



West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District
Integrated Reading and Language Arts (IRLA)
Grade 8
Revised July 2024

Equity Statement for Grades 6-12 English Language Arts Curriculum

West Windsor - Plainsboro School District is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable, and rigorous English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum for all students in grades 6-12. This commitment aligns with the current Conference on English Education (CEE) Position Statement, which grounds ELA teacher education in issues of justice, equity, and diversity. The statement emphasizes the importance of preparing and supporting ELA teachers who embody the qualities we seek to develop in all learners: creative, literate, agentic, compassionate individuals; contributors to the cultural, social, and economic health of their communities; and critically aware, participatory citizens in a complex, diverse, and increasingly globalized world.

Commitment to Equity

Our district recognizes that while each student's educational journey is unique, it is vital that all students have equitable experiences in Language Arts, regardless of the sequence of teachers they have during their time in the district. To achieve this, we are dedicated to:

1. **Diverse and Inclusive Curriculum:** Providing a curriculum that reflects diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences, enabling students to see themselves and others in the literature they study.
2. **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Supporting our teachers with professional development opportunities to enhance their cultural responsiveness, ensuring that instruction is relevant and meaningful to all students.
3. **Equitable Access to Resources:** Ensuring all students have access to high-quality learning materials and resources, including technology, books, and supplementary materials that support diverse learning needs and styles.
4. **Supportive Learning Environment:** Creating a safe and supportive learning environment where all students feel valued and respected, and where their voices and experiences are heard and honored.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly reviewing and updating our curriculum and teaching practices to reflect current research and best practices in ELA education, with a focus on equity and inclusivity.

Teacher Preparation and Support

We are committed to the preparation and support of ELA teachers who:

- **Champion Equity:** Advocate for and implement equitable teaching practices that address the diverse needs of all students.
- **Foster Critical Awareness:** Encourage students to develop critical thinking skills and an awareness of social justice issues through the study of literature and language.
- **Promote Compassionate Citizenship:** Guide students to become compassionate, informed, and active members of their communities.
- **Embody Core Values:** Model the core values of creativity, literacy, agency, and compassion in their teaching practices and interactions with students.

By grounding our ELA curriculum in these principles and continuously striving to create an equitable educational environment, we aim to ensure that every student in our district is empowered to succeed academically, socially, and personally.

Conclusion

Our district's commitment to equity in the ELA curriculum is unwavering. We believe that by providing all students with equitable educational experiences, we can foster a community of learners who are prepared to thrive in an increasingly complex and diverse world. We invite all stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, and community members—to join us in this important endeavor.

Unit 1 Memoir: Writing to Reflect on Identity and Experience

Content Area: Language Arts

Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8

Summary and Rationale

In this opening unit, students will examine a variety of engaging memoir texts to explore multiple structures, styles and craft within this genre. By examining these texts, students will come to understand that memoir explores the story within the story as well as modes of introspection and connection to other experiences in life. Subsequently, students will craft a memoir where they draw upon and extend their prior narrative writing skills to engage the reader, sequence events, relate those original events to an additional story/scene(s) and convey meaning through storytelling. To do this, students must learn to analyze their life experiences to determine what it is they most want to convey about themselves and their lives and why that matters (the 'so what') and then make purposeful craft and structure choices to do so.

Recommended Pacing

9 lesson days

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (SS) System and Structure of Language: By the end of grade 12, demonstrate command of grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

CPI #

Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

L.SS.8.1.

Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

- A. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
- B. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- C. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
- D. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- E. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
- F. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
- G. Recognize spelling conventions.

Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CPI #

Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

L.KL.8.2.

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

	<p>A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.</p> <p>B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p> <p>C. 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).</p>
<p>Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VI.8.4.	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>B. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>C. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>D. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</p>
<p>Standard: Language Domain: (VL) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Literal Meaning: By the end of grade 12, determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words using analysis of word parts (morphemes), word solving strategies, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VL.8.3.	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>B. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.</p> <p>C. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).</p>

	<p>D. 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.</p> <p>E. 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).</p>
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (CI) Central Ideas and Themes of Texts: By the end of grade 12, determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CI.8.2.	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
<p>Standard: Writing Domain: (NW) Narrative Writing: By the end of grade 12, write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.NW.8.3.	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
W.NW.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.NW.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
W.NW.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.NW.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
W.NW.8.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Writing Domain: (RW) Range of Writing: By the end of grade 12, 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.RW.8.7.	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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening: (PE) Participate Effectively: By the end of grade 12, prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PE.8.1.	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Standard: Speaking and Listening: (AS) Adapt Speech: By the end of grade 12, adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

SL.AS.8.6.	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
Standard: Speaking and Listening: (PI) Present Information: By the end of grade 12, present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PI.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.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect an individual's everyday activities and career options.
8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meaningful memoirs reveal something important about my character or my experience. ● Narrative structures bring out important meaning through linked stories and written reflection. ● Powerful topics can be explored by moving between small details and big ideas. ● Studying mentor texts allows us to see that big ideas and clear voice can exist in a memoir. ● Powerful messages can be conveyed through memoirs by adjusting narrative structures. ● Meaning can be created in memoirs by drawing on a repertoire of old and new narrative strategies. ● Experimenting with narrative structure and written craft allows for greater independence in my writing throughout the writing process--drafting, revising, and editing. 	
Unit Essential Questions	

- How can I craft a meaningful memoir that reveals something important about my character and experience, using what I know of narrative structure to bring out an important meaning through linked stories and written reflection?
- How can I collect ideas to explore powerful topics, moving between writing small details and writing about big ideas?
- How can I convey a big idea through my memoir by studying mentor texts, adjusting structure, and drawing on a repertoire of old and new strategies for highlighting meaning?
- How do I draft, revise and edit with greater independence while also bringing out my bigger meaning in even more powerful ways by experimenting with structure and elaboration?

Objectives

We are learning to/that:

1. **We are learning to use various memoir structures, styles, and techniques by examining a range of engaging texts.**
 - Students will explore different memoirs to identify diverse structures and stylistic approaches used by authors.
2. **We are learning that memoirs delve into deeper narratives and personal reflections connected to broader life experiences.**
 - Students will study how memoirs explore underlying stories and personal insights related to other experiences in life.
3. **We are learning to create memoirs that captivate the reader, organize events effectively, and connect personal experiences to larger narratives.**
 - Students will use their narrative writing skills to craft memoirs that engage readers and interweave personal events with additional stories or scenes.
4. **We are learning to analyze our life experiences to determine the most significant aspects to convey and their importance.**
 - Students will reflect on their lives to identify key experiences and understand their relevance for their memoirs.
5. **We are learning to make intentional choices in craft and structure to effectively tell our stories.**
 - Students will purposefully decide on the craft and structure elements of their memoirs to clearly convey their intended messages and themes.

Evidence of Learning

- Formative Assessment**
A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks, such as reading analysis responses, reflections, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze literary works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.

- Summative Assessment**

The culminating task asks students to synthesize their learning in a memoir that answers the unit’s essential question: How can I craft a meaningful memoir that reveals something important about my character and experience, using what I know of narrative structure to bring out an important meaning through linked stories and written reflection? Additionally, students will craft several reading response paragraphs analyzing how the author uses the structure of memoir to convey meaning.

Alternative Assessment: Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.

Benchmark: Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.

Resources

Foundational Resources:

When I Was Your Age: Original Stories about Growing Up, edited by Amy Elrich
“Everything Will Be Okay” by James Howe

Suggested Resources:

“Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan
“For My People Who Love Spam” by Minjung Pai
“How to Be Black” by Baratunde Thurston
“The Jacket” by Gary Soto
“First French Kiss” by Adam Bagdasarian
“Superman and Me” by Sherman Alexie
“Don’t Peak in High School” by Mindy Kaling
“Two Lies” by Nancie Atwell
“Fufi” by Trevor Noah
“My High School Commute” by Colin Jost
“Things They Don’t Tell You About the Biz” by Amy Poehler
“Fraud” by Abby Wambach
“Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyon
Student examples of “Where I’m Going” poems
Teacher and student generated exemplars

Additional Supports

[WW-P Accommodations and Assessment](#) (Reference Tool and Glossary)

Unit 2: Power and Privilege: An Intricate Study of Literature through the Lenses of Social Issues

Content Area: Language Arts

Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8

Summary and Rationale

In this comparative literary analysis unit, students will explore the complicated themes of social justice, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance. Students will engage in lens-based discussions about literature as they build off of each others' ideas to analyze authors' craft moves present in multiple texts. Students will continue to pull from the close reading skills modeled in previous reading--as well as those specific to the discourse of social issues literature--to explore the complicated themes and real world connections. The integration of LGBTQ+ texts into the curriculum also aligns with the emphasis in 8th grade on social equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance. The unit is a focused way to have all students share the same mentor text--*The Outsiders*--as well as model and set the bar for the skills (reading, discussion, and analysis) students will be able to use for the remainder of the year. In this unit, readers will also utilize the structure of book clubs to deepen their comprehension of social issues within texts. Additionally, students will focus on literary terms, critical reading lenses, and analysis. This unit aims to enhance students' understanding of the importance of real-world social issues within texts and spark social awareness, empathy and student advocacy.

Recommended Pacing

31 lesson days without Part 5 extension/ 36 lesson days with Part 5 extension

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (SS) System and Structure of Language: By the end of grade 12, demonstrate command of grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

CPI #

Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

L.SS.8.1.

Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

- A. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
- B. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- C. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
- D. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- E. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
- F. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
- G. Recognize spelling conventions.

Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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| L.KL.8.2. | <p>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases. B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. C. 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). |
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Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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| L.VI.8.4. | <p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. B. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. C. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. D. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute). |
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Standard: Language Domain: (VL) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Literal Meaning: By the end of grade 12, determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words using analysis of word parts (morphemes), word solving strategies, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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| L.VL.8.3. | <p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> |
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	<p>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.</p> <p>B. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.</p> <p>C. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).</p> <p>D. 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.</p> <p>E. 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).</p>
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (CI) Central Ideas and Themes of Texts: By the end of grade 12, determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CI.8.2.	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (TS) Text Structure: By the end of grade 12, analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.TS.8.4.	Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.
RI.TS.8.4.	Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.
<p>Standard: Reading Domain: (PP) Perspective and Purpose in Texts: By the end of grade 12, assess how perspective or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.</p>	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

RL.PP.8.5.	Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text through the use of different perspectives of the characters and that of the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony).
RI.PP.8.5.	Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text and by acknowledging and responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
Standard: Reading Domain: (MF) Diverse Media and Formats: By the end of grade 12, synthesize content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.MF.8.6.	Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums, including the representation/s or various perspectives of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), as well as what is emphasized or absent in each work.
RI.MF.8.6.	Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CT) Comparison of Texts: By the end of grade 12, analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CT.8.8.	Analyze and reflect on how the author’s idea in fiction and literary nonfiction texts (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) is shaped by the author’s emphasis on different evidence, advancing different interpretations of facts, or fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WR) Writing Research: By the end of grade 12, conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

W.WR.8.5.	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.
Standard: Writing: (RW) Range of Writing: By the end of grade 12, 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.RW.8.7.	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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PE) Participate Effectively: By the end of grade 12, prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (ES) Evaluate Speakers: By the end of grade 12, evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.ES.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PI) Present Information: By the end of grade 12, present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PI.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (UM) Use Media: By the end of grade 12, make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.UM.8.5.	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (AS) Adapt Speech: By the end of grade 12, adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.AS.8.6.	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect individual's everyday activities and career options.
8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.

Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Literature serves as a powerful vehicle for exploring and understanding complex social issues such as equity, identity, and community.
- Authors use specific craft moves and literary techniques to effectively convey messages about social issues and provoke critical thought.
- Close reading skills and critical lenses are essential tools for analyzing and interpreting literature, particularly texts that engage with equity themes.
- Incorporating diverse texts, including LGBTQ+ literature, enriches discussions about equity, identity, and acceptance within literary contexts.
- Collaborative learning structures like book clubs and shared mentor texts facilitate deeper comprehension and discussion of social issues present in literature.
- Using strategies from reading across genres allows readers to make sense of complicated words by recognizing that words have multiple meanings and authors sometimes convey meaning indirectly.
- Using the opportunities available to us to advocate for a positive impact on others and/or the world is among the greatest purposes of life.

Unit Essential Questions

- How do themes of equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance manifest in literature?
- What are the craft moves used by authors to convey themes and messages about social issues?
- Why is it important to use close reading skills and critical lenses when examining social issues literature?
- How can literature, including LGBTQ+ texts, contribute to discussions about equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance?
- What impact do book clubs and shared mentor texts like *The Outsiders* have on deepening our comprehension of social issues in literature?
- How can we use reading/writing/speaking skills to advocate on behalf of those suffering social injustices?

Objectives

We are learning to/that:

1. **We are learning to investigate complex themes of equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance in literature.**
 - Students will examine texts to understand and discuss intricate themes related to equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance.
2. **We are learning to participate in lens-based discussions to analyze authors' techniques and build on each other's ideas.**
 - Students will engage in discussions using different critical lenses to deepen their understanding of literary techniques and themes.
3. **We are learning to apply close reading skills and social issues discourse to explore complex themes and real-world connections.**
 - Students will utilize their close reading skills to dissect texts and understand how their social issues themes relate to real-world issues.
4. **We are learning to incorporate LGBTQ+ texts to align with the themes of equity, identity, community, engagement, and acceptance.**
 - Students will read and analyze LGBTQ+ texts, recognizing their relevance to broader equity themes.
5. **We are learning to use *The Outsiders* as a mentor text to develop reading, discussion, and analysis skills.**

- Students will study *The Outsiders* to enhance their abilities in reading, discussing, and analyzing literature.
- 6. **We are learning to participate in book clubs to deepen our understanding of social issues in texts.**
 - Students will engage in book club discussions to collaboratively explore and discuss social issues presented in their readings.
- 7. **We are learning to focus on literary terms, critical reading lenses, and analysis to enhance our understanding of social issues in literature.**
 - Students will study and apply literary terms and critical reading lenses to analyze texts more effectively.
- 8. **We are learning to connect our literary analysis to real-world social issues to develop social awareness, empathy, and advocacy.**
 - Students will relate their literary analysis to real-world social issues, fostering social awareness, empathy, and advocacy.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessment

A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions, with prepared pre-writing, will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks, such as reading analysis responses, reflections, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze literary works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.

Summative Assessment

In Part 1 of the unit, students will read *The Outsiders* and craft several reading analysis response paragraphs focused on literary elements in the text and close reading lenses. Students will also complete a novel test/quizzes incorporating reading analysis multiple choice and short answer/paragraph responses. Additionally, in this part of the unit students will craft a skeleton essay, practicing the structure of literary analysis essay.

In Part 2 of the unit, students will read a variety of social issues-focused short stories and view several social issues-based videos and images and craft reading analysis response paragraphs focused on social issues and critical reading lenses.

In Part 3 of the unit, students will read a variety of social issues book club novels and craft several reading analysis paragraphs focused on social issues and critical reading lenses.

In Part 4 of the unit, students will craft a comparative literary essay focused on author's craft techniques found in texts examined throughout the unit.

Extension Part 5 (may appear within this unit or within the Just Mercy unit--pending teacher preference)--In Part 5 of this unit, students will complete a social issues advocacy project. Groups of students will define a social issue they'd like to pursue selected from a teacher-curated list of topics already addressed in class. Groups will work to define the root causes of the issue and seek to spread awareness to peers and community by taking action. They will write to community, national, and global leaders and organizations that work with the issue to advocate on the topic. Additionally, students may develop an innovative plan of agency to work towards improving the social justice issue.

Alternative Assessment: Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.

Benchmark: Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.

Resources

Foundational Resources:

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Social Issues Book Club Texts:

I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick

Monster by Walter Dean Myers

Skin I'm In

Sold

Speak

All American Boys

A Lesson Before Dying Ernest

Lily and Dunkin by Donna Gephart

Star-Crossed by Barbara Dee

Gracefully Grayson by Ami Polonsky

Felix Yz by Lisa Bunker

Drama by Raina Telgemeier

So Hard to Say by Alex Sanchez

The Misfits by James Howe

"Secret Samantha" by Tim Federle

"In a Heartbeat"

"Baby X"

Various other supplemental texts/resources

Suggested Resources:

"Notes of a Native Daughter" by Sandra Cisneros

"Harlem" by Langston Hughes

"I Look at the World" by Langston Hughes

"(un)Learning my Name," by Mohamed Hassan

"Identity" by Angela C. Trudell Vasquez

Teacher created gallery experiences

Additional Supports

[WW-P Accommodations and Assessment](#) (Reference Tool and Glossary)

Unit 3: Just Mercy: A Critical Examination of Resilience and Justice in Society

Content Area: Language Arts

Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8

Summary and Rationale

This thought-provoking unit challenges students to critically examine and confront inequities within the criminal justice system or other institutions in American society. Students will embark on this journey through an exploration of the literary nonfiction text, *Just Mercy* or another full-length text, and auxiliary readings. Additionally, students will explore social justice through the lenses of poverty, race, ethnicity, gender and age. Through critical analysis of nonfiction text structures, students will evaluate the impact of authors' craft and how the ideals of resilience and injustice are conveyed. The goal of this unit is to broaden students' understanding of inequities through the lens of social justice and to encourage students to think deeper about the historical impact of justice in American society.

Recommended Pacing

9 lesson days without Part 2 extension/ 15 lesson days with Part 2 extension

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.KL.8.2	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
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L.KL.8.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
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L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
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Standard: Language Domain: (VL) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Literal Meaning: By the end of grade 12, determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words using analysis of word parts (morphemes), word solving strategies, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.VL.8.3.	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
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L.VL.8.3.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.
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L.VL.8.3.C	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
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L.VL.8.3.D	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.
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L.VL.8.3.E	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).
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Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VI.8.4.	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.VI.8.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.VI.8.4.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.VI.8.4.C	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.CI.8.2.	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Standard: Reading Domain: (IT) Interactions Among Text Elements: By the end of grade 12, analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.IT.8.3.	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
RI.IT.8.3.	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models,

	sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Writing Domain: (RW) Range of Writing: By the end of grade 12, 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.RW.8.7.	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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PE) Participate Effectively: By the end of grade 12, prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (ES) Evaluate Speakers: By the end of grade 12, evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.ES.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PI) Present Information: By the end of grade 12, present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

SL.PI.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (AS) Adapt Speech: By the end of grade 12, adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.AS.8.6.	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect individual’s everyday activities and career options.
8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary nonfiction serves as a powerful tool for exposing and examining systemic inequities within societal institutions, particularly the criminal justice system. • Social justice intersects with multiple dimensions of identity and social determinants, including poverty, race, ethnicity, gender, and age, shaping inequities in American society. • Authors strategically use nonfiction text structures and literary craft to highlight narratives of resilience and injustices faced by marginalized groups. 	

- Exploring historical and contemporary issues of justice in American society fosters a deeper understanding of systemic inequities and encourages critical thinking about societal change.
- Using the opportunities available to us to advocate for a positive impact on others and/or the world is among the greatest purposes of life.

Unit Essential Questions

- How do literary nonfiction texts like *Just Mercy* illuminate inequities within the criminal justice system and other American institutions?
- What are the connections between social justice and issues of poverty, race, ethnicity, gender, and age within American society?
- How do authors use nonfiction text structures and literary craft to convey messages about resilience and injustice?
- Why is it important to critically analyze and confront historical and contemporary issues of justice in American society?
- How can we use reading/writing/speaking skills to advocate on behalf of those suffering social injustices?

Objectives

We are learning to/that:

1. **We are learning to examine and address inequities within the criminal justice system in American society.**
 - Students will explore and analyze issues of inequality and injustice within the criminal justice system through various texts.
2. **We are learning to investigate social justice themes through the perspectives of poverty, race, gender, ethnicity, and age.**
 - Students will study how different social justice issues intersect with factors such as poverty, race, gender, ethnicity, and age.
3. **We are learning to analyze the impact of authors' techniques in literary nonfiction texts like *Just Mercy*.**
 - Students will examine how authors use literary techniques to convey messages about resilience and injustice.
4. **We are learning to evaluate nonfiction text structures to understand how resilience and injustice are communicated.**
 - Students will analyze the structures of nonfiction texts to see how they convey themes of resilience and injustice.
5. **We are learning to use supplementary texts to broaden our understanding of the criminal justice system and social justice issues.**
 - Students will read and analyze additional texts to gain a more comprehensive perspective on the themes discussed in the primary text.
6. **We are learning to connect our literary analysis to real-world social issues to develop social awareness, empathy, and advocacy.**
 - Students will relate their literary analysis to real-world social issues, fostering social awareness, empathy, and advocacy.

Evidence of Learning

- Formative Assessment**

A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions, with prepared pre-writing, will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks, such as reading analysis responses, reflections, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze literary works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.

Summative Assessment

In Part 1 of the unit, students will read *Just Mercy* (or a similar text centered on social justice) and craft several reading analysis response paragraphs focused on literary elements in the text and close reading lenses. Students will also complete a novel test/quizzes incorporating reading analysis multiple choice and short answer/paragraph responses.

Optional Part 2 (may appear within this unit or within the Social Issues unit--pending teacher preference)--In Part 2 of this unit, students will complete a social issues advocacy project. Groups of students will define a social issue they'd like to pursue selected from a teacher-curated list of topics already addressed in class. Groups will work to define the root causes of the issue and seek to spread awareness to peers and community by taking action. They will write to community, national, and global leaders and organizations that work with the issue to advocate on the topic. Additionally, students may develop an innovative plan of agency to work towards improving the social justice issue.

Alternative Assessment: Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.

Benchmark Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.

Resources

Foundational Resources:

Just Mercy: Adapted for Young Adults by Bryan Stevenson (or similar text centered on social justice)
Additional nonfiction and fiction resources/texts

Additional Supports

[WW-P Accommodations and Assessment](#) (Reference Tool and Glossary)

Unit 4: Global Citizenship: The Impact of Genocide on Individuals, Communities and Countries

Content Area: Language Arts

Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8

Summary and Rationale

This unit deepens students' global awareness and challenges students to examine individual and societal impact and responsibility within the context of genocide. Through close examination of the 10 Stages of Genocide and their application to multiple fiction and nonfiction texts, students will gain insights into the human capacity to overcome adversity, advocate for justice, and foster positive change. This unit aims to create awareness of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and examine the extent to which Genocide denies these rights for individuals, communities, and beyond and the effects thereof.

Recommended Pacing

10 lesson days

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.KL.8.2	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
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L.KL.8.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
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L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
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Standard: Language Domain: (VL) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Literal Meaning: By the end of grade 12, determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words using analysis of word parts (morphemes), word solving strategies, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.VL.8.3.	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
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L.VL.8.3.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.
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L.VL.8.3.C	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
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L.VL.8.3.D	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.VL.8.3.E	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).
Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VI.8.4.	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.VI.8.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.VI.8.4.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.VI.8.4.C	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CI) Central Ideas and Themes of Texts: By the end of grade 12, determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CI.8.2.	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Standard: Reading Domain: (IT) Interactions Among Text Elements: By the end of grade 12, analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.IT.8.3.	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

RI.IT.8.3.	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
Standard: Writing Domain: (IW) Informative and Explanatory Writing: By the end of grade 12, write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.IW.8.2.	Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
W.IW.8.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; 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) when useful to aid in comprehension.
W.IW.8.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
W.IW.8.2.C	Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
W.IW.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.IW.8.2.E	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
W.IW.8.2.F	Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WR) Writing Research: By the end of grade 12, conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

W.WR.8.5.	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.
Standard: Writing Domain: (RW) Range of Writing: By the end of grade 12, 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.RW.8.7.	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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PE) Participate Effectively: By the end of grade 12, prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.8.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (ES) Evaluate Speakers: By the end of grade 12, evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.ES.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PI) Present Information: By the end of grade 12, present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

SL.PI.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (UM) Use Media: By the end of grade 12, make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.UM.8.5.	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (AS) Adapt Speech: By the end of grade 12, adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.AS.8.6.	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect individual's everyday activities and career options.
8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	

- Genocides profoundly transform all involved individuals, communities, and countries.
- Fiction and nonfiction texts provide poignant illustrations of the stages of genocide and their profound effects on individuals and societies.
- The study of genocide illuminates the human capacity for resilience, advocacy for justice, and efforts to foster positive societal change in the face of adversity.
- The UN Declaration of Human Rights serves as a critical framework for evaluating how genocide infringes upon fundamental rights and freedoms for individuals and communities.
- Exploring the historical and contemporary implications of genocide deepens understanding of its enduring impact on global society and underscores the importance of prevention and advocacy.
- Narrative nonfiction tells a story that teaches both information and ideas that are influenced by personal experiences, perspectives, and philosophies and connects them to text.
- Nonfiction literacy includes an understanding that nonfiction writing employs unique informational structures such as pictures, graphics, and illustrations to enhance text.
- Themes travel across texts.

Unit Essential Questions

- To what extent does a genocide change an individual, community, or country?
- How do fiction and nonfiction texts illustrate the stages of genocide and their impact on individuals and societies?
- What insights can be gained about human resilience, advocacy for justice, and positive societal change through the study of genocide?
- What is the significance of the UN Declaration of Human Rights in understanding and addressing the impacts of genocide on rights and freedoms?
- Why is it important to examine the historical and contemporary implications of genocide on individuals, communities, and global society?
- How do themes travel across texts?

Objectives

We are learning to/that:

- We are learning to expand our global awareness and examine the impacts and responsibilities related to genocide.**
 - Students will explore the causes and consequences of genocide and consider the roles individuals and societies play in addressing these issues.
- We are learning to analyze the 10 Stages of Genocide and apply them to various fiction and nonfiction texts.**
 - Students will examine how the 10 Stages of Genocide manifest in different literary works and real-world examples.
- We are learning to understand the human capacity to overcome adversity, advocate for justice, and create positive change.**
 - Students will study stories of resilience and advocacy to understand how individuals and groups work towards justice and positive change.
- We are learning to raise awareness of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and how genocide violates these rights.**
 - Students will explore the UN Declaration of Human Rights and analyze how genocide infringes upon these rights for individuals and communities.

5. **We are learning to explore the effects of genocide on individuals, communities, and beyond.**

- Students will investigate the far-reaching impacts of genocide on various levels of society and consider the long-term consequences.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessment

A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions, with prepared pre-writing, will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks, such as reading analysis responses, reflections, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze literary works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.

Summative Assessment

In this unit, students will read a variety of genocide-focused book club novels and craft several reading analysis paragraphs focused on critical reading lenses and identifying and applying knowledge of the Stages of Genocide to the text. Students will also craft a literary essay using the book club novel and the Stages of Genocide focused on how a genocide impacts an individual, a community, or a country.

- Alternative Assessment:** Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.

- Benchmark:** Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.

Resources

Foundational Resources:

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Between Shades of Grey by Ruta Sepetys
Forgotten Fire by Adam Bagdasarian
Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne
Over A Thousand Hills I Walk With You by Hanna Jansen
Children of the River by Linda Crew
Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Green
The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank
The Play- The Diary of Anne Frank by Frances Goodrich
Zlata's Diary by Zlata Filipović
Milkweed by Jerry Spinelli
Alive in the Killing Fields by Nawuth Keat
nonfiction articles about World Genocides
Visual text sources about World Genocides

Suggested Resources:

"10 Stages of Genocide" : <https://www.genocidewatch.com/tenstages>

Additional Supports

[WW-P Accommodations and Assessment](#) (Reference Tool and Glossary)

Unit 5: Portfolio Assessment: An Examination of Our Comparative Analysis and Narrative Writing Growth

Content Area: Language Arts

Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8

Summary and Rationale

In this 2-3 day Test Prep Unit, students will review the process and format of both comparative analysis and narrative writing through a sampling of both curated and student-written exemplars. Although this unit is short, it has great breadth in the skills that students are grappling with as they examine their progressive writing pieces throughout 8th Grade. Through self-assessment of their successes and areas of growth, students will develop writing goals to strengthen their writing within a timed-writing setting. Ultimately, the intention of this brief unit is to sharpen writing skills learned throughout the year, practice timed writing, as well as foster confidence and prepare students for timed writing assessments.

Recommended Pacing

2 lesson days

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (SS) System and Structure of Language: By the end of grade 12, demonstrate command of grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.SS.8.1.	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
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L.SS.8.1.C	Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
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Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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L.KL.8.2.	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
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L.KL.8.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
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L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
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L.KL.8.2.C	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).
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Standard: Language Domain: (VL) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Literal Meaning: By the end of grade 12, determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words using analysis of word parts (morphemes), word solving strategies, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VL.8.3.	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
L.VL.8.3.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.
Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VI.8.4.	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.VI.8.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.VI.8.4.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.VI.8.4.C	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
L.VI.8.4.D	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).
Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CI) Central Ideas and Themes of Texts: By the end of grade 12, determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CI.8.2.	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RI.CI.8.2.	Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Standard: Reading Domain: (TS) Text Structure: By the end of grade 12, analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.TS.8.4.	Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.
Standard: Writing Domain: (IW) Informative and Explanatory Writing: By the end of grade 12, write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.IW.8.2.	Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
W.IW.8.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; 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) when useful to aid in comprehension.
W.IW.8.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
W.IW.8.2.C	Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
W.IW.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.IW.8.2.E	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
W.IW.8.2.F	Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented.
Standard: Writing Domain: (NW) Narrative Writing: By the end of grade 12, write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.NW.8.3.	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
W.NW.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.NW.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
W.NW.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.NW.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
W.NW.8.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PE) Participate Effectively: By the end of grade 12, prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.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.PE.8. 1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (ES) Evaluate Speakers: By the end of grade 12, evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

SL.ES.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (PI) Present Information: By the end of grade 12, present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.PI.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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (UM) Use Media: By the end of grade 12, make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.UM. 8.5.	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (AS) Adapt Speech: By the end of grade 12, adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.AS.8. 6.	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect individual’s everyday activities and career options.

8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewing curated and student-written exemplars provides valuable insights into effective strategies and techniques for comparative analysis and narrative writing. ● Self-assessment allows students to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, facilitating targeted goal-setting to enhance writing proficiency. ● Timed writing exercises help students build confidence and readiness for timed assessments by practicing under similar conditions. ● Setting and pursuing writing goals throughout the year contributes to continuous improvement in writing skills and preparedness for writing assessments. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can reviewing curated and student-written exemplars enhance understanding of comparative analysis and narrative writing? ● What role does self-assessment play in identifying strengths and areas for growth in writing skills? ● Why is practicing timed writing important for developing confidence and readiness for writing assessments? ● How do writing goals contribute to strengthening writing skills in a timed-writing setting? 	
Objectives	
<p>We are learning to/that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are learning to revisit the processes and formats of comparative analysis and narrative writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will review and reinforce their understanding of the structures and techniques specific to comparative analysis and narrative writing. 2. We are learning that analyzing curated and student-written exemplars helps us understand effective writing strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will study examples of comparative and narrative writing to identify and discuss successful writing strategies. 3. We are learning to self-assess our writing to identify strengths and areas for improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will evaluate their own writing to recognize their strengths and areas that need improvement. 4. We are learning to develop writing goals that enhance our performance in a timed-writing setting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will set specific, achievable goals to improve their writing skills under timed conditions. 5. We are learning to refine the writing skills we have learned throughout the year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will sharpen and apply the writing techniques and strategies they have developed over the course of the school year. 	

Evidence of Learning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative Assessment A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions, with prepared pre-writing, will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks such as reading analysis responses, reflections, timed writing prompt responses, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze literary works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summative Assessment In this unit, students will use the knowledge and skills gained throughout the year and through the formative assessments in the unit and apply those to their work on the NJSLA testing.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alternative Assessment: Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benchmark: Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.
Resources
Foundational Resources: Scored writing samples from NJDOE website Various other supplemental texts/resources
Additional Supports
WW-P Accommodations and Assessment (Reference Tool and Glossary)

Unit 6: Argument: a Claim-based Synthesis of Multiple Perspectives
Content Area: Language Arts
Course & Grade Level: IRLA, Grade 8
Summary and Rationale
<p>This unit directs students as they navigate the intersection of critical literacy and argument writing. Through the use of thoughtfully-curated resource materials and student research-based sources, students will delineate and evaluate the arguments and claims found in the texts. By gathering relevant evidence from multiple sources, students will craft an argumentative claim and delineate clear and organized support. Students will compose a position paper that takes a clear stance while acknowledging other points of view. The goal of this unit is to teach student-writers to channel their emotional response and to compose arguments that are fair and principled as well as impassioned.</p>
Recommended Pacing
12 lesson days
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Standard: Language Domain: (KL) Knowledge of Language: By the end of grade 12, apply knowledge of language and command of vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.KL.8.2.	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
L.KL.8.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
Standard: Language Domain: (VI) Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Interpretative Meaning: By the end of grade 12, interpret figurative and connotative word meanings, including shades of meaning based on word relationships and context.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
L.VI.8.4.	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.VI.8.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
L.VI.8.4.B	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
L.VI.8.4.C	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CR) Close Reading of Text: By the end of grade 12, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RI.CR.8.1.	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CI) Central Ideas and Themes of Texts: By the end of grade 12, determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RI.CI.8.2.	Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Standard: Reading Domain: (AA) Analysis of an Argument: By the end of grade 12, evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning, the credibility and accuracy of each source as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RI.AA.8.7.	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.
Standard: Reading Domain: (CT) Comparison of Texts: By the end of grade 12, analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
RL.CT.8.8.	Analyze and reflect on how the author’s idea in fiction and literary nonfiction texts (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) is shaped by the author’s emphasis on different evidence, advancing different interpretations of facts, or fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period.
RI.CT.8.8.	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
Standard: Writing Domain: (AW) Argumentative Writing: By the end of grade 12, write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.AW.8.1.	Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
W.AW.8.1.A	Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
W.AW.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
W.AW.8.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
W.AW.8.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form.
W.AW.8.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WP) Writing Process: By the end of grade 12, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing.	

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WP.8.4.	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Standard: Writing Domain: (WR) Writing Research: By the end of grade 12, conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.WR.8.5.	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.
Standard: Writing Domain: (SE) Sources of Evidence: By the end of grade 12, gather relevant information and evidence from multiple sources to support analysis, reflection, and research, while assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrating the information while avoiding plagiarism.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.SE.8.6.	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.
Standard: Writing Domain: (RW) Range of Writing: By the end of grade 12, 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
W.RW.8.7.	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.
Standard: Speaking and Listening Domain: (II) Integrate Information: By the end of grade 12, integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
SL.II.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.
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)

9.1.8.CR.2:	Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
9.1.8.FP.1:	Describe the impact of personal values on various financial scenarios.
9.1.8.FP.2	Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior(rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
9.1.8.FP.3:	Explain how self-regulation is important to managing money (e.g., delayed gratification, impulse buying, peer pressure, etc.).
9.1.8.FP.4	Analyze how familial and cultural values influence savings rates, spending, and other financial decisions
New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
8.1.8.IC.1:	Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect individual’s everyday activities and career options.
8.1.8.IC.2:	Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.
8.1.8.DA.1:	Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.
Interdisciplinary Standards (fill-in Science, or SS, or Math, etc..)	
6.1.8.EconN E.4.b:	Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In order to complete objective research, readers, analysts, and researchers need to suspend judgment on an issue while weighing and evaluating ideas across texts. ● Critical literacy skills enable students to critically evaluate and analyze arguments presented in texts, fostering deeper comprehension and engagement. ● Delineating and evaluating arguments from diverse sources enhances students' ability to construct well-supported argumentative claims. ● Gathering evidence from multiple sources strengthens argumentative claims by providing robust and varied support for their positions. ● Composing a position paper that acknowledges and addresses opposing viewpoints promotes fairness, principled argumentation, and fosters meaningful dialogue. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can we suspend judgment on an issue as we research, weigh and evaluate ideas and information presented across texts, and carefully consider the strength of arguments? ● How does critical literacy enhance understanding and analysis of arguments in texts? ● What strategies can students use to delineate and evaluate arguments and claims effectively? ● Why is gathering evidence from multiple sources important for crafting strong argumentative claims? ● How can composing a position paper that acknowledges other viewpoints contribute to fair and principled argumentation? 	
Objectives	
We are learning to/that:	
1. We are learning to navigate the intersection of critical literacy and argument writing.	

- Students will explore how critical literacy skills enhance their ability to write compelling arguments.
- 2. **We are learning that delineating and evaluating arguments and claims found in texts is essential for effective argument writing.**
 - Students will analyze texts to identify and evaluate arguments and claims made by authors.
- 3. **We are learning to gather relevant evidence from multiple sources to support an argumentative claim.**
 - Students will conduct research to collect evidence from diverse sources that strengthens their argumentative writing.
- 4. **We are learning to craft an argumentative claim and organize clear and logical support for our position papers.**
 - Students will develop a clear argumentative claim and structure their supporting evidence in a coherent and organized manner.
- 5. **We are learning that composing a position paper involves taking a clear stance while acknowledging other viewpoints.**
 - Students will write position papers that present a clear argument while demonstrating an understanding of opposing perspectives.
- 6. **We are learning to channel our emotional responses into fair, principled, and impassioned arguments.**
 - Students will learn to use their emotional responses constructively to create arguments that are both compelling and ethically sound.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessment

A variety of formative assessment techniques will be employed to gauge students' progress, understanding, and engagement with the material. These assessments will include exit tickets after reading assignments or class discussions, allowing the teacher to quickly assess comprehension and address any misconceptions. Additionally, group discussions, with prepared pre-writing, will offer opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their critical thinking and communication skills. Writing tasks, such as reading analysis responses, charts, and peer reviews will enable students to express their ideas, analyze nonfiction works, and receive constructive feedback to improve their writing. Through these diverse formative assessments, teachers will gain valuable insights into each student's progress and adapt instruction to meet their individual needs effectively.

Summative Assessment

In this unit, students will use the knowledge gained on how to weigh and evaluate argumentative evidence to take a clear position while crafting an organized written argument that acknowledges opposing viewpoints and incorporates rebuttal. Students may extend that written argument with speaking and listening skills through podcasts, debates, and/or presentations.

Alternative Assessment: Assessment plan includes teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, a district common assessment, self-assessments, and performance tasks. During each common, formative, and summative assessment, teachers will provide alternative assessment opportunities that adhere to 504 and IEP requirements. Alternative assessments are individualized for the needs of all students.

Benchmark: Common Assessments given twice a year in addition to MAP testing 2-3 times per year.

Resources

Foundational Resources:

Teacher and student generated exemplars
Curated collections of nonfiction resources on specific sub-genres

Suggested Resources:

“High Jinks: Shootout” by Guy Martin, *The New Yorker*
“Shooting in the Dark” By Benedict Carey, *The New York Times*

Additional Supports

[WW-P Accommodations and Assessment](#) (Reference Tool and Glossary)