



PISCATAWAY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

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Grade 8 English Language Arts

Content Area: English Language Arts

Grade Span: 8

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Description	
<p>This course follows the structure of a reading and writing workshop. The teacher employs min-ilessons as a way to introduce and expose students to various reading and writing techniques. Independent work is stressed throughout as students work to incorporate the repertoire of learned skills and strategies into their own reading and/or writing process. The use of small groups is also relied on as teachers instruct students at their level— reteaching, reinforcing, or extending upon the skills and strategies taught in the whole-class minilessons. This structure enforces student creativity, responsibility, and agency, while providing teachers with the ability to differentiate and provide individualized support. The content of this course’s curriculum emphasizes a repertoire of skills and strategies that will help students be more powerful readers and writers in whatever genre they encounter. This is a departure from the past, when middle school curriculums were perceived as a few reading texts or writing tasks that students would master. Instead in this course, students will focus on specific skills and strategies necessary for mastering a given genre, independent of text or task.</p>	
Goals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the growth of communication skills in an environment that encourages students to read, write, listen, and speak. • Foster flexible, resilient readers and writers who read and write for pleasure as well as for academic purposes. • Help students develop a toolkit of strategies for dealing with difficulties so that they can confidently tackle any reading and/or writing task with vigor and expertise. • Foster students who are knowledgeable on a range of subjects from their nonfiction reading as well as empathetic and nuanced in their interactions with others from their reading of literature. • Prioritize time and space for high volume reading and writing. • Provide direct, explicit instruction in the skills and strategies of proficient readers and writers. • Encourage academic growth through assessment-based instruction and informative, responsive targeted feedback tailored to a student’s specific strengths and needs. • Push students to read increasingly complex texts by stretching and encouraging them to engage with texts that are appropriately complex for their grade level. 	
Scope and Sequence	
Topic	Length
Reading Analytically and Characterization Fiction - 25 Sessions	25 Sessions-w/2-3 Test Prep Sessions
Position Papers and Literary Nonfiction Information and Opinion - 30 Sessions	30 Sessions-w/2-3 Test Prep Sessions
Dystopian Book Clubs and Literary Essay Fiction- 40 Sessions	40 Sessions-w/2-3 Test Prep Sessions
Critical Literacy and Memoir Fiction-40 Sessions	40 Sessions-w/2-3 Test Prep Sessions
Resources	
<p>Core Text: The 8th Grade Reading and Writing Units of Study (by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from Teachers College Reading and Writing Project)</p>	

Suggested Resources: Grade-level writing units and mentor texts, Reading Curricular Calendars or grade-level reading units and mentor texts, Grade-level Google Drive, Heinemann online resources (that correspond with each unit), The Reading and Writing Project website.

UNIT 1:

Summary and Rationale

This unit functions on the belief that reading changes you—it especially changes you the more you see yourself in the texts you read. This unit encourages students to study the characters in books as a way to study themselves. It also introduces students to a deep study of the author's craft, moving from characterization to symbolism to narrative structure. With the goal to pull readers forward into a more engaged, expert, and dedicated reading life, students will conduct more sophisticated literary analysis than years past. In Bend I, students will read a *WHOLE CLASS NOVEL*, students and study complicated characters together with teacher assistance and modeling. In Bend II, students will move into book clubs, and then into Bend III and independent and mentor texts. Bend One focuses on a study of perspective, particularly how readers sympathize with certain characters, what shapes characters' and readers' perspectives, and distinguishing between characters with differing perspectives and complications. There is an element of critical literacy to the work, as readers learn to attend to how and why they make judgments about characters. Bend Two leads readers to investigate how authors use a variety of craft, including symbolism, imagery, and multiple perspectives, to develop complicated and nuanced themes. Bend Three leads readers to attend to narrative trajectory, or structure, looking at the movement of time, shifts in voice, and the development or ending of plotlines, and how these affect readers, looking at multiple texts and how themes carry across them and become complicated.

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I: Reading Closely for Craft and Structure for Complicated Characters. (about one and half weeks)
* *WHOLE CLASS NOVEL*, students will read and study complicated characters together with teacher assistance.
- Bend II: Reading Closely for Craft and Structure for Complicated Themes. (about one week)
* *In BOOK CLUBS*, students read one novel of their choice, with teacher guidance of selection.
- Bend III: Analyzing Craft and Structure across texts to complicate themes. (about one week)

State Standards

Reading Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text
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
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.
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.
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.
RL.8.7	Evaluate the choices made by the directors or actors by analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script
RL.8.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.

RL.8.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.
Writing Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
W.8.9.A	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”).
Speaking and Listening Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
SL.8.1.A	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.
SL.8.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.8.1.C	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
SL.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
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.
Language Standards	
L.8.3.	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening
L.8.3.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).
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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.4.B	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
L.8.4.C	Consult 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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.8.5.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.8.5.C	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).

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.
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Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Point of view is relative.
- Perspective creates empathy.
- Increased knowledge leads to understanding.
- Genres follow predictable characteristics.

Unit Essential Questions

- How can I develop a varied toolkit of strategies to learn about how characters are crafted by authors?
- How can I deepen my understanding of perspective to study how characters’ and readers’ perspectives are shaped by authors?
- How can I analyze an author's craft in a way that helps me imagine how authors create characters and develop themes?
- How can I expand what I already know about narrative structure to include more challenging narrative trajectories and how they affect readers?

Objectives

Students will know:

- Readers experience an emotional response to a text when the reader’s perspective or worldview is challenged.
- Readers and characters may have remarkably similar or vastly different perspectives.
- Characters’ perspectives are shaped by experience
- Different characters can have very different perspectives in the same amount
- Subtle details lead readers to judge characters.
- A reader’s preconceptions and stereotypes play a role in how they judge characters.
- Characters teach lessons.
- Various narrative techniques to achieve specific goals
- The issues or motifs in a text suggest themes.
- Narrative structure is how time moves in a story toward the resolution
- Traditional literary (narrative) structures

Students will be able to:

- Consider why they are experiencing an emotional response when reading.
- Distinguish between their own perspectives and that of the characters.
- Analyze how characters in a text are shaped by their experiences.
- Determine reasons characters have different perspectives in the same moment in a story.
- Discover how they respond to subtle, suggestive details about a character and how those details lead them to judgements about the character.
- Analyze the impact of preconceptions and stereotypes on their emotional responses to a text.
- Explain lessons positive and negative lessons learned from their character.
- Recognize various narrative techniques in a text.
- Speculate an author’s goal for using a given technique.
- Distinguish symbols within a text and analyze how their meaning may change across the text.
- Consider how an author controls reader sympathy by controlling access to the characters’ inner thinking.
- Infer themes and explain what techniques the author used to develop them.
- Assess how a story is structured.
- Evaluate how a text fits with or breaks from traditional narrative structures.

- Critique both the master and petit narratives in a text.
- Analyze the reason behind interruptions in a narrative's trajectory.

Resources

Core Text:

- Reading Curricular Calendar: Unit 1- *Reading Analytically across Genres: Themes, Archetypes & Allusions*
- Suggested Whole Class Novels:
Gen-Ed-*The Boy in the Black Suit* by Jason Reynolds/**Accelerated**-*Watch Us Rise* by Ellen Hagan and Renee Watson
- *Lamb to the Slaughter* by Roald Dahl
- *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allen Poe
- *Early Memory* by January Gill-O'Neill
- Student Choice Texts (classroom libraries, Learning Ally, etc)

Suggested Resources:

(* indicates a resource that is available on the Google Drive)

- Anchor Charts:
 - *To Uncover Character Complexities...
 - *To Develop Complicated Messages...
 - *To Synthesize Themes Across Texts...
- Resources suggested in Teacher Edition from The Reading and Writing Project site
- Reading notebooks and reading logs

UNIT 2: Position Papers

Summary and Rationale

In this unit, students will begin by developing an argument related to something that may be taken for granted; namely violence in video games and whether playing those games is simply diverting the player's attention, or if it is potentially harmful to the player. They will develop a position supported by reasons and evidence, while acknowledging other points of view. They will continue through the unit by extending the focus of their initial argument to a larger world view of a similar argument; whether child soldiers should be given amnesty. The focus in this part of the writing process will be to learn how to write to be principled and fair. Ultimately, students will write a position paper to finish the unit.

In this unit, students are reminded that it is important to weigh and evaluate evidence for both ideas of an issue quickly, develop a position supported by reasons and evidence, and compose a position paper that takes a clear position while acknowledging other points of view. In this context, we use the term position paper to describe a research-based argument essay, one that attempts to be principled and fair to alternative points of view.

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I: Writing a Position Paper: Games Based on Fictional Violence—Diverting or Harmful? (Approximately 8 days)
- Bend II: Writing a Position Paper on a Complicated Issue: Should Child Soldiers Be Given Amnesty? (Approximately 8 days)

State Standards

Reading Standards

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

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
W.8.1.A	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
W.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
W.8.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
W.8.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style.
W.8.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
W.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
W.8.3.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

W.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
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.
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.
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.8.8	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.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").
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.
Speaking and Listening Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
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.
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.
Language Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
L.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
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.
Instructional Focus	

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Argument writing is a moral imperative that leads to social justice.
- The best evidence is relevant and fully explained.
- Writers consider more than one side of an argument.
- To understand the genre of Information writing?
- To independently produce writing through the writing process.
- To self assess writing and set meaningful goals.
- To understand the author's craft and replicate strategies.
- To experiment with different leads and endings to engage our audience.

Unit Essential Questions

- How do writers approach debatable issues or ethical dilemmas?
- How do writers/public speakers persuade and engage their readers/audience?
- How do I write a position paper?
- How do we angle evidence to support specific points?
- How do we write powerful conclusions about debatable issues?
- How do we write a position paper on a complicated issue?
- How do we strengthen, frame, and pace evidence?
- How do we attend to alternative arguments and point of view?
- How do we use organizational structures to help build our argument?

Objectives

Students will know:

- Argument writers call to mind familiar strategies to write strong conclusions, including not just restating a claim, but also leaving the reader with new thinking.
- When speakers rehearse their speeches, practicing techniques that will make them more confident and compelling, such as tone of voice, body language, and gestures.
- Argument is not just an exercise; it's a moral imperative. Human beings have a responsibility to understand complex issues and to argue in ways that promote justice.
- When composing a balanced and principled argument, it helps to debate with others who are also knowledgeable about the other side of the issue.
- To strengthen an argument, writers include only the strongest possible evidence, choosing evidence that is the most relevant, significant, and convincing.
- Writers study alternatives to their own point of view to illuminate complex topics. Then they strengthen their own arguments by addressing counter argument in their writing fairly.
- Writers use the organizational structure of their piece to help build their argument.

Students will be able to:

- Debate effectively on complex issues.
- Angle evidence to support their claim effectively.
- Use connotative language effectively to convey tone.
- Write powerful introductions and conclusions to position papers.
- Present a speech.
- Construct a balanced and principled argument.
- Select evidence that will strengthen an argument.
- Attend to an audience, adjusting words and tone as appropriate.

Resources

Core Text:

- "High-Jinks: Shootout," by Guy Martin

- “Shooting in the Dark,” by Benedict Carey
- Exemplar position paper: Letter to Mayor Bloomberg
- Speech to the School Board
- Bend I Text Set
- Bend II Text Set
- Teachers College Writing Exemplars
- Alternative Text Set: Free Speech in the Age of Social Media

Suggested Resources:

(indicates a resource that is available on the Google Drive)*

- Anchor Charts:
 - How to Write an Argument
 - How to Write a Position Paper

- Additional Charts:
 - Make a Crystal Clear Plan for Drafting Your Essay
 - Sophisticated Techniques for Framing and Adapting Quotes
 - Guide to Citing References
 - Writers of Information Texts Aim Toward Goals...
 - Writers of Information Texts Use Techniques...
 - Emergency Checklist Word Processing Safety Check
 - Checking the Most Urgent Conventions
 - Transitional Phrases that Help Guide the Reader
 - Tips for Rehearsing and Giving Confident and Stirring Speeches
 - Let’s Argue About Texts
 - Transitions that You Can Use as You Argue
 - Tips for Being a Great Debater: Moves that Pay Off
 - Layering Details-Nonfiction Craft Moves
 - Writers Frame Evidence By...
 - To Provide Context in an Introduction, Writers Try...
 - A continuum of Fairness in Addressing Counterclaims

- Studying (And Addressing) Alternative Points of View in Arguments
- Organizational Structure Possibilities Template
- Checklist for High-Stakes Writing
- When Addressing Experts, Writers Often Use Respectful Language Such As...
- Sample reading notebook entries/ Sample completed reading logs*/Various reading log formats*
- Centers (developed by Teachers College)*
- Predictable Early Conferences and Small Groups (p. 41 of the Curricular Calendar)

UNIT 3: Literary Nonfiction

Summary and Rationale

The philosophy at the core of this unit is best summed up by the words of Hannah Arendt, from *The Life of the Mind*: “Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it...” Kids today, if they read the news at all, are likely to do so through social media because it flows freely to them through their friends’ posts. Few households subscribe to print news any longer, and few students seem to have the appetite for anything more than snack-sized news. The skills of this unit are essential to students coming of age in an era of global economics and global collaboration, and to their achievement in virtually every academic discipline and on standardized tests. When a student becomes powerful at nonfiction reading, that child becomes more powerful at school. The ability to glean central ideas that are not stated outright, to build connections across parts of texts and across multiple texts, to identify and trace implicit arguments are predictive of whether students will be able to hold their own in college-level science classes. In order to help students learn the skills necessary for handling longer journalistic pieces, it is helpful to begin with book length nonfiction. When students read engaging texts, they are much more likely to find topics that interest them and excite them. Additionally, becoming powerful at nonfiction fosters informed citizenship, a passion for knowledge, and a lifelong joy of reading to learn. This unit focuses on the skills readers need to be able to effectively and critically read nonfiction. The first part of the unit students will read literary nonfiction chapter books, and will learn strategies for tracking ideas and for taking notes. Students will also learn how to differentiate narrative sections and subtle arguments from the informational sections of text. The middle part of the unit gives students strategies for understanding how the many, often complicated, parts fit together to support the central idea. In the final part of the unit, students will transfer the skills that they have learned as they apply them to a host of digital texts, including podcasts, documentaries, and interactive articles. After selecting an issue that they became more aware of and informed about at the end of Bend II, students will continue to research the issue through digital texts

The skills of this unit are essential for students coming of age in an era of global collaboration and vital in the development of a truly informed, critical electorate. Across the unit readers will:

- Glean central ideas that are not stated outright and identify and trace implicit arguments
- Build connections across parts of texts and across multiple texts
- Develop the stamina, patience, and the analytic presence of mind necessary to read longer nonfiction
- Flexibly activate their schema as they read passages that seem more informational and passages that seem more narrative in their literary nonfiction texts
- Transfer their literary nonfiction skills to digital and hybrid media

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I: Embracing Complexity (6 sessions)
- Bend II: Making Connections (9 sessions)
- Bend III: Beyond Print: Transferring Literary Nonfiction Skills to Digital and Hybrid Media (5 sessions)

State Standards

Reading Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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
RI.8.3	Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
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.
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
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.
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.
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.
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.
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
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
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
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
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.
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.
RL.8.7	Evaluate the choices made by the directors or actors by analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script
RL.8.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.

RL.8.1 0	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Writing Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
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.
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.
W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
W.8.9. A	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”).
W.8.9. 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”).
W.8.1 0	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Speaking and Listening Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
SL.8.1. A	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.
SL.8.1. B	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.8.1. C	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
SL.8.1. 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.
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.8.5	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
SL.8.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.8.1.A	Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences
L.8.1.B	Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
L.8.1.C	Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
L.8.1.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.
L.8.2.A	Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
L.8.2.B	Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
L.8.2.C	Spell correctly.
L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
L.8.3.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).
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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.4.B	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
L.8.4.C	Consult 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.
L.8.4.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 an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.8.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.8.5.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words
L.8.5.C	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute)
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.

Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Nonfiction skills are necessary for success in every academic area.
- Being able to read nonfiction well is essential for an informed citizenry.
- Students who are especially good at reading nonfiction will seek out a variety of instructional texts on topics of interest.
- Students who read critically are able to question a writer's point of view and identify bias.
- Building background knowledge and vocabulary understanding helps texts become less intimidating to readers.
- Reading simpler nonfiction texts on a topic before tackling a longer book on a topic can help readers approach longer texts with more confidence and skill.
- Reading hybrid nonfiction, where the author combines compelling narratives with research, ignites curiosity and passion in students, and can motivate them to pursue personal research projects.

Unit Essential Questions

- Why is it so important for readers to be able to read nonfiction texts successfully?
- What do students who are skilled at reading nonfiction do differently from students who struggle with nonfiction?
- Why is it important to question a writer's point of view and bias when reading nonfiction?
- How can knowing vocabulary help a reader tackle nonfiction text?
- How can readers build their background knowledge?
- How can readers switch schema to better understand literary nonfiction texts?

Objectives

Students will know:

- The central idea of a nonfiction text.
- Nonfiction texts help to inform ourselves by seeing the views of others..
- Literary elements that support comprehension of literary nonfiction.

Students will be able to:

- Read nonfiction texts critically.
- Find bias in nonfiction texts.
- Determine which texts are more reliable than others.
- Make a claim about the value of a text.
- Defend a claim.
- Conduct independent research.

Resources

Core Text:

- *Literary Nonfiction* by Katie Clements and Audra Kirshbaum Robb
- *Hidden Figures (Young Readers' Edition)*, by Margot Lee Shetterly

Suggested Resources:

- Video clips from "San Quentin's Giants"
- Clips from the movie *Hidden Figures*
- Video "peanut Butter, Jelly, and Racism"
- Article "Sputnik and the Dawn of the Space Age" (Level Z)
- Podcast "The Consequences of Racism"
- Video clip from "Two Countries, No Home"
- *Flesh and Blood so Cheap: The Triangle Fire and Its Legacy* by Albert Marrin (Level Z)
- *The Who Challenged Hitler* by Phillip Hoose (Level Z+)
- *D-Day: The World War II Invasion that Changed History* by Lawrence Goldstone (Level Y)
- *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Daksha Slater (Level Z+)
- *Bomb: The Race to Build--and Steal-- the World's Most Powerful Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin (Level Z)
- selected books for book talks and modeling good reader behaviors

UNIT 4: Dystopian Book Clubs

Summary and Rationale

This unit will focus on deep comprehension from the get-go through the study of dystopian texts in clubs, an incredibly engaging genre. Readers will develop skills in reading more complex fiction texts: analyzing symbolism, deepening character analysis, understanding story arcs, and reading critically with questions in mind. Additionally, there will be a new strand of focus on literary terms, analysis, and critique. And finally, this unit will continue to emphasize (or re-invigorate) volume, stamina, and voracious reading while strengthening students' work with reading notebooks, building their ability to transfer their skills from one context to another, and supporting their increasing independence as readers and thinkers. Most importantly, readers will love the books they're reading and the intellectual engagement that they will require

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I: Reading Dystopia in the Shadow of Literary Traditions (approximately one and a half weeks)
- Bend II: Investigating the Challenges of Series Reading (approximately one week)
- Bend III: Bridging the World and Dystopian Novels (approximately one week)

State Standards

Reading Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
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
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
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.
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.
RL.8.7	Evaluate the choices made by the directors or actors by analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script
RL.8.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.
RL.8.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

Writing Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
W.8.9.A	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").

Speaking and Listening Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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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.
SL.8.1.A	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.
SL.8.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.8.1.C	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
SL.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented

Language Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.8.2.B	Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.4.B	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede)
L.8.4.C	Consult 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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.8.5.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.8.5.C	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute)
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.

Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- The genre of a text will guide the reading work you will need to do in order to fully comprehend the text.
- Dystopian literature relies on archetypes in characters and in story arcs, but often adjusts, or changes, those archetypes.
- Dystopian stories present systemic, as well as personal, obstacles and challenges.
- Symbolism is an essential element of dystopian literature

Unit Essential Questions

- How can I use strategies from reading other genres in order to make sense of imaginary, often complicated worlds?
- In what ways does my understanding of these worlds affect underlying ideas the text is highlighting—ideas that might also offer insights or critiques of my own world?

- What are ways I can look at themes that live in each of the texts that I read?
- How can I trace not only the themes across the text, but the details which support each theme?
- What are ways I can see how themes travel across texts?
- How can I be sure that with each subsequent text I read, I strengthen my reading by compounding my understanding with the themes from all the texts that came before it?
- How does noticing some traditional literary techniques, themes and archetypes that I see playing out in the stories I have read help strengthen my understanding of those stories?
- How can seeing those same patterns in my life and in world events help me make sense of them as well?

Objectives

Students will know:

- Dystopian novels have predictable characteristics.
- Small details at the start of a dystopian story will help readers make sense of how that world has gone awry.
- How characters respond to power (seek, resist, exert, submit) highlights their characteristics as well as the world they're in.
- Common archetypes of the genre
- Identifying character archetypes allows readers to think more deeply (predict actions and figure out motivations) about characters.
- Characters in dystopian novels are complex and may fit into more than one or may not fit perfectly into any archetype.
- Dystopian novels usually include systematic obstacles—political or societal obstacles—as well as personal ones.
- Information is revealed slowly in dystopian novels.
- Objects, actions, and phrases are often symbolic in dystopian novels.
- Books series increase in complexity over time and create unique challenges for readers.
- Systems and strategies for addressing the challenges when reading a series.
- Moments in a series that seem random usually connect with earlier scenes to shape plot.
- External pressures and internal motivations lead to character change.
- The meaning of symbols can change over the course of a book or series.
- Dystopian texts often reflect conditions (events and social issues) in the real world.
- The real-world context of a symbol might affect the meaning of the symbol in a story.

Students will be able to:

- Conduct meaningful literary analysis.
- Understand, identify, and analyze character archetypes.
- Engage in literary conversation with peers.
- Develop strategies to sustain the requirements of series reading.
- Consider how dystopian stories reflect issues experienced in the real world.
- Transfer lessons learned from reading dystopian novels and meeting characters in dystopian worlds to help them in their world and in encounters with people they meet.
- Identify, understand, and explain the significance of symbols.

Resources

Core Text:

(* indicates a resource that is available on the Google Drive)

- Teacher Edition- *Dystopian Book Clubs* by Katy Wischow
- “Ponies” by Kij Johnson from *At the Mouth of the River of Bees*
- “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut from *Welcome to the Monkey House*
- Video clips from *The Hunger Games* and *Catching Fire* films

Suggested Resources:

(* indicates a resource that is available on the Google Drive)

- Anchor Charts:
 - Dystopian Novel Usually...So Readers...
 - What’s Challenging about Reading Series?
 - To Read Dystopia, Thinking About the World...
- Additional Charts:
 - Book Clubs...
 - Common Archetypes in Dystopian Fiction
 - Ways to Use Archetypes to Get to Know Characters
 - Readers in Book Clubs Reflect, Asking Themselves...
 - Steps to Create a Tool or Strategy for Building Skills
 - Ways To Notice an Author’s Work on Plotting
 - Authors Sometimes Make Difficult Decisions in Order to...
 - Parts...fit with...Wholes
 - Some Prompts to Think about Literature with the World in Mind
 - A Few Social Issues to Look for in Dystopian Texts
 - Commonly Alluded-to Historical Events in Dystopian Fiction
 - What Thinking Word Does the Text Want Me to Do?
- Resources suggested in Teacher Edition from Heinemann site (must register book to obtain)
- Reading notebooks and reading logs
- Centers (developed by Teachers College)*

Suggested Book Club Texts:

- *The Testing Trilogy* by Joelle Charbonneau
- *The Hunger Games Trilogy/Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Susan Collins
- *The Divergent Trilogy* by Veronica Roth
- *The Giver Quartet* by Lois Lowry
- *The Matched Trilogy* by Ally Condie
- The Maze Runner Series by James Dashner
- *The Uglies Series* by Scott Westerfield
- *The Unwind Series* by Neal Schusterman

Unit 5: Literary Essay

Summary and Rationale

The ultimate goal of this unit is to lead students toward more independence and rigor in their writing. This unit begins with teaching students how to write about and reflect upon the themes they see in the texts they have

chosen to read. Then students will write an essay analyzing an author’s writing craft. Finally, students will learn to write an essay comparing the themes and craft of two texts they have read, developing strong claims of their own about the texts they have read. An added benefit of this unit is that students will be taught to be more powerful readers.

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I: The Thematic Essay (8 days)
- Bend II: The Author’s Craft Essay (6 days)
- Bend III: The Comparative Essay (3 days)

State Standards

Reading Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.8.12	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.
RI.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.
RI.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.
RI.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
RI.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.

Writing Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
W.8.1.A	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
W.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
W.8.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
W.8.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style.
W.8.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
W.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
W.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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.
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.
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.a	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").
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.

Speaking and Listening Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
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.
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.

Language Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
L.8.2.B	Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
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.
L.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
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.

Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- All narrative texts have themes.
- Literary critics always ask, "What is this text really about?"
- Essayists go through many stages of writing before composing a final product.

- Essayists consider not just the plot of a text, but the craft of the text when composing an essay.
- Essayists reflect on their own understandings to forge new understandings.

Unit Essential Questions

- How do writers find themes in a text?
- How do writers write about themes?
- How do writers organize their writing to most effectively deliver their message?
- How do writers read with responsive writing in mind?
- In what ways are texts related or not related to each other?
- How does the writing process, specifically revision, enhance our understanding of a theme?

Objectives

Students will know:

- All narrative texts have themes within them, and when literary critics start to look for those themes, they ask questions like, “What is this text really about?” or “What is this text trying to teach me about life?”
- Literary essayists dig deep in the texts they are writing about, reading critical scenes closely to look for nuance and detail, and then they use that text to say what they think the text is really saying.
- When literary essayists analyze a text, they pay careful attention to not just the details of the plot, but to the details of the author’s craft as well.
- When essayists get ready to draft, they think about what they already know about essay writing. To do this, they sometimes look at other people’s essays to help them make a plan, to remind them of what they have learned before, and to set new goals.
- Essayists, like all writers, bring their reading skills to their writing. When a draft is done, writers become readers, rereading the draft to think, “How much does this match my internal checklist?”
- When essayists revise their essays, they pause every time that they have introduced some evidence from the text, pushing themselves to explain exactly what that evidence means, and how it relates to the ideas they are discussing.
- Essay writers look for places in their essays where there could be another interpretation or opinion about the text, and they write to argue why their interpretation is the best one.
- Literary essayists look out for craft moves that pull their own weight—in particular, symbolism.
- Essayists introduce their essays by explaining the context of the text and also by naming how the ideas in the text might be relevant to the reader.
- When essayists revise, they work to adopt an engaging and formal tone in their writing by varying their sentence length and making sure their language is sophisticated.
- Literary essayists often write to think and grow ideas about more than one text at a time, pushing themselves to do the work of comparing and contrasting similar ideas across different texts.
- Writers have to use all that they know about essays to not just write well, but also quickly and flexibly in a new situation, by quickly recalling what they know, assessing their resources, and making a plan to put their knowledge into action.

Students will be able to:

- Determine the theme of a given text.
- Set their own writing goals.
- Use evidence from a text to support their interpretation of a theme.
- Compose an introduction that puts the text in context of the reader’s life.
- State a nuanced claim.
- Compose an essay that explains, using textual evidence, the theme of a text.
- Compose an essay that analyzes the author's craft in a specific text.
- Compose an essay that compares and contrasts two texts.

- Revise their essays referring back to their writing goals.

Resources

Core Text:

- “Safe and Sound,” by Taylor Swift
- “All Summer in a Day,” by Ray Bradbury
- Teacher Mentor Essay: “All Summer in a Day”
- Teacher’s Notebook: Author’s Craft and Theme
- New York Times Book Reviews

Suggested Resources:

(* indicates a resource that is available on the Google Drive)

- Anchor Charts:
 - How to Write a Thematic Essay
 - How to Write an Author’s Craft Essay
- Additional Charts:
 - Prompts to Push Writers...
 - Literary Devices that Authors Use to Highlight Themes ○ What Makes a Great Essay?
 - Narrative Writers Aim Toward Goals Such As...
 - Narrative Writers Use Techniques Such As...
 - Why Authors Use Commas
 - Ingredients and Materials for a Comparative Literary Essay
- Sample reading notebook entries/ Sample completed reading logs/formats*
- Centers (developed by Teachers College)*
- Predictable Early Conferences and Small Groups (p. 41 of the Curricular Calendar)

Unit 6: Critical Literacy: Unlocking Contemporary Fiction

Summary and Rationale

Students will become more independent with the critical reading and annotating skills they have acquired across their elementary- and middle-school years while also learning new, high-leverage strategies that will help them meet and exceed the expectations of their high school communities. This unit will focus on deepening comprehension, deepening students’ reading identities, and deepening students’ writing about reading. Students will be encouraged to bring their own identities into each text as they read while also considering how each student’s identity can shape their responses to their reading. The unit will then shift into the types of power that

are present within their readings while developing ways to map character power, power dynamics, power systems, and sources of power. Students will then take the time to discover ways to notice more subtle details that reveal microaggressions. As this unit progresses, students will grow ways that they can better develop abstract thinking skills. Finally, students will engage in novel advocacy in which they will select a novel from the unit that they felt a strong connection to and advocate to those in the community with power to include it in the curriculum. Throughout the unit, students will be given the opportunity to show understanding through checklists, notebook checks, self-assessments, and book talk.

Recommended Pacing

- Bend I-Diving into Textual and Emotional Complexity (7 sessions)
- Bend II-Critical Literary Lenses to Investigate Power (9 sessions)
- Bend III-Book Slams and Promoting Texts (4 sessions)

State Standards

Reading Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
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
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
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.
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.
RL.8.7	Evaluate the choices made by the directors or actors by analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script
RL.8.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.
RL.8.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

Writing Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
W.8.9.A	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”).

Speaking and Listening Standards

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.

SL.8.1.A	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.
SL.8.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.8.1.C	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas
SL.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Language Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.8.2.B	Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.4.B	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede)
L.8.4.C	Consult 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.
L.8.4.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.
L.8.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.8.5.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.8.5.C	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute)
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.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to deepen their comprehension and annotating skills while empowering themselves as democratic readers. ● Deepen their comprehension, studying summaries and reviews in preparation for reading and developing their own analytical summarizing techniques; ● Be innovative in their writing about reading, annotating and taking longer-form notes in reading notebooks to engage more deeply with texts and other readers; ● Readers consider their identities as lenses as they read to see novels reflecting their unique identities while also seeing their readings as windows into the lives and experiences of others. ● By recognizing power dynamics and power systems within stories, readers can better understand how characters and people are affected by power systems like racism, gender, etc. ● When a story or novel is important and teaches a lasting lesson, readers must compel others to read the novel. 	
Unit Essential Questions	

- Why must we read in order to build a more democratic and just world for all?
- In what ways do gender, racial, and economic norms reinforce or break down our identities and shape our perceptions of stories and the world?
- How can I access a text so that the story serves as both a mirror and a window?
- How can I use the subtle actions in a novel to recognize who holds the power and who is the victim?
- How can I utilize the pressures placed on a character to discover important character traits?
- How can I bring to life the exciting and moving moments in a text?
- How can I urge my peers to read novels that are impactful and meaningful?

Objectives

Students will know:

- That power exists in the world in a dynamic way that is influenced by race, culture, traditions, gender, etc.
- Powerful readers question deeply in order to not only analyze the text and its themes, but the world around them.
- Systemic issues and obstacles are influenced and influence all of us.
- That their identity allows them into mirrors and windows in which to view and analyze a text.

Students will be able to:

- Approach novels as being mirrors of their own experience, windows into another's experience, and sliding glass doors that will help create an entry point into another's experience.
- Conduct meaningful literary analysis.
- Engage in literary conversation with peers.
- Challenge gender, racial, religious, and other stereotypes they see in characters as they read.
- Develop strategies to sustain the requirements of reading several challenging novels.
- Consider how new novels reflect issues experienced in the real world, and how they may be changing and challenging what it means to be a literary classic.
- Transfer lessons learned from reading novels and meeting characters in different parts of the world to help them in their own neighborhood and in encounters with people they meet.
- Identify, understand, and explain the significance of symbols.
- Share a significant novel that they have read, and encourage someone else to read it.

Resources

Core Text:

- *Units of Study for Reading: Critical Literacy - Unlocking Contemporary Fiction* by Heather Burns, Mary Ehrenworth, and Sonja Cherry-Paul
- *Pride: A Pride and Prejudice Remix* by Ibi Zabo
- Selected clips from the films *Black Panther* and *The Hate U Give*

Suggested Resources:

- Critical Literacy Shelf, Grades 7-9
Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Classroom Library
- Goodreads, Kirkus, NPR, and NY Times Book Reviews

Unit 7: Memoir: Writing to Reflect on Experience and Suggest Thematic Connections

Summary and Rationale	
<p>This unit brings together the art of narrative and expository writing. Students will be asked to draw upon their previous narrative skills to engage the reader, sequence events, and convey meaning through storytelling, and to draw upon their expository work to skillfully unpack and couch those stories in idea-based writing. Students will learn to analyze their life experiences to determine what it is they want to convey about themselves and their lives and make purposeful craft and structure choices to do so.</p>	
Recommended Pacing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bend I: Collecting: Writing “Big” and “Small” to Discover Meaningful Topics, Patterns, and Questions to Explore in Memoir (3 sessions) ● Bend II: Drawing on the Qualities of Good Writing to Write--and Revise--Shapely Memoir (7 sessions) ● Bend III: Writing a Second Memoir, with a Focus on Bringing Out the Meaning (6 sessions) ● Bend IV: Publishing and Celebrating (3 sessions) 	
State Standards	
Reading Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.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.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
RL.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
RL.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.
Writing Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
W.8.2.A	Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia).
W.8.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
W.8.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
W.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.8.2.E	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
W.8.2.F	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
W.8.3.	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.8.3.A	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.
W.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
W.8.3.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.
W.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
W.8.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
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.
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.
Speaking and Listening Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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.
SL.8.1.A	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.
SL.8.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.8.1.C	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
SL.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Language Standards	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.8.1.A	Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
L.8.1.B	Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
L.8.1.C	Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
L.8.1.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.
L.8.2.A	Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
L.8.2.B	Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
L.8.2.C	Spell correctly
L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening

L.8.3.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).
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A memoir takes the personal narrative and adds a reflection piece to the story. ● Reflection on the importance of the small moment in shaping the writer is what differentiates it from a personal narrative. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do memoirists simultaneously write to capture small moments in their lives and step back to analyze themes and lessons in those moments? ● In what ways can mentor texts aid writers in learning strategies for writing, determining which structures will work best, and making the writing process meaningful? ● How can revision bring an added level of sophistication to a writer’s work? ● How is a memoir different from a personal narrative? 	
Objectives	
<p>Students will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The qualities and specific elements of a memoir and how they can be best used to show a theme. ● How to analyze texts and compare and contrast the elements of memoir found in the texts. ● That story structure can vary and impact the way their stories are told. <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect entries and freewriting in their notebooks as they work toward developing an idea. ● Move between reliving small moments from their lives and writing to capture those experiences on the page and stepping back to analyze the themes and lessons those moments convey ● Go through the process of flash-drafting, revising, and editing. ● Focus especially on bringing out meaning, drawing on strategies they’ve already learned as well as new ones you’ll teach them (or remind them of from prior years). 	
Resources	
<p>Core Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>If...Then...Curriculum</i> by Lucy Calkins et. al ● <i>Writing a Life: Teaching Memoir to Sharpen Insight, Shape Meaning--and Triumph Over Tests</i>, by Katherine Bomer ● <i>Worth Writing About: Exploring Memoir with Adolescents</i>, by Jake Wizner <p>Suggested Resources: <i>Unusual Normality</i>, by Ishmael Beah https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_GN08c6Tc8 <i>Black Like Me</i>, by Renee Watson https://rethinkingschools.org/articles/black-like-me/ <i>Hair</i> by Elizabeth Acevedo https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0I11xCfnzXs</p>	

Brown Girl Dreaming, by Jacqueline Woodson
Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings, by Margarita Engle
Soaring Earth, by Margarita Engle
Under The Royal Palms, by Alma Flor Ada
Where The Flame Trees Bloom, by Alma Flor Ada
Marshfield Dreams, by Ralph Fletcher
Life In Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina, by Misty Copeland
It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood, by Trevor Noah (Young Reader's Edition)
When I Was Your Age, edited by Amy Ehrlich

Graphic Novel Memoirs
El Deafo, by Cece Bell
Real Friends, by Shannon Hale
Smile and Sisters, by Raina Telgemeir
The Dumbest Idea Ever, by Jimmy Gownley