meaning.

Your chosen words can be:

- A brand-new word you've never seen before.
- A slang word or historical term unique to the Great Depression era.
- A familiar word used in a totally new, unique, or interesting way.

For each word, include:

1. **The word & page number.**
2. **Definition:** Look up the formal dictionary definition. You may use Dictionary.com or Vocabulary.com.
3. **Original Sentence:** Write a sentence of your own that uses the word correctly.

Remember to pace yourself as you read. A good reader doesn't finish the fastest; a good reader finishes with the best understanding of the journey.

Due Date: Bring your completed notebook to the **first day of LA class**.

Have a wonderful summer and see you in September!

8th Grade Language Arts Team

The Word & Page Number: (e.g., *Symphony*, p. 12)

Definition:

My sentence:

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