Eighth Grade ELA
2018-2019

Middle School. 8th grade language arts, often called ELA8, is the Des Moines Public Schools core curricular course for students in 8th grade in the study of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students grapple with increasingly complex texts in both fiction and non-fiction genres while studying the craft of skillful authors. Additionally, students in ELA8 focus their writing efforts on argumentative writing as they learn to become more effective communicators and critical consumers of information.

http://secondaryliteracy.dmschools.org/
http://grading.dmschools.org

Version: Epsilon+

Standards-Referenced Grading Basics

The teacher designs instructional activities that grow and measure a student's skills in the elements identified on our topic scales. Each scale features many such skills and knowledges, also called **learning targets**. These are noted on the scale below with letters (A, B, C) and occur at Levels 2 and 3 of the scale. In the grade book, a specific learning activity could be marked as being 3A, meaning that the task measured the A item at Level 3.

Evidence shows the student can...	Topic Score
Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3 and Level 4	**4.0**
Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3 with partial success at Level 4	**3.5**
Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3	**3.0**
Demonstrate at least half of the Level 3 learning targets	**2.5**
Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 2 but none of the learning targets from Level 3	**2.0**
Demonstrate at least half of the Level 2 learning targets and no Level 3 learning targets	**1.5**
Demonstrate none of the learning targets from Level 2 or Level 3	**1.0**
Produce no evidence appropriate to the learning targets at any level	**0**

The **Learning Goal** is the complete Level 3 of the scale.

Each lettered bullet point represents one **Learning Target**.

Each arrow bullet point represents an **unpacked** requirement of the target

Scale Level Symbols

Ⓐ	The targets on this level can be **changed**
Ⓑ	Targets on this level can **not** be changed
➕	**More** targets can be added to this level
✖	**No** targets are written at this level

When identifying a Topic Score, the teacher looks at all evidence for the topic. The table to the **right** shows which Topic Score is entered based on what the Body of Evidence shows.

Only scores of 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1.5, 1, and 0 can be entered as Topic Scores.

Some scales, particularly **Writing** and **Speaking & Listening** Topics, use an arrow for bullets instead of letters. While letters indicate **Learning Targets**, arrows indicate **Success Criteria** – think of them as the descriptors of what a student's total product or performance must show to score a 3 on that scale.

Multiple Opportunities

It's not about going back to do a retake, or back to redo something; it's about going forward, continually scaffolding student learning through multiple opportunities, and noting that improved learning. Our curriculum builds on itself. "Multiple opportunities" are about taking an assessment and connecting it to past topics. They're about allowing students to demonstrate their learning multiple times in units after their current unit or when learning is scaffolded into future units.

Multiple Opportunities suggestions will be noted in the guide to the right of the scales. Here you will see initial thinking of connections to other topics. This is also a place where teachers can add connections developed through their PLCs.

Guiding Practices of Standards-Referenced Grading
1. A consistent 4-point grading scale will be used.
2. Student achievement and behavior will be reported separately.
3. Scores will be based on a body of evidence.
4. Achievement will be organized by learning topic and converted to a grade at semester's end.
5. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.
6. Accommodations and modifications will be provided for exceptional learners.

Course Map

Unit	Estimated Duration	Content Standards	Grading Topics	Extended Topics
Unit One: *Elements of Literature*	12 weeks	• Reading Literature 1 • Reading Informational Text 1	• Analyzing Textual Evidence	*Collected and Reported* • Constructing Writing [W4, W5, W6] • Collaborating in Discussions [SL1] • Mastering Vocabulary [RL4, RI4, L4] • Applying Grammar and Mechanics 1 [L1, L2]
		• Reading Literature 2	• Analyzing Theme	
		• Reading Literature 3 • Reading Literature 6	• Analyzing Story Elements	
Unit Two: *Making Meaning*	6 weeks	• Reading Informational Text 2 • Reading Informational Text 3	• Analyzing Central Ideas	*Collected and Reported* **UNSCORED** • Comprehending Text [RL10, RI10]
Unit Three: *Argument*	12 weeks	• Reading Informational Text 6 • Reading Informational Text 8	• Evaluating Arguments and Purpose	*Collected and Reported* • Constructing Writing [W4, W5, W6] • Applying Grammar and Mechanics 2 [L1, L2] • Collaborating in Discussions [SL1] • Comprehending Text [RL10, RI10] • Mastering Vocabulary [RL4, RI4, L4]
		• Writing 1	• Writing Arguments	
Unit Four: *The Author's Craft*	6 weeks	• Reading Literature 5 • Reading Informational Text 5 • Reading Informational Text 9	• Analyzing Text Structure	

Testing Information
MAP

Fall Window
Sept 4 – Oct 1

Winter Window
Dec 3 – Jan 11

Spring Window
Apr 22 – May 17

Textbooks

Student Literature:
McDougal Littell Literature Grade 8
© 2008

Teacher Literature: Holt McDougal Literature Grade 8 © 2012

Grammar and Writing:
Prentice Hall Writing Coach Grade 8

Snapshot

Extended Topics

Year-Long

Organizing Principles
Some skills are so fundamental to the function and organization of a course that they persist throughout the course instead of being limited to a specific unit. These skills are described in this section of the curriculum guide and should be taught in tandem with unit-based instruction throughout the year.

Considerations

Comprehending Text
Evidence for this topic is collected three times per year using the MAP test. The Lexile score that results from this test should be translated to an SRG score using this scale. Teachers should assign a Topic Score based on the highest Lexile score earned on the MAP over the course of the year. In the first semester, this score does not contribute to the letter grade; it factors into the grade at the end of semester two only.

Mastering Vocabulary
This topic is collected and reported in both semesters. Activities used to collect evidence for this topic should be rooted in text-based vocabulary, not the vocabulary words associated with the academic scales in this curriculum guide. Pay careful attention to what the Level 3 requires on this scale—this is often overlooked.

Applying Grammar and Mechanics
This scale has a tight vertical alignment with other courses. Be advised that the instruction of isolated skills, such as the basics of parts of speech, should be provided only when absolutely required—the emphasis in each grade level should be only those supporting skills required to help students access and achieve the Level 3 Learning Targets assigned to each semester.

Constructing Writing
This topic is used specifically when either revising work generated by a different writing standard or when assessing writing that is not covered by the course's other writing topics.

Collaborating in Discussions
Use this scale when students are working in groups to process reading topics throughout the course. Strategies such as defined student roles and Socratic seminars help facilitate the collection of this evidence.

Standard Support

Testing Bank

PLC Resources

Grading Topic:
Constructing Writing

4 ⃤	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, the student demonstrates a command of voice and style that rises above formulaic writing.*
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Produce** clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience B. **Develop and strengthen** writing by planning, revising, and editing as needed, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed C. **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
2 ➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Describe** the task, purpose, and audience for a given writing task B. **Describe** how to modify samples of writing for a specific task, purpose, and audience C. **Plan** writing using a template or graphic organizer
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

Standard Language: CCSS ELA W.8.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Teacher Clarifications
Development: Is able to effectively arrange examples, support, and details into paragraphs. Is able to draw support from numerous sources or varying places within a source as required.

Organization: Is able to vary transitions to move from one idea to the next and create a sense of flow from beginning to end.

Style: Is able to vary sentence length and structure and make strong word choices, especially verbs.
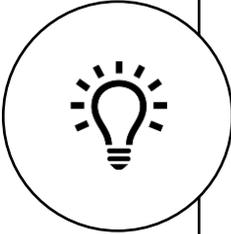
Academic Vocabulary
Development, Organization, Style, Task, Purpose, Audience

Multiple Opportunities
Any time students are doing writing that is not Argumentative in nature, consider also assessing this topic. Keep in mind that to fairly measure Learning Target 3A, the task, purpose, and audience for the writing should be clearly articulated in the prompt or directions.
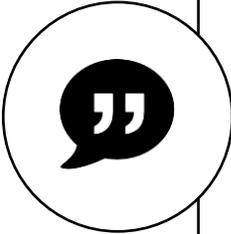
	Grading Topic: **Mastering Vocabulary**	
4 ⬓	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:* A. **Investigate** the evolution of form and meaning of an unusual word in a text	
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Determine** figurative, connotative, and technical meanings of words B. **Use** context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase C. **Use** common Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word D. **Analyze** the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone in a text, including analogies or allusions to other texts	
2 ➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Consult** reference materials, both print and digital, to find the pronunciation or a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech B. **Verify** the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase	
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*	

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA RI.8.4

*Identical to CCSS ELA RL.8.4 except adds "technical meanings"*

Standard Language: CCSS ELA L.8.4

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
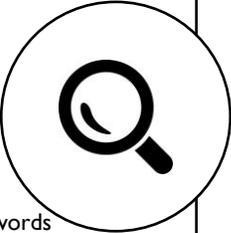
Click link at right for additional details on this standard.

Teacher Clarifications

Instructional materials and word lists can be found at the link to the right, which connects to the A STUDY OF WORD FAMILIES materials assigned to this grade level. When using these materials, Exercises I-IV are best viewed as practice. These materials are **OPTIONAL** but could be a powerful routine homework assignment for your class. In such a case, consider assigning one unit per week and connecting students to materials either through print-outs or an online platform such as Canvas.
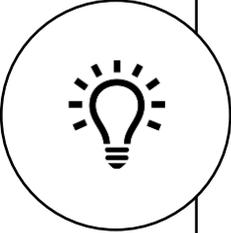
BONUS MATERIALS

If using A STUDY OF WORD FAMILIES, some Quizlet materials have been prepared by the publisher. Access them by clicking HERE.
Note: Grade 8 uses Book III (the Quizlet page labels that book as Grade 9)

Multiple Opportunities

Students being taught and assessed using the A STUDY OF WORD FAMILIES materials can be assessed multiple times throughout the semester (particularly using Exercise V (for 3C) and VI (for 3B) in each unit). To account for the ongoing nature of this process, grades can be determined using the three most recent assessments—this sort of Process-Based grading is a way to pull a grade at any given time while also requiring students to continuously work to keep up with vocabulary acquisition.

Academic Vocabulary

Technical, Context, Affix, Root, Meaning, Tone, Figurative, Connotative, Reference, Preliminary, Evolution, Form, Analogy, Allusion
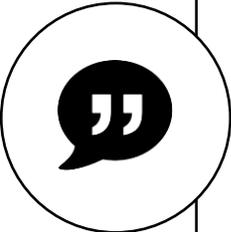
Grading Topic:
Collaborating in Discussions

4 △		*In addition to the Learning Goal, the student demonstrates a command of collaboration and discussion that reflects leadership and insightfulness.*
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**		*Students initiate and engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on topics and texts, 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 or text to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion ➢ Pose questions that connect ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas ➢ Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of evidence presented
2 ➕		*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Follow** rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, **track** progress towards specific goals and deadlines, and **define** individual roles as needed B. **Participate** actively in one-on-one, small-group, or class discussions in a thoughtful and appropriate manner C. **Prepare** for participation in a discussion
1 ✖		*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.
*Click link at right for additional details on this standard.*
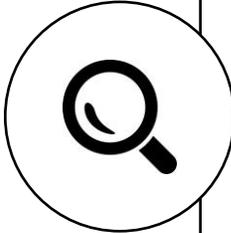
Teacher Clarifications
This topic is posted in both Semester 1 and Semester 2.

When helping to unpack the expectations of this topic with students, some teachers found the following language helpful. This cannot be learning target language, but could have a place in success criteria:

- *Read critically and for comprehension, come prepared with evidence and reflections, and use them in the discussion*
- *Ask questions and make connections among the ideas of other speakers*
- *Make inferences and draw conclusions, respond to other speakers with relevant evidence, observations, questions, and ideas*
- *Give and receive meaningful feedback with an open mind and be ready to defend my point of view*
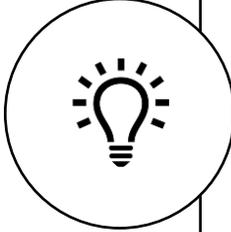
Academic Vocabulary
Prepare, Pose, Reflect, Acknowledge, Qualify, Justify

Multiple Opportunities
The subject matter of these collaborative discussions should be drawn from the skills students need to demonstrate in the reading standards. Observation of discussions should then be able to serve as evidence of both this topic and the associated reading topic.
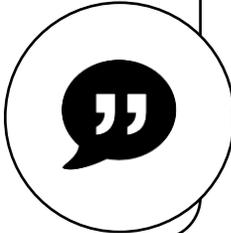
Grading Topic:
Comprehending Text

Score		Description
4	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **1231+** Lexile level (Advanced) • RIT Range **235+**
3.5	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **1141-1230** Lexile level (Proficient) • RIT Range **230-234**
3	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **1051-1140** Lexile level (Proficient) • RIT Range **225-229**
2.5	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **961-1050** Lexile level (Basic) • RIT Range **220-224**
2	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **871-960** Lexile level (Basic) • RIT Range **215-219**
1.5	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **475-870** Lexile level (Below Basic) • RIT Range **193-214**
1	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* • Read text at the **BR-474** Lexile level (Below Basic) • RIT Range **100-192**

Academic Vocabulary
None

Standard Language: CCSS ELA RL.8.10
By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA RI.8.10
By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Teacher Clarifications
This topic is posted in Semester 1 (where it does not factor into the grade) and in Semester 2 (where it **does** factor into the grade).

To see a student's Lexile score in MAP, log into the MAP system and look at the Class Report. Another way to see the scores (which will show all scores earned for the year) is to use the MAP Student Detail report in Tableau.
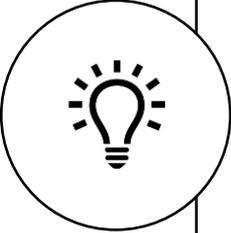
Multiple Opportunities
This topic should be assessed three times over the course of the year. Students will always be given a score based on their best performance among those three tests (even if the best result is the first one).
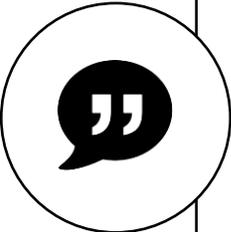
Grading Topic:
Applying Grammar and Mechanics

4 🔒	3 🔒 Learning Goal	2 🔒
Semester 1 *Students:* A. Delete commas in long or complex sentences when an incorrect understanding of the sentence suggests a pause that should be punctuated (e.g., between the elements of a compound subject or compound verb joined by *and*) B. Recognize and correct inappropriate uses of colons and semicolons C. Use punctuation to set off complex parenthetical elements D. Use apostrophes to form simple possessive nouns	*Students:* A. Delete commas when an incorrect understanding of the sentence suggests a pause that should be punctuated (e.g., between verb and direct object clause) B. Delete apostrophes used incorrectly to form plural nouns C. Use commas to avoid misunderstandings (e.g., to set off a long introductory element from the rest of the sentence when a misreading is possible) D. Use commas to set off simple parenthetical elements	*Students:* A. Determine the need for punctuation or conjunctions to correct awkward-sounding fragments, fused sentences, and obviously faulty subordination and coordination of clauses B. Delete commas that markedly disturb sentence flow (e.g., between modifier and modified element) C. Use appropriate punctuation in straightforward situations (e.g., simple items in a series)
Semester 2 *Students:* A. Recognize and correct errors in sentence structure (e.g., faulty placement of phrases, faulty coordination and subordination of clauses, lack of parallelism within a simple series of phrases) B. Maintain consistent and logical verb tense and pronoun person on the basis of the preceding clause or sentence C. Form simple and compound verb tenses, both regular and irregular, including forming verbs by using have rather than of (e.g., *would have gone*, not *would of gone*) D. Ensure pronoun-antecedent agreement when the pronoun and antecedent occur in separate clauses or sentences E. Recognize and correct vague and ambiguous pronouns	*Students:* A. Recognize and correct major problems in sentence structure (e.g., faulty placement of adjectives, participial phrase fragments, missing or incorrect relative pronouns, dangling or misplaced modifiers, lack of parallelism within a simple series of verbs) B. Use the correct comparative or superlative adjective or adverb form depending on context (e.g., "He is the oldest of my three brothers") C. Ensure subject-verb agreement when there is some text between the subject and verb D. Use idiomatically appropriate prepositions, especially in combination with verbs (e.g., long for, appeal to) E. Recognize and correct expressions that differ from idiomatic English	*Students:* A. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense and voice when the meaning of the entire sentence must be considered B. Determine whether an adjective form or an adverb form is called for in a given situation C. Ensure straightforward subject-verb agreement D. Ensure straightforward pronoun-antecedent agreement E. Use idiomatically appropriate prepositions in simple contexts F. Use the appropriate word in frequently confused pairs (e.g., *there* and *their*, *past* and *passed*, *led* and *lead*)

1 ❌	Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

*These standards are derived from both the Core (CCSS ELA L 1 and CCSS ELA L 2) and the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards for English. Note that some targets may lend themselves to work in isolation (**recognize and correct, delete**), while others benefit more from applied use in student writing (**form, determine, ensure, use, maintain**).*

Unit 1: Elements of Literature

12 Weeks

Organizing Principles
A longer unit focused on analysis of literature. This unit should include a novel or literature circle to give students rich and substantive text upon which to base their analyses.

Don't forget:
MAP testing
happens in this unit.

Materials

Commonly Used Full-Length Texts
Touching Spirit Bear / Catching Fire
Nothing But the Truth / Bud, Not Buddy
The Outsiders / Crossing the Wire
The Giver / The Adoration of Jenna Fox
Unwind / Peak
Red Glass / Endangered

Commonly Used Short Pieces
The Elevator (p.27)
Raymond's Run (p.32)
The Tell-Tale Heart (p.76)
The Treasure of Lemon Brown (p.168)
The Monkey's Paw (p. 358)
Abuela Invents the Zero (p.445)
Pandora's Box (p.454)
The Old Grandfather and His Little Grandson (p.462)
The Wise Old Woman (p.466)
The Ransom of Red Chief (p.46)

Grammar Guidance
Use exercises from Writing Coach to start assessing where on the Applying Grammar and Mechanics scale instruction needs to start. Any time students are writing, take the opportunity to talk about grammar targets that are relevant to the type of writing they are doing.

Standard Support

Testing Bank

PLC Resources

Grading Topic: **Analyzing Textual Evidence**		
4 △	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:* • Possible Target: Analysis	
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Support** analysis with inferences and evidence paraphrased from text B. **Support** analysis with inferences and evidence cited directly from text C. **Distinguish** between relevant and irrelevant evidence in a text	
2 ➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Describe** what a text says explicitly B. **Draw** logical inferences from the text	
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*	

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Teacher Clarifications
Target 3B requires students to use MLA in-line citation format (following the quote with author name and page number or setting up the quote with author name and then following with page number in parentheses). Single page or website sources do not require the page number, though the root of the URL may be appropriate (ex: CNN.com)

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
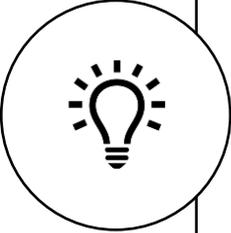
Academic Vocabulary
Cite, Explicit, Inference, Textual Evidence, Paraphrase, Relevant, Irrelevant

Multiple Opportunities
Students should be able to circle back throughout the year. **Collaborating in Discussions** explicitly builds on these skills, and inferences and evidence are an essential part of the context-dependent portions of **Mastering Vocabulary**. This topic establishes the baseline for the way that argumentative claims can and will be supported with evidence (and commentary/explanation) in Unit 3, and it may be wise to emphasize this early on to set the proper tone for students.
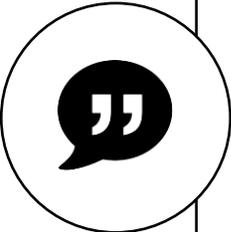
Grading Topic:
Analyzing Theme

4 △	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:* • Possible Target: Investigation
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Analyze** the relationship between theme and the characters, setting, and plot in a text
2 ➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Determine** a theme in a text
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.
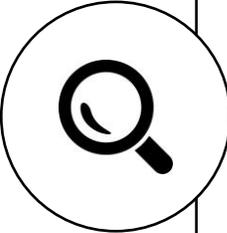
Teacher Clarifications
Theme at this level is a statement, not a single word—be sure to elicit more complex theme statements from students in order to facilitate the level of analysis required.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
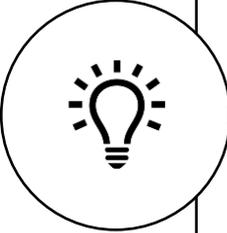
Academic Vocabulary
Theme

Multiple Opportunities
Short papers in response to theme might be ideal evidence for the **Constructing Writing** topic, and conversations on the matter are well suited to **Collaborating in Discussions** tasks. The language of some stories may support the **Mastering Vocabulary** as well.
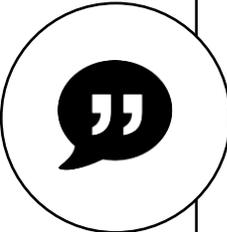
Grading Topic:
Analyzing Story Elements

4 △	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:* • Possible Target: Investigation	
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Analyze** how dialogue moves the story forward and provokes characters to make decisions B. **Analyze** how events move the story forward and provoke characters to make decisions C. **Analyze** how differences in points of view between characters create such effects as suspense and humor	
2 ➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Identify** significant dialogue or events in a work of literature B. **Identify** how dialogue or events reveal information about a character C. **Determine** different points of view within a story	
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*	

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Teacher Clarifications
Pay particular attention to target 3C—this is notably new at 8th grade and is extremely foundational to high school course work.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
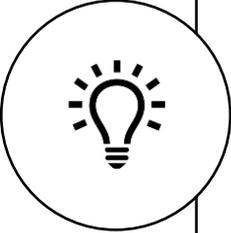
Academic Vocabulary
Characterization, Conflict, Dialogue, Protagonist, Antagonist, Suspense, Tone

Multiple Opportunities
Short papers in response to story elements are ideal evidence for the **Constructing Writing** topic, and discussions on literature are always good **Collaborating in Discussions** tasks. The language of some stories may support the **Mastering Vocabulary** as well.

Depending on approach, this topic may recur in Unit 4.
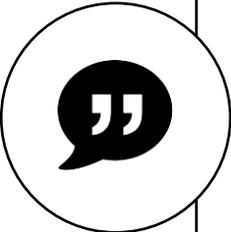
Unit 2: Making Meaning

6 Weeks

Organizing Principles
A shorter unit focused on determining the message of a text, serving as a springboard into non-fiction.

Don't forget:
MAP testing
at the end of the semester.

Materials

Commonly Used Full-Length Texts

Commonly Used Short Pieces
The Spider Man Behind Spider-Man (p.884)
Robo-Legs (p.928)

Grammar Guidance
Continue using Writing Coach and revision on student **Constructing Writing** tasks to practice and collect evidence on as many targets from **Applying Grammar and Mechanics** as possible. Record evidence separately from Infinite Campus since this topic doesn't show up in the grade book until Semester 2.

Standard Support

Testing Bank

PLC Resources

Grading Topic:
Analyzing Central Ideas

4 △

In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:
- Possible Target: Decision-Making

3 🔒

Learning Goal

Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
A. **Analyze** development of a central idea over the course of a non-fiction text, including its relationship to supporting ideas
B. **Provide** an objective summary of a text
C. **Analyze** how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, and events

2 ➕

Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
A. **Determine** central idea of a non-fiction text
B. **Recognize** examples of irrelevant or unimportant details in isolation
C. **Identify** the use of comparisons, analogies, or categories in a text

1 ✖

Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA RI.8.3
Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
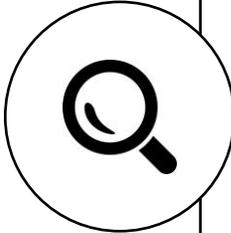
Teacher Clarifications
Note that this topic is rather expanded from previous versions—since it stands alone in Unit 2, there should be an opportunity to more fully unpack these analytical skills with students to set them up for success in the subsequent unit.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
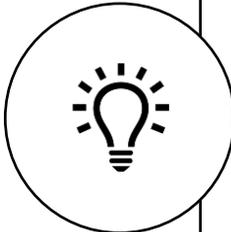
Academic Vocabulary
Analyze, Central Idea, Objective, Summary, Connections, Distinctions, Analogies

Multiple Opportunities
Students have many purposes for **Collaborating in Discussions** and many opportunities for **Mastering Vocabulary** during the study of this topic. **Constructing Writing** would be a natural method of collecting evidence on student understanding of the topic as well.

This topic may recur in Unit 3 when engaging in **Evaluating Arguments and Purpose** tasks.
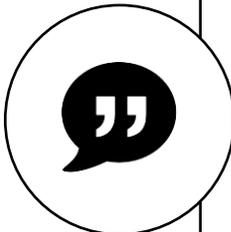
Unit 3: Argument

12 Weeks

Organizing Principles
A robust unit focused on how argument works and is successfully made, this unit has many opportunities for larger project-driven work, from research to presentations, but all things work in service of argument, claims, and evidence.

Materials

Commonly Used Full-Length Texts
I Am Malala
Nothing But the Truth
The Outsiders
The Hunger Games
Unwind

Commonly Used Short Pieces
Zoos (p.968, 974)
Dodgeball in Physical Education (p.984)

Grammar Guidance
Use the editing process on pieces written for **Constructing Writing** or **Writing Arguments** products to practice and collect evidence on as many targets from Applying Grammar and Mechanics as possible. As of this unit, evidence can now be entered in the grade book.

Standard Support

Testing Bank

PLC Resources

Grading Topic:
Evaluating Arguments and Purpose

4 △ | *In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:*
- Possible Target: Decision-Making

3 🔒

Learning Goal

Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
A. **Evaluate** whether the reasoning is logical in a specific claim or an entire argument
B. **Evaluate** whether the evidence is sufficient in a specific claim or an entire argument
C. **Analyze** how an author acknowledges and refutes counterclaims in an argument
D. **Analyze** how two or more texts provide information on matters of facts or interpretation of the same topic

2 ➕

Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
A. **Delineate** the argument and specific claims in a text
B. **Determine** an author's point of view or purpose in a text
C. **Compare** the structure of two or more texts

1 ✖

Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.
**Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.
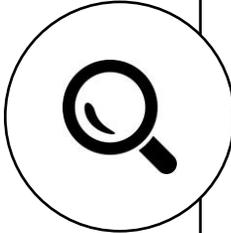
Teacher Clarifications
Procon.org and SIRS (in the Heartland database collection) are both excellent resources for gathering materials for the study of this topic.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
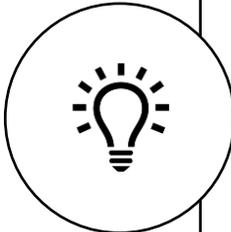
Academic Vocabulary
Argument, Claim, Evaluate, Reasoning, Logical, Sufficient

Note that a piece will have just one argument and often several claims.

Multiple Opportunities
Writing in regards to the effectiveness of arguments can generate **Constructing Writing** evidence and, in the process, also create opportunity for both **Applying Grammar and Mechanics** and **Collaborating in Discussions**.

Among the most logical connections with this topic is to have students evaluate the effectiveness of their own **Writing Arguments** tasks.
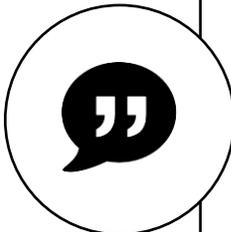
	Grading Topic: **Writing Arguments**
4 △	In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate a command of voice and style that rises above formulaic writing.
3 🔒 **Learning Goal**	Students demonstrate they have the ability to write multi-paragraph arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. These texts: ➢ Introduce the argument and claims ➢ Acknowledge and refute a counterclaim within the argument ➢ Organize reasons and evidence logically ➢ Support claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence drawn from accurate, credible sources ➢ Use transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence ➢ Establish and maintain a formal style ➢ Provide a conclusion that supports the argument
2 ➕	Students demonstrate they have the ability to: A. **Write** a claim on a topic and relevant reasons/examples to support that claim B. **Generate** relevant counterclaims C. **Write** a concluding statement D. **Write** a paragraph with a clear claim and supporting evidence E. **Write** a paragraph that presents and refutes a counterclaim
1 ✖	Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

Academic Vocabulary

Clarify, Counterclaim, Credible, Refute

Standard Language: CCSS ELA W.8.1
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

For additional details on this standard, click the link to the right.

Teacher Clarifications
Students should complete several drafts of this paper if possible—each draft is a piece of evidence. While the basic expectation of 8th grade extended writing is "multi-paragraph" in length, a fully revised piece should exceed a full page as a minimum length. To make this happen, you will likely need to start instruction on this topic early in the unit.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.
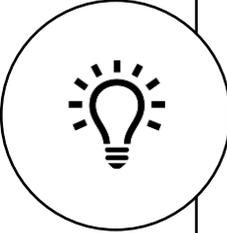
Multiple Opportunities
Revision of argumentative writing can provide evidence for **Constructing Writing**. Writing should showcase a student's grammar and mechanics, creating opportunities to measure **Applying Grammar and Mechanics** as well.

The Revision Assistant software can support this standard in numerous ways. The following argumentative prompts are reserved for ELA8: School Sports and Letter to Your Principal: Cell Phones
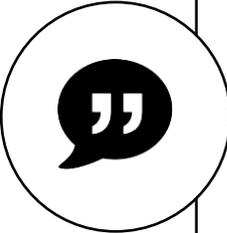
Unit 4: The Author's Craft

6 Weeks

Organizing Principles
An open unit designed to flexibly give up time to the meatier Argument unit before it, Unit 4 can be the home of a novel study with text rich in complex language or a place for further work on non-fiction. The focus is on an analysis of text structure and how the parts contribute to the meaning of the whole. This unit also provides ample opportunity for re-teaching and re-testing of previous topics.

Don't forget:
MAP testing
at the end of the semester.

Materials

Commonly Used Full-Length Texts
The Giver
Animal Farm

Commonly Used Short Pieces
Flowers for Algernon (p.188)
Charly (p.216)
The Lesson of the Moth (p.596)
Identity (p.601)

Grammar Guidance
This final unit is the last opportunity to secure the Level 3 Learning Targets in Grammar and Mechanics before students move on to English I. With this in mind, place deliberate emphasis on scheduling opportunities for students to learn and apply the skills that have not yet been demonstrated.

Standard Support

Testing Bank

PLC Resources

		Grading Topic: **Analyzing Text Structure**
4	△	*In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:* • Possible Target: Decision-Making
3 Learning Goal	🔒	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Analyze** how the differing structure of two or more texts contributes to the meaning of each text B. **Analyze** in detail how specific sentences and paragraphs develop and refine key concepts in a text
2	➕	*Students demonstrate they have the ability to:* A. **Recognize** signal words or phrases associated with text structure (examples: following, compared with, therefor, as a result of) in a text B. **Describe** the structure of a specific paragraph in a text and the text as a whole
1	✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

**Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.

Standard Language: CCSS ELA 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.
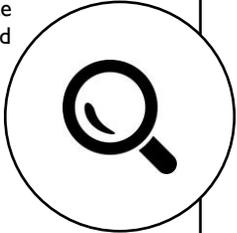
Teacher Clarifications
Note that target 3C requires students to compare multiple texts to one another. This could set up a Decision-Making type of Level 4 task.

Have a request for clarification? Submit it to the Secondary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator.

Academic Vocabulary

Structure, Meaning, Refine, Interpretation
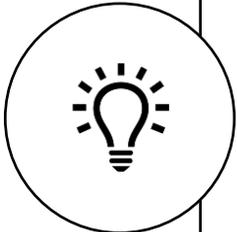
Multiple Opportunities
As the final topic of the year, there can (and should) be many ways to connect to the **Constructing Writing**, **Applying Grammar and Mechanics**, and especially the **Collaborating in Discussions** topics.

It may be beneficial to cycle back to a number of previous topics as part of an in-depth study of this topic.