

The Ivy College Guru

Dr. Gavin Wittje
gavinwit@gmail.com

2026 Junior English Genius Class Syllabus **An 11 - week Summer Semester Session; One Meeting Per Week**

Saturdays: 6pm-8pm, 6/6 – 8/15

I. Purpose of the program

This class is carefully designed by Dr. Gavin Wittje. The class is intended for 4th and 5th graders, who are at the age when they should and can start reading and appreciating classic stories and poetry, with the proper and expert guidance. The benefits of exposure in early ages to the classic canon and the reading and understanding of these works will enhance their language ability and reading comprehension. By taking this class, 4-5th graders will be well prepared for their upcoming middle school academic challenges in language arts classes.

The intent of the class is to achieve the following overall goals:

- 1) Increasing students' skills in English vocabulary
- 2) Reading and appreciating classic books in their original or adapted versions
- 3) Enhance students' reading, writing, and grammar skills
- 4) Heighten students' capability to understand and enjoy life
- 5) Deepen students' all-round knowledge about humanities and social sciences
- 6) Enriching students' educational experience overall

II. Major Contents of the program

The class will consist of the following specific contents and learning objectives:

- 1) Intensive vocabulary-building
- 2) Guided classic English reading: read classic books/novels and classic poems
- 3) Guided and graded writing assignments
- 4) Feedback on each writing assignment for each student

III. Textbooks and Study Materials

The class requires a number of books and other materials. You need to purchase the books online; you will receive the study guide directly from me:

- 1) *The Junior English Genius Study Guide* (Summer 2026)
- 2) *Vocabulary Workshop Level A* (ISBN: 978-0821580066)

Reading Exercise

- 3) *Patterns of Revision, Grade 7: Inviting 7th Graders into Conversations That Elevate Writing* (ISBN: 978-1625316394)

Classic literature books:

- 4) *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* (ISBN: 978-0192750136)
- 5) *Dead End in Norvelt* (ISBN: 978-1250010230)
- 6) *Fahrenheit 451* (ISBN: 978-1451673319)

Various poems and other materials provided by the instructor

IV. Schedule of the Ivy Guru Junior English Genius Program (11 weeks)

Week/ Dates	Reading/Literature/Poems	Writing	Patterns of Revision	Vocabulary Workshop Level A
6/6	Life and Works of Geraldine McCaughrean "The Little Mermaid" by Hans Christian Andersen Life and Works of T.S. Eliot T.S. Eliot Poem "The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufroch"	Instructions on Writing	Chapter 1	Lessons 1 - 2
6/13	<i>One Thousand and One Arabian Nights</i> by McCaughrean Life and Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson Alfred Lord Tennyson Poem "The Eagle"	In-Class Writing Practice	Chapter 1	Lessons 3 - 4
6/20	<i>One Thousand and One Arabian Nights</i> by McCaughrean Life and Works of Denise Levertov Denise Levertov Poem "The Dog Of Art"	Comments on Writing	Chapter 2	Lessons 5-6
6/27	<i>One Thousand and One Arabian Nights</i> by McCaughrean Life and Works of H. D. H. D. Poem "Sea Rose"	First Essay (Book Report) Due	Chapter 2	Lessons 1-6
7/3	Life and Works of Jack Cantos <i>Dead End in Norvelt</i> by Jack Cantos Life and Works of Robert Creeley Robert Creeley Poem "The Window"	More discussion on writing	Chapter 3	Lessons 7-8
7/10	<i>Dead End in Norvelt</i> by Jack Cantos Life and Works of Ted Hughes Ted Hughes Poem "The Thought Fox"	Book discussion and analysis	Chapter 3	Lessons 9-10
7/17	<i>Dead End in Norvelt</i> Life and Works of Emily Dickinson Emily Dickinson "My Life had stood - a Loaded Gun"	Second Essay (book report) Due	Chapter 4	Lessons 11-12
7/24	Life and Works of Ray Bradbury <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> Life and Works of Robert Frost Robert Frost Poem "Design"	More discussion on writing	Chapter 4	Lessons 7-12
7/31	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> Life and Works of Wallace Stevens Wallace Stevens Poem "The Reader"	Book discussion and analysis	Chapter 5	Lessons 13-14
8/7	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> Life and Works of William Carlos Williams William Carlos Williams Poem "This is Just to Say"	Free Writing	Chapter 5	Lessons 15
8/15	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> Life and Works of Roald Dahl Roald Dahl Poem	Third Essay (Book Report) Due	Chapter 5	Review