

Grade 8 English Language Arts

Full-Year Pacing Guide

8 units · 32 instructional weeks · all 41 Common Core standards. Reading builds toward the argument unit; writing modes land after students have read strong models of each.

WEEKS 1-4

Unit 1: Evidence and Theme in Literature

Cite the evidence that MOST strongly supports an analysis; determine a theme and trace its development; write objective summaries.

RL.8.1

Citing textual evidence

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

RL.8.2

Theme and its development

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.8.10

Range of literature

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.

WEEKS 5-8

Unit 2: Character, Craft and Structure

How dialogue and incidents propel a story; word choice, tone, and figurative language; comparing the structure of two texts.

RL.8.3

Dialogue and incidents

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

Word meaning and figurative language

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

Comparing text structures

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.

L.8.5

Figurative language and nuance

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

WEEKS 9-11

Unit 3: Point of View and Story Across Mediums

Dramatic irony and points of view; evaluating film and stage choices against the text; how modern fiction draws on myth and tradition.

RL.8.6

Point of view and dramatic irony

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

Text vs. film or live production

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

RL.8.9

Modern fiction and source material

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.

WEEKS 12-15

Unit 4: Informational Ideas and Evidence

Central ideas and their development in nonfiction; strongest textual evidence; how texts connect and distinguish ideas, individuals, and events.

- RI.8.1 Citing evidence in nonfiction**
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 Central idea in nonfiction**
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 Connections and distinctions**
Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
- RI.8.10 Range of nonfiction**
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.
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WEEKS 16-19

Unit 5: Informational Craft and Perspective

Technical and connotative word meanings; paragraph-level structure; author's point of view and conflicting evidence; choosing the right medium.

- RI.8.4 Word meaning in nonfiction**
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 Paragraph and sentence structure**
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 Author's point of view**
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 Evaluating mediums**
Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.
- L.8.4 Determining word meanings**
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.
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WEEKS 20-23

Unit 6: Argument: Reading It, Writing It

Evaluate the soundness of reasoning and sufficiency of evidence; analyze two texts that disagree on the facts; write arguments with claims, counterclaims, and evidence.

- RI.8.8 Evaluating arguments**
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 Conflicting texts**
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.
- W.8.1 Argument writing**
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
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WEEKS 24-28

Unit 7: Writing Modes, Process and Research

Informative and narrative writing; planning, revising, and publishing with technology; short research projects with credible sources and correct citation.

W.8.2 Informative writing

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.3 Narrative writing

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.8.4 Clear and coherent writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.8.5 Planning, revising, editing

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 Technology and collaboration

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 Short research projects

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 Gathering and citing sources

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 Evidence from texts

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.8.10 Range of writing

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.

WEEKS 29-32

Unit 8: Speaking, Listening and Language Study

Collegial discussion and formal presentation; verbals, voice, and mood; punctuation for effect. Conventions taught here are reinforced all year.

SL.8.1 Collaborative discussions

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 Analyzing diverse media

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 Evaluating a speaker's argument

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 Presenting claims and findings

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 Multimedia in presentations

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

SL.8.6 Adapting speech

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

L.8.1 Grammar and usage

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.2 Capitalization, punctuation, spelling

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.3 Knowledge of language

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.6 Academic vocabulary

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.
