

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 1, Unit 1.1

Textual Purpose and Narrative Elements

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20-25 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read and analyze a variety of short stories and poems and use a variety reading processes and strategies to determine theme, the meanings of words and phrases, and the sequence of events. Students examine dialogue and how it moves the story forward. Students write a narrative to develop real or imagined experiences using a sequence of events (plot) and descriptive details. In order to write they need to draw upon background knowledge from literary or informational text to support their writing process. Students build on others' ideas using peer discussions to express their own ideas clearly. Students demonstrate grammar efficiency when writing or speaking.

Leading up to the multi-paragraph essay, students read from a variety of texts, learning to analyze how narrative elements contribute to the meaning and style of a text. They use knowledge of author's use of precise words, phrases, descriptive details, and imagery to comprehend plot and theme development. Students follow rules for peer discussions and decision-making and, with teacher guidance, track their own progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. At the teacher's discretion, students use mind maps or other graphic organizers to create an outline and rough draft of the multi-paragraph essay. In order to teach the grammar skills needed, teachers may choose to embed grammar throughout the unit. Teacher will scaffold these activities as necessary.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because the strategies are complex enough to rely on skills that were learned in prior grade levels and will build upon knowledge. These skills are foundational to following units by reinforcing comprehension of plot characteristics and narrative elements such as structure used to organize a text, interactions between characters, and author's point of view and purpose.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- DETERMINE a **theme** or **central idea** of a text.
 - ANALYZE its development over course of text (relationship to **characters, setting, plot**).
 - PROVIDE **summary** of text.

- ANALYZE how lines of **dialogue** in a story or drama propel the action.
 - REVEAL aspects of character or provoke a decision.
- ANALYZE how a modern work of fiction draws on **themes**, patterns of events, or character types from **myths, traditional stories, or religious works** such as the Bible.
- DETERMINE meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text.
 - INCLUDE **figurative, connotative, and technical meanings** of words and phrases in text.
 - ANALYZE impact of specific word choices on **meaning and tone**, including **analogies or allusions**.
- WRITE **narratives** to DEVELOP real or imagined experiences or events using techniques, descriptive details, and well-structured events.
 - ENGAGE and ORIENT the reader by establishing a **context** and **point of view**.
 - INTRODUCE narrator or characters.
 - ORGANIZE an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
 - USE narrative techniques such as **dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection** to DEVELOP characters and events.
 - USE precise words and phrases, **descriptive details**, and **sensory language** to capture action and convey events.
- ENGAGE in a range of discussions with diverse partners.
 - BUILD on others' ideas and EXPRESS them clearly.
 - COME to discussions prepared having READ or RESEARCHED material under study.
 - Explicitly DRAW on that preparation by REFERRING to **evidence** on topic or issue.
 - REFLECT on ideas under discussion.
 - FOLLOW **rules** for discussion and decision making.
 - TRACK progress toward goals and deadlines.
 - DEFINE individual roles as needed.
- DEMONSTRATE command of conventions of standard English grammar when writing or speaking.
 - USE verbs in **active and passive voice**.
- DEMONSTRATE command of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - USE punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
 - SPELL correctly.

- DETERMINE or CLARIFY meaning of unknown and multi-meaning words based on grade 8 reading and content.
 - USE context as a clue to meaning of a word.

Essential Questions

- What defines a protagonist?
- How do imagery or descriptive details reinforce plot?
- How does an author create an archetype through textual purpose and narrative elements?
- What is the relationship between characters and theme? Setting and theme?
- How does an author create a vivid and memorable character?
- What is the purpose of collaborative conversations? How is the conversation affected if everyone engages appropriately with the material and the other people in the conversation?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit's activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RL.8.9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Reading Standards for Informational Text**Craft and Structure**

- RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Writing Standards**Text Types and Purposes**

- W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
 - Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

Speaking and Listening Standards**Comprehension and Collaboration**

- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
 - Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

Language Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
 - Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Writing Standards**Production and Distribution of Writing**

- W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).

The following standards recur through many/all of the units of study:

Reading Standards for Literature**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

- RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading Standards for Informational Text**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

- RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards**Range of Writing**

- W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and

shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards*

RL— RL.8.2 In grade 7, students were expected to learn how to determine the theme of a text and analyze its development. **In the eighth grade, student learning increases to include the theme’s relationship to the characters, setting, and plot.** In grade 9, students will be expected to include how theme emerges and is shaped by specific details.

RL.8.3 In grade 7, students were expected to analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact. **In the eighth grade, learning is extended to include dialogue, incidents in a story, and how action is propelled by aspects of a character.** The focus is on specific lines of dialogue or incidents rather than simply the setting as a whole. In grade 9 the focus extends to complex characterization and how characters affect plot development.

RL.8.9 In seventh grade, students were expected to compare and contrast a fictional portrayal and historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. **In eighth grade, student learning increases to analyze modern works of fiction as well as myths, traditional stories, and religious works. The focus of the analysis in grade 8 is how a modern work of fiction draws upon myths, traditional stories, or religious work, and students are supposed to describe how the material is made new.** In grade 9, students will analyze specific works including Shakespearean theme and biblical references.

RI— RI.8.4 In eighth grade, students determined the meaning of words and phrases used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. They also analyzed the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. **In eighth grade they will expand upon this by including analogies or allusions to other text.** In grade 9, learning is extended by having students analyze how the cumulative impact of specific word choice impacts meaning and tone.

W— W8.3 In grades 6-7, students were expected to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. **In grade 8, students continue the practice of this skill to write narratives.** In ninth grade, students will expand their practice of this skill in order to further develop their technique.

W8.9 In 6th and 7th grade, students are expected to draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **In 8th grade, this skill is enhanced by including myths, traditional stories, and religious works.** At the 9th grade level, the skill is enhanced.

SL— SL8.1 In seventh grade, students were asked to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners. **In eighth grade, students are asked to follow rules for decision making and track their progress.** Students in the ninth grade will be expected to have a well-reasoned exchange of ideas that stimulates a thoughtful discussion.

L.8.1 In seventh grade, students were asked to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners. **In eighth grade, students are asked to follow rules for decision making and track their progress.** Students in the ninth grade will be expected to make effective choices for meaning or style and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.8.2 In seventh grade, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. **In eighth grade, they use punctuation (ellipses, comma, dash) to indicate a pause or break and learn to spell correctly.** In ninth grade, students will begin using semicolons to link independent clauses.

L.8.4 In seventh grade, students determined or clarified the meaning of unknown words or phrases choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. **In eighth grade, they use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.** Students are expected to further apply their understanding in the ninth grade.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain. In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator’s and characters’ personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense. In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information. In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.

Creative Writing beyond Narrative

The narrative category does not include all of the possible forms of creative writing, such as many types of poetry. The Standards leave the inclusion and evaluation of other such forms to teacher discretion.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad by Rosemary Sutcliff

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

Samples of Student Writing (pp. 52-56)

Suggested Local Resources

- “Cyclops from *The Odyssey*” by Homer
- “Moco Limping” by David Nava Monreal
- “Barbara Frietche” by John Greenleaf Whittier
- “Elizabeth Blackwell” by Ever Merriam
- “Paul Revere’s Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Terminology

- Analyze
- Dialogue
- Verbals
- Provoke a decision
- Collegial

Challenging Concepts

Students have difficulty distinguishing/defining archetypes.

- Students will use a variety of poems, short stories, and multimedia to develop the concept of what an archetype is.
- Building on the concepts of antagonist and protagonist, students will develop clear understanding of different archetypes.

Students have difficulty distinguishing active and passive voice in writing.

- Students will be introduced to the concepts of active/passive voice, and will incorporate it into writing during daily discussion and quick writes.

Students do not have knowledge of biblical or historical allusions, or have difficulty making the connections to modern literature.

- During the unit, students will be introduced to or reminded of Bible stories and historical text so they can draw upon the background knowledge to connect to current reading materials.

Students have difficulty understanding the relationship of media used as text.

- Through use of multimedia, such as film, short clips, and news reports, students will begin to understand how media can be used as a source of text instead of just a source of entertainment.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States' Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
- Kansas Department of Education (SBAC): <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4778>
- Rhode Island Department of Education (PARCC): <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>
- New York Department of Education (PARCC): <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

General Sites

- A resource for student writing samples: <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>
- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>
- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman's organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 1, Unit 1.2

Introduction to Central Idea and Expository Elements

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20-25 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students use phrases from the text as evidence to support their analysis of fiction and non-fiction. They determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development. They write informative/explanatory essays to convey central ideas as well as writing a narrative to explain experiences or events. Students are asked to participate in a wide range of peer discussions. They demonstrate understanding of grammar, figurative language, and multiple meaning words.

Students read from a variety of texts, learning how to use evidence to analyze and draw inferences from the content. In their writing, they use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses, and introduce a topic clearly with relevant facts. Students learn to create questions and respond to peers with textual evidence and personal observations. They continue to learn to track their own progress toward specific goals and deadlines and define individual roles as needed. Students use mind maps and graphic organizers to relate their ideas not only in writing a text but also visually. In order to teach grammar skills as needed, teachers may choose to embed grammar throughout the unit. Teachers scaffold these activities as necessary.

The unit is taught at this point in the school year because the skills are complex enough to rely on skills previously learned and will build upon prior knowledge and the previous foundational unit. Students practice using evidence from text to analyze structure and narrative elements of multiple genres.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- CITE **textual evidence** that most strongly supports analysis of what text says.
 - DRAW **inferences** from text.
- DETERMINE meaning of words and phrases as they are used in text (**figurative** and **connotative** meanings).
 - ANALYZE impact of specific word choice on **meaning** and **tone**, including **analogies** to other texts.

- DETERMINE central idea of text.
 - ANALYZE its development over course of text, including its relation to supporting ideas.
 - PROVIDE objective **summary** of text.
- WRITE narratives to DEVELOP real or imagined experiences or events.
 - USE effective technique, descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences in writing.
 - USE **transition** words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence.
 - SIGNAL shifts from one time frame to another.
 - SHOW relationships among experiences and events.
 - PROVIDE conclusion that reflects on narrated experiences or events.
- WRITE **informative/explanatory texts** to examine topics and convey ideas, concepts, and information through organization and analysis of content.
 - INTRODUCE a topic clearly.
 - PREVIEW what is to follow.
 - ORGANIZE ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories.
 - INCLUDE **formatting, graphics, and multimedia** to aid comprehension.
 - DEVELOP topic with relevant well-chosen facts or other information.
- ENGAGE effectively in collaborative discussions with diverse partners.
 - BUILD on others' ideas and EXPRESS them clearly.
 - POSE questions that connect ideas of several speakers.
 - RESPOND to others' questions with relevant **evidence** and ideas.
- DEMONSTRATE commands of standard English grammar when writing or speaking.
 - RECOGNIZE and CORRECT inappropriate **shifts** in verb voice.
- USE knowledge of language when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
 - USE verbs in **active** and **passive voice**, conditional and subjective mood to ACHIEVE effects.
- DETERMINE or CLARIFY meaning of unknown and multi-meaning words based on grade 8 reading and content.
 - VERIFY determination of meaning of word or phrase.
- DETERMINE understanding of **figurative language** and relationships in word meaning.
 - USE relationships between particular words for better understanding.
 - DISTINGUISH among **connotations** of words with similar **denotations**.

Essential Questions

- What is the importance of using transitional words within written work?
- How can textual evidence support an analysis?
- How do visual representations enhance meaning?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit's activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Craft and Structure

- RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

- RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

- W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
 - e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

- W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

Language Standards

Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

Knowledge of Language

- L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
 - Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Craft and Structure

- RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Writing Standards

Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

Language Standards

Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
 - c. Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

The following standards *recur* through many/all of the units of study:

Reading Standards for Literature

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards*

RL—RL.8.1 In grade 7, students cited textual evidence to support analysis of text. **In grade 8, students use support more strongly to support analysis.** In grade 9, they will cite thorough evidence of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from text.

RL.8.4 In grade 7, students determined meanings of words and phrases, analyzing rhymes and repetition. **In grade 8, focus shifts to include analogies and allusions, including figurative and connotative meanings and analyzing the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.** In grade 9, students will analyze cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

RI—RI.8.1 In grade 7, students cited textual evidence to support analysis of text as well as draw inferences. **In grade 8, cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from text.** In grade 9, students will be required thorough support of analysis and inferences of textual evidence.

RI.8.2 In grade 7, students determined two or more central ideas, analyzed development, and provided objective summary. **In grade 8, students recognize a central idea and its relationship to supporting ideas and provide an objective summary of the text.** In grade 9, they will be asked to include how central ideas including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.

W— W.8.3. In grade 7, students wrote narratives using a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence providing a reflective conclusion. **In grade 8, students expand to show the relationships among experiences and events as well as using reflection to develop experiences, events or characters.** In grade 9, students will engage the reader by setting out a problem, establishing one or multiple points of view, and introducing a narrator or characters and create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

W.8.2. In grade 7, students wrote informative/expository texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and analyze relevant content, introducing topics clearly, organizing by using strategies and graphics as well as multimedia. **In grade 8, students organize into more broad categories and develop the topic with well-chosen facts, concrete details and quotations, using varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships.** In grade 9, students will continue organizing more complex ideas making important connections and distinctions, extending definitions and considering audiences knowledge of the topic.

SL— SL.8.1. In grade 7, students engaged in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, posed questions that elicited elaboration, and responded to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas. **In grade 8, students begin connecting ideas of several speakers and respond to others with relevant evidence and qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.** In grade 9, students will propel conversations by broadening themes and ideas; they will actively incorporate others and challenge ideas.

L— L.8.1. In grade 7, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage in writing and speaking. **In grade 8, students are expected to recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb, voice, and mood.** In grade 9, students will use parallel structure and phrases and clauses to convey specific meaning and add variety and interest to writing and presentations.

L.8.3. In grade 7, students used knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening, choosing language to express ideas precisely. **In grade 8, students expand knowledge using active and passive voice and conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects.** In grade 9, students will apply knowledge of language to understand its function in different contexts, writing, and editing work so it conforms to the guidelines in the MLA Handbook.

L.8.4. Building from grade 5, **students increase referencing skills to verify meaning through grade 8,** and these skills are further practiced and refined in order to show continual progress and development.

L.8.5. Building from grade 5, **students increase using relationships between words to understand figurative language and nuances through grade 8** and these skills are further practiced and refined in order to show continual progress and development.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources**Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms*****Informational/Explanatory Writing***

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers' knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept. Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and précis writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and résumés. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue. Because an argument deals with whether the main claim is true, it demands empirical descriptive evidence, statistics, or definitions for support. When writing an argument, the writer supports his or her claim(s) with sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain. In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator’s and characters’ personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense. In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information. In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.

Texts that Blend Types

Skilled writers many times use a blend of these three text types to accomplish their purposes. For example, *The Longitude Prize*, included above and in Appendix B, embeds narrative elements within a largely expository structure. Effective student writing can also cross the boundaries of type, as does the grade 12 student sample “Fact vs. Fiction and All the Grey Space In Between” found in Appendix C.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Terminology

- Central idea
- Collaborative discussion
- Connotation
- Denotation
- Informational/explanatory texts
- Narratives
- Nuances
- Transition words

Challenging Concepts

Convey main ideas, drawing inferences, create level 1, 2, 3 questions, tracking own progress toward goals, objective summary.

Students have difficulty understanding and conveying central ideas of a piece of writing.

- Students will learn what a main idea of a piece of writing is through the reading of fiction, nonfiction, and informational text and questioning text to find the main idea.

Students have difficulty with drawing inferences.

- Students will be taught connotation and denotation and how each concept works to help draw inferences.

Students have difficulty with the differences between level 1, 2, and 3 questions in Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Students will learn how to ask important questions on all three levels, using facts from the writing, main idea, and connotation and denotation to make inferences as well as to make connections to a piece of writing and how it relates to real-life experiences.

While students can set goals, they often have difficulty in tracking their own progress toward the goal.

- Using graphic organizers, grade sheets, and rubrics, students will learn how to track their progress in their own writing.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States' Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
- Kansas Department of Education (SBAC): <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4778>
- Rhode Island Department of Education (PARCC): <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>
- New York Department of Education (PARCC): <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

General Sites

- A resource for student writing samples: <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>
- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>
- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman's organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 2, Unit 2.1

Argumentation—Author’s Craft and Structure

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20-25 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read and analyze a variety of nonfiction texts, poetry, and advertising methods. They compare and contrast the different structures within these genres. Students know how differing structures contribute to meaning and style. They understand the structure of specific paragraphs and texts and include the role of particular sentences in developing and refining key concepts. Students write both informative pieces as well as a multi-paragraph argument essay.

Leading up to the argument multi-paragraph essay, students read from a variety of texts, learning to analyze how argumentative elements contribute to the refining of key concepts. They examine a topic to convey ideas, concepts, and information. Students use appropriate and varied transitions, precise language, and domain-specific vocabulary to inform and argue. Students establish and maintain a formal style of writing, provide a concluding statement that follows and supports the information presented. They use technology to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas. Students collaborate with others to track their own progress toward specific goals and deadlines. At the teacher’s discretion, students use mind maps or other graphic organizers to create an outline and rough draft of the persuasive multi-paragraph essay. In order to teach the grammar skills needed, teachers may choose to embed grammar throughout the unit. Teachers scaffold these activities as necessary.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because the strategies are necessary to progress to argumentation and debate. Strategies are complex enough to rely on the skills pertaining to the citation in writing that were learned during the previous unit and will build upon prior knowledge. These skills are foundational to following units by reinforcing comprehension of literary nonfiction, research skills, citing textual evidence, author’s point of view and purpose, and the writing process.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- COMPARE and CONTRAST the **structure** of two or more texts.
 - ANALYZE how **structure of a text contributes to meaning**.

- **ANALYZE the structure of a specific paragraph.**
 - **INCLUDE the role of particular sentences in developing/refining a key concept.**
- **WRITE arguments to support claims.**
 - **INTRODUCE claims.**
 - **ACKNOWLEDGE/DISTINGUISH claims from alternate or opposing claims.**
 - **ORGANIZE evidence logically.**
 - **SUPPORT claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence.**
 - **CREATE cohesion with words, phrases, and clauses.**
 - **CLARIFY relationships among claims, reasons, evidence**
- **WRITE informative/explanatory texts to EXAMINE a topic and CONVEY ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.**
 - **USE appropriate and varied transitions to:**
 - **CREATE cohesion and CLARIFY the relationships among ideas and concepts.**
 - **USE precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to INFORM about or EXPLAIN the topic.**
 - **ESTABLISH a formal style.**
 - **MAINTAIN a formal style.**
 - **PROVIDE a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.**
- **PRODUCE and PUBLISH writing through use of technology.**
 - **PRESENT relationships between information and ideas efficiently.**
- **DEMONSTRATE command of English grammar and usage when writing/speaking.**
 - **EXPLAIN function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) and their function in particular sentences.**
 - **FORM and USE verbs in the active and passive voice.**
- **DETERMINE or CLARIFY the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words based on reading content.**
 - **USE context as a clue to the meaning of word or phrase.**
 - **USE Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.**
 - **CONSULT reference materials to find pronunciation of word or DETERMINE its meaning/part of speech.**
 - **VERIFY determination of meaning of word or phrase.**

Essential Questions

- How does commercialism impact daily life?
- How does the structure of informational texts (advertisements, etc.) change the function of conventional English grammar to popular usage (i.e., text messages, social media usage, etc.)?
- How can the use of technology help to clarify the relationships between information and ideas?
- How does research enhance the ability to find logical reasoning and relevant evidence?
- How does informational text use differing structures to inform and manipulate the general public?
- How does technology provide support to expository writing?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Craft and Structure

- RL.8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Craft and Structure

- RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

- W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

- W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.8.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

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| Language Standards |
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Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
 - b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
 - c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
 - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).
 - c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
 - d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Craft and Structure

RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

Craft and Structure

RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Writing Standards

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

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| Language Standards |
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Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
 - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*
- L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
 - c. Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

- L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
 - c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

The following standards recur through many/all of the units of study:

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| Reading Standards for Literature |
|---|

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL* = Reading Standards for Literature, *RI* = Reading Standards for Informational Text, *RF* = Foundational Skills, *W* = Writing Standards, *SL* = Speaking & Listening Standards, *L* = Language Standards

RI— RI.8.5 In grade 7, students were expected to be able to analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure contributes to its meaning. **In grade 8, students’ learning increases to compare and structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure contributes to its meaning and style.** In grade 9, students will be expected to analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events in it, and manipulate time create such effects such as mystery, tension, or surprise.

RI— RI.8.5 In grade 7, students were expected to analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text. **In grade 8, student learning increases to include analyzing in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text.** In grade 9, students will analyze in detail how an author’s ideas are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs or larger portions of a text.

W— W.8.1 In grade 7, students wrote arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence by introducing claim(s), acknowledging alternate or opposing claims, and organizing the reasons and evidence logically. They supported claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence using accurate, credible sources and demonstrated an understanding of the topic or text. They also used words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. **In grade 8, the students expand on this by acknowledging and distinguishing the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims and use words, phrases or clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationship among counter claims.** In grade 9, students will introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationship among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. They will also develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns. They will use words, phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

W8.2 In grades 6-7, students used appropriate transitions, precise language, and domain-specific vocabulary to clarify and explain the topic. Students maintained a formal style and provided a concluding statement for support of the information. **In eighth grade, students continue the practice of these skills to write explanatory texts, convey ideas, and organize relevant content.** In grade 9, students will

increase learning to include linking sections of the text and using objective tone in order to clarify complex ideas and concepts in their writing.

W8.6 In grade 7, students used technology to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as collaborate with others. **In grade 8, technology use is increased by producing and publishing writing to present the relationships between information and ideas effectively.** In ninth grade, students will expand the use of technology by taking advantage of the capacity to link other information flexibly and dynamically.

SL—No focus standards at this time.

L— L8.1 In seventh grade, students were expected to explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and specific sentences. Students also recognized and corrected misplaced and dangling modifiers. **In grade 8, students explain the function of verbals in general and particular sentences as well as form and use verbs in multiple moods.** In ninth grade, students will increase their understanding of grammar with the use of parallel structure.

L8.4 In grades 6-7, students used common, grade-appropriate affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word. **In grade 8, students continue using this skill.** In ninth grade, students will identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Argument

Arguments are used for many purposes—to change the reader’s point of view, to bring about some action on the reader’s part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer’s explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief, or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about. In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple primary and secondary sources to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically or empirically situated interpretation. In science, students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence and draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to argue in support of their claims. Although young children are not able to produce fully developed logical arguments, they develop a variety of methods to extend and elaborate their work by providing examples, offering reasons for their assertions, and explaining cause and effect. These kinds of expository structures are steps on the road to argument. In grades K–5, the term “opinion” is used to refer to this developing form of argument.

“Argument” and “Persuasion”

When writing to persuade, writers employ a variety of persuasive strategies. One common strategy is an appeal to the credibility, character, or authority of the writer (or speaker). When writers establish that they are knowledgeable and trustworthy, audiences are more likely to believe what they say. Another is an appeal to the audience’s self-interest, sense of identity, or emotions, any of which can sway an audience. A logical argument, on the other hand, convinces the audience because of the perceived merit and reasonableness of the claims and proofs offered rather than either the emotions the writing evokes in the audience or the character or credentials of the writer. The Standards place special emphasis on writing logical arguments as a particularly important form of college- and career-ready writing.

Informational/Explanatory Writing

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers’ knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept. Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and précis writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and résumés. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue. Because an argument deals with whether the main claim is true, it demands empirical descriptive evidence, statistics, or definitions for support. When writing an argument, the writer supports his or her claim(s) with sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

“Oranges” by Gary Soto

“Letter on Thomas Jefferson” by John Adams

“Address to Parliament on May 13th 1940” by Winston Churchill

Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

Samples of Student Writing (pp. 52-56)

Suggested Local Resources

“Just the Facts about Advertising and Marketing to Children” by Betsy Taylor

“Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers” by Alissa Quart

“How Do Tweens Feel about Brands” by Patricia Seybold

Terminology

- Verbals
- Explanatory texts
- Affixes
- Roots
- Multimedia
- Precise language

Challenging Concepts

Argumentation, textual evidence, active and passive voice, shifts, voice, and mood are all challenging concepts in this unit.

Students have a difficulty using evidence to support their arguments for or against a point of view.

- Students can be given different examples of text and research citation in order to have a clear visual of how evidence is used in articles.

Students have difficulty discerning between active and passive voice verbs

- Use of specific bellwork and materials focusing on active and passive voice can be used to aid students in discernment.

Students will be able to understand and use shifts, voice, and mood in their own writing.

- Teachers will model shifts, voice, and mood by comparing texts listed in appendix B, and will provide opportunity for students to write both poetry, timed nonfiction writing, and argumentation.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States’ Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
- Kansas Department of Education (SBAC): <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4778>
- Rhode Island Department of Education (PARCC): <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>
- New York Department of Education (PARCC): <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

General Sites

- A resource for student writing samples: <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>
- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>
- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman’s organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 2, Unit 2.2

Argumentation—Analyzing Writing

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20-22 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read and analyze a variety of short stories, poems, and informational texts and use a variety of reading processes and strategies to comprehend and analyze text. Students make a connection about author's point of view by analyzing differences and responses to evidence in conflicting viewpoints. In short stories, students find how the differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience can create effects such as humor or suspense. In literary nonfiction texts, students analyze an author's point of view as well as evaluate arguments and claims presented in different types of texts. The students determine what evidence is sound and relevant. They are also to recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced. An important product from this unit is the multi-paragraph argument.

Leading up to the multi-paragraph essay, students are able to differentiate between what is relevant or irrelevant information, and draw from that to create a coherent argument with sound, valid reasoning. In this unit, students use activities such as peer-to-peer sharing and group work activities to build upon the skill of argumentation. They share ideas and discuss them as a small group and evaluate peer-to-peer to provide feedback for relevant arguments. Students also acknowledge new information expressed by peers and evaluate the reasoning behind the evidence. With teacher support, students develop and strengthen their writing through planning, revising, editing, and rewriting. At the end of the unit, students write a rough draft, revise it, and provide a published version of the argument. The teacher scaffolds the standard English grammar and other activities as necessary.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because the strategies are complex enough to rely on skills that were learned in prior grade levels and will build upon knowledge. These skills are foundational to following units by reinforcing purpose and clarity of argumentation and the writing process. In order to write, students need to draw on previous experiences in writing as well as background knowledge from literary and informational text to support their writing process. Examples of this include their writing of a narrative of real or imagined experiences, their citation of textual evidence, and their ability to draw inferences from text.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- ANALYZE how differences **in points of view** of the character, audience, or reader **create effects**.
- DETERMINE author's **point of view** or **purpose** in a text.
 - ANALYZE how author acknowledge and responds to conflicting view points.
- DELINEATE and EVALUATE the **argument** and specific claims in a text.
 - ASSESS whether **reasoning** is sound and **evidence** is relevant or sufficient.
 - RECOGNIZE when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
- WRITE arguments to support **claims** with **clear reasons** and **relevant evidence**.
 - INTRODUCE, ACKNOWLEDGE and DISTINGUISH **claims** from **alternate** or **opposing claims**.
 - ORGANIZE **reasons** and **evidence** logically.
 - SUPPORT claims with **logical reasoning** and **relevant evidence**.
 - DEMONSTRATE understanding of **topic/text**.
 - USE words, phrases, and clauses to create **cohesion** and clarify **relationships** among claims.
- PRESENT claims and findings in a focused, **coherent manner** with relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen detail.
 - USE appropriate **eye contact, volume, pronunciation**.
- ANALYZE **purpose** of information presented in diverse media.
 - EVALUATE the **motives** behind the presentation.
- ACKNOWLEDGE **new information** expressed by others.
 - JUSTIFY **their views** in light of **evidence**.
- DELINEATE a speakers argument and claims.
 - Evaluate sound, relevance, and sufficiency of evidence.

Essential Questions

- How will analyzing differences in point of view help the reader understand how effects such as suspense or humor are created?
- How does a reader recognize when introduced evidence is irrelevant? What is the relationship between recognizing irrelevant evidence and understanding the strength of an argument?
- How can organization of text or argument lead to cohesion of evidence? What is the relationship between the strength of an argument and evidence?

- How can an author clarify the relationships between claims or argumentation?
- What are some appropriate techniques a speaker can use to deliver presentation? How does the use of these techniques influence an audience’s understanding?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Craft and Structure

- RL.8.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Craft and Structure

- RI.8.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.8.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

- W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

Speaking and Listening Standards**Comprehension and Collaboration**

- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document] for specific expectations.)

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Writing Standards**Production and Distribution of Writing**

- W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

| |
|---------------------------|
| Language Standards |
|---------------------------|

Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
 - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

Knowledge of Language

- L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
 - c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

The following standards recur through many/all of the units of study:

| |
|---|
| Reading Standards for Literature |
|---|

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

| |
|---|
| Reading Standards for Informational Text |
|---|

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards*

RL— RL 8.6 In grade 7, students analyzed how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text. **In grade 8, students build on this skill by analyzing how differences in point of view of the characters and the audience or reader create such effects as humor or suspense.** In grade 9, students will analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

RI— RI 8.6 In grade 7, students determined an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyzed how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others. **In grade 8, students increase their understanding of the author’s point of view by analyzing how the author responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoint.** In grade 9, students will expand on this by including author’s use of rhetoric to advance point of view or purpose.

RI 8.8 In grade 7, students traced and evaluated the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims. **In grade 8, students delineate and evaluate the arguments and specific claims in a text and recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.** In grade 9, students will expand upon this by identifying false statements and fallacious reasoning.

W— W 8.1 In grade 7, the students wrote arguments with clear reasons and relevant evidence by introducing claims, acknowledging alternate or opposing claims and organizing the reasons and evidence logically. They supported claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text by the use of words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. **In grade 8, students expand their knowledge by distinguishing the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims. They will also begin using counterclaims.** In grade 9, students will develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each, while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge-level and concerns. They will use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text.

SL— SL 8.1 In grade 7, students acknowledged new information expressed by others and, when warranted modified their own views. **In grade 8, students expand on this by qualifying or justifying their own views in light of the evidence presented.** In grade 9, students will respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify

their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

SL 8.2 In grade 7, students analyzed the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and explained how the ideas clarified a topic, text, or issue under study. **In grade 8, students analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats and evaluate the motives behind its presentation.** In grade 9, students will integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

SL 8.3 In grade 7, students delineated a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. **In grade 8, students expand on this by identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.** In grade 9, students will evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

SL 8.4 In grade 7, students presented claim(s) and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; they used appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. **In grade 8, students expand this knowledge by understanding the importance of having sound valid reasoning and well-chosen details.** In grade 9, students will present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

SL 8.6 In grades 7-9 students adapted speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

L—No focus standards at this time.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Argument

Arguments are used for many purposes—to change the reader’s point of view, to bring about some action on the reader’s part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer’s explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief, or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about. In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple primary and secondary sources to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically or empirically situated interpretation. In science, students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence and draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to

argue in support of their claims. Although young children are not able to produce fully developed logical arguments, they develop a variety of methods to extend and elaborate their work by providing examples, offering reasons for their assertions, and explaining cause and effect. These kinds of expository structures are steps on the road to argument. In grades K–5, the term “opinion” is used to refer to this developing form of argument.

“Argument” and “Persuasion”

When writing to persuade, writers employ a variety of persuasive strategies. One common strategy is an appeal to the credibility, character, or authority of the writer (or speaker). When writers establish that they are knowledgeable and trustworthy, audiences are more likely to believe what they say. Another is an appeal to the audience’s self-interest, sense of identity, or emotions, any of which can sway an audience. A logical argument, on the other hand, convinces the audience because of the perceived merit and reasonableness of the claims and proofs offered rather than either the emotions the writing evokes in the audience or the character or credentials of the writer. The Standards place special emphasis on writing logical arguments as a particularly important form of college- and career-ready writing.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

“Sorry wrong number” by Louise Fletcher

“Twelfth song of Thunder” Navajo tradition

Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

“Uniform Opinion” an Editorial by The Dallas Morning News

“Student Dress Codes” by Lynne Isaacson

“Uniformity” by Anonymous

“A Blessing in Disguise” by Anonymous

Terminology

- Relevant evidence
- Irrelevant evidence
- Valid reasoning
- Alternate/opposing claims
- Coherence in writing

Challenging Concepts

Students have difficulty being able to support their arguments with valid reasoning.

- They will use textual evidence to prove their argument with valid reasoning.
- Students will highlight textual evidence to do a side-by-side comparison.

Students have difficulty with the differences between relevant and irrelevant evidence in support of argument.

- Students will develop a sense of whether an issue is arguable or not based on whether evidence is opinion or fact.

Students have difficulty with creating cohesive writing.

- Students will clarify the relationship among claims, reasons, and evidence in order to write more cohesively.
- Students will use transition words and phrases correctly to assure more cohesion in writing.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States' Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
- Kansas Department of Education (SBAC): <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4778>
- Rhode Island Department of Education (PARCC): <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>
- New York Department of Education (PARCC): <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

General Sites

- A resource for student writing samples: <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>
- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>

- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman’s organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 3, Unit 3.1

Research and Expository Writing

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20-25 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read literary nonfiction and analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between ideas, individuals, or events. Students use analogies to interpret two or more texts. This allows students to provide information on the same topic where texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation. Students also conduct short research projects to answer focused questions that allow for exploration. During this unit, students also apply eighth-grade reading standards and demonstrate these standards in their writing. They also use academic and domain-specific vocabulary when considering comprehension or expression.

To prepare the multi-paragraph research paper in the next unit, students conduct a short research project to answer a question related to the content in the unit of study. They analyze modern works of fiction drawing on themes or patterns of events. Students work in small groups and present their findings to a specific audience. The teacher scaffolds the standard English grammar and other activities as necessary. Teachers and students reflect on the research through use of commentary and written evaluations.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because the strategies are necessary to progress on to the multi-paragraph research paper. The strategies at this point in the year are complex enough to rely on the skills pertaining to the citation of relevant evidence and sound reasoning that will support their analysis of the question.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- ANALYZE how text makes **connections** and distinguishes between individuals' ideas and events.
- ANALYZE a case in which two or more texts provide **conflicting information on same topic**.
 - IDENTIFY where texts **disagree** on matters of fact or interpretation.
- CONDUCT short research projects to answer a question.
 - DRAW on **several sources**.
 - GENERATE additional related **questions** that allow for **multiple avenues of exploration**.

- DRAW evidence from literary or informational texts to SUPPORT **analysis, reflection, and research**.
 - APPLY grade 8 reading standards to literature.
- DEMONSTRATE command of standard English (i.e., capitalization, punctuation, spelling).
 - USE an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
- ACQUIRE and USE accurately grade appropriate general **academic** and **domain specific** words and phrases.
 - GATHER **vocabulary knowledge** when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension.

Essential Questions

- How can identifying where texts disagree on facts effect interpretation of those facts?
- How can modern works of fiction and traditional works be used to draw evidence from literary or informational texts?
- How do people communicate effectively to convey ideas and clear information?
- How can gathering information on topics help make a connection or distinguish between ideas and events? How does gathering multiple sources on a topic affect understanding of the topic?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit's activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

- RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.8.9 Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

Writing Standards**Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

- W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
- W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).

Language Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

- L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Writing Standards**Text Types and Purposes**

- W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
 - Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

- W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document] for specific expectations.)

The following standards recur through many/all of the units of study:

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL* = Reading Standards for Literature, *RI* = Reading Standards for Informational Text, *RF* = Foundational Skills, *W* = Writing Standards, *SL* = Speaking & Listening Standards, *L* = Language Standards

RL—No focus standards at this time.

RI— RI.8.3 In grade 7, the students analyzed the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text. **In grade 8, students analyze how a text makes connections among and distinguishes between individuals, ideas, or events.** In grade 9, students will analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

RI.8.9 In seventh grade, students analyzed how two or more author’s writings about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts. **In eighth grade, students analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.** In ninth grade, students will analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical or literary significance including how they address related themes and concepts.

W— W.8.7 In grade 7, students conducted short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related focused questions for further research and investigation. **In grade 8, students expand on this by generating additional related focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.** In grade 9, students will conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W8.9 – In seventh grade, students drew evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research by applying grade 7 reading standards. **In eighth grade, students expand on this by applying grade 8 reading standards.** In grade 9, students will further expand on this by applying grades 9-10 reading standards.

SL—No focus standards at this time.

L— L8.2 In grade 7, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing by using a comma to separate coordinating adjectives. **In eighth grade, students expand on this by using punctuation to indicate a pause or break.** In grade 9, students will begin using a semicolon to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

L8.6 In grades 6-9 students acquired and used accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; they also gathered vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Argument

Arguments are used for many purposes—to change the reader’s point of view, to bring about some action on the reader’s part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer’s explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief, or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about. In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple primary and secondary sources to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically or empirically situated interpretation. In science, students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence and draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to argue in support of their claims. Although young children are not able to produce fully developed logical arguments, they develop a variety of methods to extend and elaborate their work by providing examples, offering reasons for their assertions, and explaining cause and effect. These kinds of expository structures are steps on the road to argument. In grades K–5, the term “opinion” is used to refer to this developing form of argument.

Informational/Explanatory Writing

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers’ knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept.

Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and précis writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and résumés. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue. Because an argument deals with whether the main claim is true, it demands empirical descriptive evidence, statistics, or definitions for support. When writing an argument, the writer supports his or her claim(s) with sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

“The Songs of Wandering Aengus” by W.B. Yeats

“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost

Suggested Local Resources

- “Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust” by Eve Bunting
- “First They Came For” by Martin Niemöller
- “The Butterfly” by Patricia Polacco
- “The Cats in Krasinski Square” by Karen Hesse

- Freedom Writers Film
- “The Diary of Anne Frank” p. 712, 8th grade Literature edition-Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes

Terminology

- Self-generated question
- Focused question
- Avenues of exploration

Challenging Concepts

Students have difficulty making connections and distinguishing between individual’s ideas or events.

- Students will read with the goal in mind of making the connections within the text.

Students have difficulty differentiating between two or more texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic.

- Students will compare and contrast text side by side to identify or interpret the text.

Students struggle with producing self-generated questions during research projects.

- Students will practice generating focus questions that allow for research and exploration.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States’ Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
- Kansas Department of Education (SBAC): <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4778>
- Rhode Island Department of Education (PARCC): <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>
- New York Department of Education (PARCC): <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

General Sites

- A resource for student writing samples: <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>
- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>
- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman’s organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 3, Unit 3.2

Research and Expository Writing, Continued

Overview

Number of instructional days: 30-35 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read literature and research a variety of relevant informational texts in order to produce a high-quality written multimedia research project that reflects the connection between literature and related informational texts and societal issues. They use texts such as newspaper articles, network news clips, and online news sources to create a variety of information. They understand how the different types of media channels can be used to gather information.

Leading up to the project, students learn to convey ideas and research the topic. They take information and apply it to their project. They also gather relevant information from multiple print resources. They apply what they have learned from previous units about citations when paraphrasing the information. Students learn how to conduct a survey and share out results with peers. They use graphic organizers and peer response to develop an outline for their project. They use technology to research, produce, and publish a project that is presented and shared with teacher and peers. Students draft, revise, and produce a final copy of the project. Students embed grammar that has been learned this year into their final draft. Teachers scaffold activities as necessary.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because strategies are a culmination of skills learned in previous units. Strategies are complex enough to rely on skills pertaining to textual evidence, citation, and conventions of grammar to build upon prior knowledge. These skills are foundational in reinforcing research techniques.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- WRITE arguments to support claims with clear reasons and **relevant evidence**.
 - **INTRODUCE, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND DISTINGUISH** claims from alternate or opposing claims.
 - ORGANIZE reasons and evidence logically.
 - SUPPORT claims with logical reasoning using accurate and **credible sources** while demonstrating understanding of topic.

- USE words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify **relationships** among claims.
- ESTABLISH a formal style.
- PROVIDE concluding statement that supports presented argument.
- ANALYZE how text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals' ideas or events.
- DRAW evidence from literary or informational texts to support research.
 - APPLY grade 8 reading standards.
- DETERMINE **theme** or **central idea** of a text.
 - ANALYZE its development over course of text (including its relationship to **characters**, **setting**, and **plot**).
 - PROVIDE **objective summary**.
- GATHER **relevant information** from multiple print and digital sources.
 - ASSESS **credibility** of the sources.
 - QUOTE, PARAPHRASE OR CITE information.

Essential Questions

- How does one generate ideas for writing?
- How can evidence be used to support an argument?
- How can one analyze text to make connections to the text?
- How does one identify significant problems within society and generate realistic solutions?
- How does one identify the effectiveness of media as text to convey meaning or message?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit's activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

- W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing

- claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
 - d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Writing Standards

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- b. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).

Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details

- RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

The following standards reinforce and/or support the unit of study focus standards:

Writing Standards

Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how

well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document] for specific expectations.)

Language Standards

Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

The following standards recur through many/all of the units of study:

Reading Standards for Literature

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards*

RL— RL.8.2 RL.8.2 In grade 7, students learned how to determine the theme of a text and analyze its development. **In grade 8, student learning increases to include the theme’s relationship to the characters, setting, and plot.** In grade 9, students will be expected to include how theme emerges and is shaped by specific details.

RI— In grade 7 students analyzed the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text. **In grade 8, students analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events.** In grade 9, students will analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

W— W.8.1 – In grade 7, students will write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence by introducing claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. They will support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text. Students will use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. They will establish and maintain a formal style and provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. **In grade 8 students expand on this by introducing claim(s), acknowledging and distinguishing claim(s) from alternate and opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. They will use words, phrases, and clauses**

to create cohesion and clarify the relationship among claim(s), counter claims, reasons, and evidence. In grade 9 students will introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. They will develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns. Students will use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text and establish a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.8.8 In grade 7, students gathered relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; they assessed the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quoted and paraphrased the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. **In grade 8, students continue using this skill.** In grade 9, students will expand on this by gathering information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; they will assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; they will also integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W8.9 – In grade 7, students drew evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research by applying grade 7 reading standards. **In grade 8, students expand on this by applying grade 8 reading standards.** In grade 9, students will further expand on this by applying grade 9-10 reading standards.

SL—No focus standards at this time.

L—No focus standards at this time.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Informational/Explanatory Writing

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers’ knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept. Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as

naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and précis writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and résumés. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue. Because an argument deals with whether the main claim is true, it demands empirical descriptive evidence, statistics, or definitions for support. When writing an argument, the writer supports his or her claim(s) with sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain, from chapter 2, “The Glorious Whitewasher”

Suggested Local Resources

- *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne
- “For some It’s Food for Thought” by La Monica Everett-Haynes
- “Making a Difference One Child at a Time” by Any Wignall

Terminology

- Informational text
- Analysis
- Well-chosen details
- Print and digital sources
- Paraphrase

Challenging Concepts

Students have difficulty writing arguments with relevant evidence.

- Students will use and establish textual evidence and logical reasoning to demonstrate understanding of topic.

Students have difficulty establishing and maintaining a formal style of writing.

- Students will use words, phrases, and clauses to create a cohesive formal style of writing.

Students have difficulty synthesizing new information.

- Students will be provided with information from multiple sources on a topic. They will highlight specific information in the source, and write a paragraph in which they utilize the information.

Online Resources

Common Core State Standards, Appendices, and PARCC Assessments

The link below provides access to the Common Core State Standards, as well as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A includes research and information about all of the strands. Appendix B includes text exemplars for literature, literary nonfiction, and content-area texts. Appendix C includes grade-level annotated student writing samples that address the three main text types.

- <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>
- <http://www.parcconline.org/>: PARCC website

Other Websites with CCSS Information, Strategies, or Lessons

States' Sites

- New Mexico Department of Education: <http://newmexicocommoncore.org/>
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General Sites

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- Links to several sites with Common Core Resources: <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/edreformer/10-common-core-resources/>
- Lessons and Assessments, some aligned to Common Core: <http://learnzillion.com/overview>
- Common Core Tools from Student Achievement Partners, David Coleman's organization: <http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools>

Grade 8 English Language Arts, Quarter 4, Unit 4.1

Drama/Film as Text

Overview

Number of instructional days: 25-28 (1 day = 50 minutes)

Students read and analyze multimedia to perform a scene from a selected piece of text or drama, emphasizing elements of humor or suspense. Students also integrate understanding of figurative language by noting differences in which the director or actor present the subject matter. Students evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different media as text.

To prepare for the performance, students analyze differences in points of view of various characters and how they create effects such as suspense or humor. Students assess, evaluate, and write a reflection on differences/similarities of two interpretations of the same text. They also incorporate the advantages and disadvantages of different media. Students work in small groups and present a final performance to a specific audience. Teachers and students reflect on final performance through use of commentary and written evaluations.

This unit is taught at this point in the school year because strategies are a culmination of skills learned in previous units. Strategies are complex enough to rely on literary analysis from previous units of study as well as terms, techniques, and elements of a wide range of literature. The unit is a final result of a year's worth of study, and will prepare students for upcoming study in the next year.

As with all units aligned to the Common Core State Standards, students should read texts within the appropriate range of complexity. Students should have the opportunity to read texts that are challenging for them, with support from the instructor as necessary, and texts that they can read fluently. Additionally, students should focus on doing close readings and supporting their analyses in reading and writing with evidence from the texts they read.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

- ANALYZE how differences in **point of view** of the characters and the audience create effects such as humor or suspense.
- ANALYZE extents to which a filmed or live production of a story or **drama** stays faithful to or departs from text or script.
 - EVALUATE choices made by director or actors.
- EVALUATE advantages and disadvantages of different mediums to present a topic or idea.

- INTEGRATE **multimedia** and **visual displays** into presentations to clarify information.
 - STRENGTHEN **claims** and **evidence**.
 - ADD **interest**.
- DEMONSTRATE understanding of **figurative language**, **word relationships**, and **nuances** in word meaning.
 - INTERPRET **figures of speech**.

Essential Questions

- How do differences in point of view create effects like suspense or humor?
- Why is multimedia important to the presentation of drama or humor? How does multimedia influence the audience's experience of a dramatic presentation?
- How can prior knowledge of figurative language and nuances help a reader interpret subject matter?
- What are some literary elements that can cause a reaction/emotion from the reader/audience? How can a reader detect these elements? What is the impact on the reader/audience when they don't understand those literary elements used to cause a reaction?

Written Curriculum

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit's activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

*The following standards are the **focus** of this unit of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Craft and Structure

RL.8.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Reading Standards for Literature

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.8.7 Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.8.7 Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.8.5 Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

Language Standards

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

*The following standards **reinforce and/or support** the unit of study focus standards:*

None at this time.

*The following standards **recur** through many/all of the units of study:*

Reading Standards for Literature

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- RI.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards

Range of Writing

- W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Clarifying the Standards

Key: *RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards*

RL— RL8.6 – In grade 7, students analyzed how an author develops and contrasts the point of view of different characters or narrators in a text. **In eighth grade, students analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader create such effects as suspense or humor.** In grade 9, students will analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

RL8.7 – In seventh grade, students compared and contrasted a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each media. **In eighth grade, students analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.** In grade 9, students will analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

RI— RI8.7 In seventh grade, students compared and contrasted a text to audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject. **In eighth grade, students evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums to present a particular topic or idea.** In ninth grade, students will analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums, determining which details are emphasized in each account.

W—No focus standards at this time.

SL— SL8.5 In grade 7, students included multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. **In eighth grade, students integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.** In grade 9, students will make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings and reasoning, and to add interest.

L— L8.5 In grade 7, students demonstrated understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings by interpreting figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context. **In grade 8, students interpret figures of speech such as verbal irony and puns in context.** In ninth grade, students will interpret figures of speech such as euphemism and oxymoron in context and analyze their role in text.

Resources: References to Appendices A–C and Other Resources

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

“Jabberwocky” Alice through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll

Suggested Local Resources

- “Ransom of Red Chief” by O’ Henry
- “Made You Laugh” by Marc Tyler Nobleman
- “I’m telling you for the last time” by Jerry Seinfeld
- A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, Much Ado about Nothing “and
- “The Life and Death of King Richard III” by William Shakespeare, p. 784
- Eighth Grade Literature Edition–Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes

Terminology

- Nuances
- Figures of speech
- Multimedia
- Compare and contrast

Challenging Concepts

Students have difficulty understanding differences between text and film.

- Students will learn to explain the differences between film and print text teacher modeling and instruction.

Students have difficulty understanding why the writer purposely chooses which type of media to use to portray clear meaning.

- Students will learn to identify why different media is used in order to strengthen meaning, bring clarification and convey dramatic results.

Online Resources

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