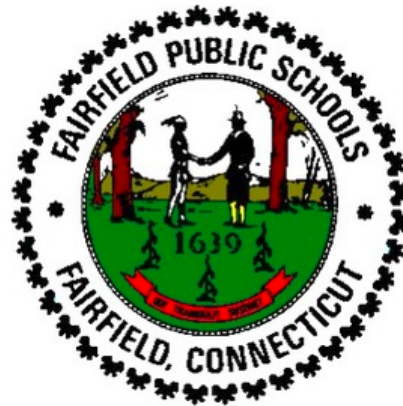


Fairfield Public Schools Language Arts Curriculum

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language

Grade 8



Grade 8 English Language Arts: Description

The goal of the Fairfield Public Schools English/Language Arts curriculum is to cultivate the reading and writing lives of all of our students.

Students in the Fairfield Public Schools are immersed in literacy through rich and rigorous learning experiences. Fairfield's comprehensive eighth grade Language Arts curriculum consists of all the aspects of communication including reading, writing, usage and mechanics, grammar, speaking and listening, vocabulary, and research.

The 8th grade reader deepens their knowledge of texts by: analyzing literary components, examining text structures, developing vocabulary knowledge through context, and applying literary lenses. Some of the authors that the 8th graders study include: William Saroyan, Anton Chekhov, Eudora Welty, William Butler Yeats, Carson McCullers, William Shakespeare, Dylan Thomas, Jordan Sonnenblick, and Cynthia Rylant.

The 8th grade writer develops their competency in many types of writing including: narrative, informational, and argumentative forms. Students deepen their knowledge of the essential skills of the writing process: planning for intended audiences and purposes, studying exemplary texts, drafting, elaborating, revising, reimagining, and editing for precision.

This course demands increased application of developing literacy skills and intellectual reasoning.

Grade 8 Language Arts: Overview

Central Understandings	Course Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students comprehend and respond in literal, critical, and evaluative ways to a variety of complex texts that are read, viewed, and heard.• Students express, develop, and substantiate ideas and experiences through their own writing, artistic productions, and researched presentations.• Students listen actively, synthesizing the ideas of others, and responding appropriately to generate meaningful discourse.• Students adhere to the language and conventions of Standard English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do readers interpret and evaluate themes in a wide variety of literary texts?• How do writers use the writing process as a tool for developing and expressing ideas in a variety of forms?• How do I do a “close-reading” of a visual text?• How do oral expressions of writing (theater, movies, etc.) add to their meaning and impact?• How do writers use a variety of devices and techniques to craft a good story?• How do writers study and learn an author’s craft to apply the techniques in their own writing?• How do readers read and respond to texts individually and with others to deepen their understanding of literature and their lives?• How do readers transfer effective, efficient reading strategies and practices to preparing to take tests?• How do readers synthesize information in order to answer short-answer and open-ended questions?• How do readers collaborate to appreciate multiple perspectives and use those perspectives to shape an individual interpretation?• How do grammar, usage, and mechanics impact a writer’s message?• How do I evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my own literacy growth and development?• How do I become part of a community of readers and writers?

Grade 8 Language Arts: Overview

Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary:

Grammar, usage, and mechanics concepts and skills that are to be taught during the 8th grade year are outlined in the grammar scope and sequence, and are aligned to meet Connecticut Core Standards for Language. New concepts include, but are not limited to: verbals; active and passive voice; verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood; and correct use of commas, dashes, and ellipsis. Students are expected to follow MLA formatting rules for all formal writing.

Vocabulary study is systematic, designed by teachers, and embedded into each unit. Vocabulary focus is on Tier 2 words – wide ranging words of high utility for literate language users. These are words that are more characteristic of written language and not so common in oral language/conversation (Hayes & Ahrens 1988). Further, students are taught advanced ““word attack”” strategies that include using context clues and using grade appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of a word. Vocabulary study also includes Tier 3 words – domain specific words that are germane to the study of literature (e.g. *alliteration*, *hyperbole*, *paradox*, etc). Lists of these Tier 3 words are developed before each unit.

The Portfolio

The Fairfield Public Schools value active and self-reflective learning. To that end, all 8th graders assemble a culminating portfolio – a purposeful collection of their work that demonstrates their growth and progress as readers, writers, and thinkers over time. Students also write a final reflection of their academic development throughout their final year in middle school. This final portfolio is sent home and students review their work with their parents. This culminating portfolio is then sent on to the student’s 9th grade English teacher. As students begin their 9th grade year, this portfolio serves as a valuable resource for both student and teacher as they collaborate on setting reading and writing goals for the coming year.

Teacher Resources

Mastering the Mechanics Grades 6-8 by L. Hoyt and T. Therriault
Image Grammar, 2nd Edition by H. Noden
More Nitty Gritty Grammar Book by E. Fine and J. Josephson
Words, Words, Words Teaching Vocabulary 4-12 by J. Allen
Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction by I. Beck, M. McKeown, and L. Kucan
E.D. Hirsch’s Core Knowledge® Sequence: List of Latin and Greek Words for Grade 8

Grade 8 Language Arts: Year-at-a-Glance

Unit Title	Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar/Usage/ Mechanics Focus	Summative Assessments
Launch	Habits and dispositions: Establishing the Reader's Notebook	Habits and dispositions: Establishing the Writer's Notebook	Review of major 7 th grade concepts	Gathering ideas for writing from both life and texts in writing journal.
Close Reading of Literature	Close Reading: annotating texts to analyze theme, and literary devices that help develop deeper meaning	Writing in Response to Close Readings Developing ideas and claims	Comma: with conjunction Adjectives: Comparative and Superlative forms	Informational writing
The Art of the Personal Narrative	Close reading: Reading like a writer - analyzing the craft and structure of the personal narrative	Language and Structure in Writing: how structure and figurative language communicate theme	Punctuating dialogue Complete sentences and fragments Active and Passive Voice	Personal Narrative Writing
				Reading Comprehension Assessment
Analyzing Dramatic Texts	Analyzing multiple plot-lines Developing Thematic understandings Identifying Thematic patterns Analyzing how a text is interpreted for the stage	Analyzing the craft and structure of Informational writing/ Theme Essay Defining a controlling Idea	Plural subject-verb agreement Comma with nonrestrictive elements	Informational Writing: Theme Essay, Reviews
Developing a Critical Lens for the Analysis of Informational Texts	Examining structure in non-fiction texts Finding underlying ideas in non-fiction Relating non-fiction to fiction	Informational writing/ Reader's Response Relating non-fiction to independent reading Building a controlling idea	Closing elements Dashes Verb forms	Revised Reader's Response (Informational Writing)

The Inquiry process – Research and Argument	Analyzing Elements of Argument Writing	Writing the Argument. Developing a claim and recognizing the counter-claim	Comma: with opening element Pronouns and their antecedents	Argumentative Essay
				Reading Comprehension Assessment
Reading Short Texts and Writing On Demand: Test Prep	Responding to timed reading comprehension questions	Writing in a timed situation	Review of SBAC grammar and usage rules	SBAC Assessment
Interpreting Universal Themes Across Time, Genre and Medium	Analyzing thematic patterns	Literary Analysis of Universal Themes (Writing Across Texts)	Gerunds Underlining and quotation marks Apostrophe: Plural possessive nouns	Informational Writing: Thesis based essay
Communicating Universal Themes Across Medium	Reading multi-modal texts	Representing a Universal Theme through Multiple Mediums - Synthesis	Sentence fluency and variety Colons and semicolons Possessive pronouns Infinitives	Universal Theme Essay
				Reading Comprehension Assessment
Reflection	Evaluate contents of literacy folder to determine portfolio entries.	Written self-reflection	Review and self-assessment	Final Portfolio

Close Reading of Literature

Overview

To start this year and highlight the focus on the close and careful re-reading of texts we begin the eighth-grade year with a short three-week unit on supporting our students' building of their own reading and writing lives.

Specifically, students will annotate, discuss, and write an informational piece about a text as they continue improving their close reading skills. Students will:

- Interpret themes as ideas, not one word topics
- Begin developing an understanding of how theme is crafted both explicitly and implicitly throughout a text.
- Be introduced to the Socratic Dialogue method of questioning and discussing a text to improve annotations and interpretation.
- Select a controlling idea to which they will respond in a multi-paragraph writing piece.
- Use summary as a way to introduce theme and/or or another controlling idea
- Clearly state a controlling idea that serves as focus of written response.
- Gather text evidence that supports their controlling idea.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annotate texts during close reading to deepen interpretation of texts and gather evidence to support ideas in writing• Define theme as “a statement or question about life that readers develop when interacting with a text”• Analyze how metaphor and symbolism contribute to theme• Analyze how <i>titles</i> can relate to theme or most important ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use summaries to introduce controlling idea and provide background information on character and conflict• Provide text evidence in the form of direct quotes and paraphrasing to support controlling idea• Organize text evidence logically within and between paragraphs• Use a variety of transition words and phrases to connect ideas fluently within	<p><u>Review / Reteach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple sentence• Phrase / clause• Compound Sentence• Coordinating conjunction with two independent clauses• Semi-colon• Punctuation of quotes• Indicating book titles• Unit-specific vocabulary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify defining moments in characters' lives – relate to theme • Introduce the Socratic Dialogue: using student questions to guide whole-class discussion and annotation of shared text. • Preview guiding questions to help gather controlling ideas for writing 	<p>paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of sentences to create fluency and emphasize ideas • Craft effective introductions and conclusions suitable to audience and purpose of writing • Edit work carefully to eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced vocabulary “word attack” skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.) • Comma: with conjunction • Adjectives: Comparative and Superlative forms
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production And Distribution Of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Range Of Writing

W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or

a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

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

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.8.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).

L.8.4c Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

L.8.4d Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.8.5a Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

L.8.5b Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

L.8.5c Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

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

The Art of the Personal Narrative

Overview

Fall is a time of new beginnings, new dreams, and new expectations for the year. Inherent in all of this is deep reflection. Knowing that this is their last year in middle school, students enter our rooms wondering how this year will go, and they fill their minds with the largest hopes they can muster. They look at their social, academic, and personal lives—both the ones they show the world and those they keep inside—dreaming of what is to come. This is the perfect opportunity to grab up this thread and begin this unit, a study of narrative writing. During this unit students will analyze the structure of narrative texts and then apply what they have learned to their own writing.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annotate texts during close reading of narratives to deepen interpretation of texts and gather evidence to support ideas in writing• Interact with the text in order to recognize the author’s unique experience• Read with stamina in independent narrative text in order to notice perspective, feelings, and to make connections• Analyze how the author’s experiences relate to theme• Use student questions to guide whole-class discussion and annotation of shared narrative text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discover and build on anecdotes.• “Exploding” Small moments• Use Action, dialogue, details, and the elements of storytelling• Craft parallel moments• Collect anecdotes and vignettes to determine patterns• Expect Depth in our writing• Use their writer’s notebooks to find ideas that really matter to them• Identify our own symbols in our stories• Revise and edit work carefully to eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely• Rely on partners to help us revise our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Punctuating dialogue• Complete sentences and fragments• Active and Passive Voice• Unit-specific vocabulary• Advanced vocabulary “word attack” skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.)

Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-

structured event sequences.

W.8.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

W.8.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

W.8.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

W.8.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

W.8.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Production And Distribution Of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Range Of Writing

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

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

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence,

observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.8.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).

- L.8.4c** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- L.8.4d** Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- L.8.5a** Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
- L.8.5b** Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- L.8.5c** Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).
- L.8.6** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Analyzing Dramatic Texts

Overview

In this unit, students will analyze how a film or live production stays faithful to or departs from a text or script and evaluate the choices made by the director or actors and determine whether the choices enhance or detract from the text. Students continue to develop habits and skills related to close reading, annotation, using evidence, building vocabulary, and participating in structured discussion, and they do so with text that is more qualitatively complex than in earlier units. This may be students' first exposure to the study of drama. Students will study the structure of dramatic language and speeches for craft and impact on character development.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annotate texts during close re-reading of texts to deepen interpretation of texts and gather evidence to support ideas in writing• Identify and delineate relationships among key ideas in a text• Connect emotions and motivations of characters to our own personal experiences• Share evidence and the truth about text they have chosen with peers in order to evaluate the relevance of their interpretation of the author's message.• Use student questions to guide whole-class discussion and annotation of shared narrative text• Analyze the extent to which a filmed or	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rehearse ideas about characters, lessons, issues, or themes, to write moments in our lives when we have learned a similar lesson that illustrate the same idea, issue, or theme• Explore how different authors interpret an idea• Analyze the differences among texts that are linked thematically• Analyze the structure of the Literary Essay• Develop a thesis• Use our writer's notebooks to find ideas that really matter to us• Revise and editing work carefully to eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comma with nonrestrictive elements• Plural subject-verb agreement• Unit-specific vocabulary• Advanced vocabulary "word attack" skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.)

live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script		
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Range of Writing

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

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

- SL.8.1a** Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- SL.8.1b** Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- SL.8.1c** Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- SL.8.1d** Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL.8.2** Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL.8.3** Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

- L.8.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.8.1a** Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
- L.8.1b** Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- L.8.1c** Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
- L.8.1d** Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- L.8.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- L.8.2a** Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
- L.8.2b** Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
- L.8.2c** Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

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

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

- L.8.4** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- L.8.4a** Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- L.8.4b** Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede, recede, secede*).
- L.8.4c** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- L.8.4d** Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- L.8.5a** Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
- L.8.5b** Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- L.8.5c** Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute*).
- L.8.6** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Developing a Critical Lens for the Analysis of Informational Texts

Overview

For students to be able to ascertain the big ideas in a nonfiction text in such a way that they can summarize as well as think critically about these, they need to grasp the text’s infrastructure of ideas and supporting details. This unit aims to support our students in developing into more powerful readers of complicated informational texts.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annotate texts during close re-reading of texts to deepen interpretation of texts and gather evidence to support ideas in writing• Determine the characteristics of the genre• Read persuasive texts in order to determine the nuances and/or the characteristics of non-fiction texts.• Determine the intended audience of persuasive texts• Analyze how authors appeal to audiences. (ethos/pathos/ logos)• Recognize author’s purpose and delineate elements of effective non-fiction writing (organization, title, elaboration, tone)• Share evidence and the truth about text they have chosen with peers in order to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distinguish between topic and theme in informational texts• Create theme statements about informational texts articles and/or documents• Draw on background knowledge to explore/support a topic in persuasive writing.• Write provocative leads that acknowledge the situation that necessitates action and the persuasive argument• Develop the skill for choosing the approach for an argumentative essay (examples, cause and effect, anecdote, answering a rhetorical question), based on the question or prompt• Establish a position between the evidence and the position being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closing elements• Dashes• Verb forms• Unit-specific vocabulary• Advanced vocabulary “word attack” skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.)

<p>evaluate the relevance of their interpretation of the author’s message.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read with stamina in independent narrative text in order to notice perspective, feelings, and to make connections • Analyze how the author’s experiences relate to theme • Use student questions to guide whole-class discussion and annotation of shared narrative text 	<p>advocated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain focus in their writing. • Use a consistent, personal voice in their writing • Avoid repetition of the points of their argument • Acknowledge and discount an opposing argument • Write with an awareness of audience by providing all of the details that the audience needs to know • Apply writing skills developed through analysis of non-fiction mentor texts. (i.e.: leads, relevant evidence, variety of elaboration, transitions, organization, conclusions) • Write a conclusion, which does not repeat and also brings advocacy to a new level • Use three types of persuasive appeals (ethos, pathos and logos) in their own writing • Evaluate their position on a topic as a result of large and small group collaboration • Revise and editing work carefully to eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely 	
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

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

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Range of Writing

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

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

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

- L.8.4b** Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).
- L.8.4c** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- L.8.4d** Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- L.8.5a** Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
- L.8.5b** Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- L.8.5c** Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).
- L.8.6** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

The Inquiry Process – Research and Argument

Overview

This unit is designed to support students’ journeys towards proficiency in reading and analyzing nonfiction texts, analyzing information across multiple texts, and writing argument essays based on their findings. The task included asks each student to read several nonfiction texts that give information about an issue, to take a stance on that issue, and defend that stance in an argument essay, drawing on the provided texts for support.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read persuasive texts in order to determine the nuances and/or the characteristics of non-fiction texts• Determine the intended audience of persuasive texts• Analyze how authors appeal to audiences. (ethos/pathos/ logos)• Recognize author’s purpose and delineate elements of effective non-fiction writing (organization, title, elaboration, tone)• Share evidence and the truth about text they have chosen with peers in order to evaluate the relevance of their interpretation of the author’s message• Recognize Bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distinguish between topic and theme in informational texts.• Create theme statements about informational texts articles and/or documents• Draw on background knowledge to explore/support a topic in persuasive writing• Write provocative leads that acknowledge the situation that necessitates action and the persuasive argument• Develop the skill for choosing the approach for a argumentative essay (examples, cause and effect, anecdote, answering a rhetorical question), based on the question or prompt• Establish a position between the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comma: with opening element• Pronouns and their antecedents• Unit-specific vocabulary• Advanced vocabulary “word attack” skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.)

	<p>evidence and the position being advocated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain focus in their writing.• Use a consistent, personal voice in their writing• Angle Evidence to Support Specific Points• Avoid repetition of the points of their argument• Acknowledge and discount an opposing argument to theirs• Write with an awareness of audience by providing all of the details that the audience needs to know• Use connotative language• Apply writing skills developed through analysis of non-fiction mentor texts. (i.e.: leads, relevant evidence, variety of elaboration, transitions, organization, conclusions)• Write a conclusion, which does not repeat and also brings advocacy to anew level• Use three types of persuasive appeals (ethos, pathos and logos) in their own writing• Evaluate their position on a topic as a result of large and small group collaboration• Revise and editing work carefully to	
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	eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely	
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

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

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING**Text Types and Purposes**

W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

W.8.1a Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

W.8.1b Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

W.8.1c Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.8.1d Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.1e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

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

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.8.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).

L.8.4c Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

L.8.4d Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.8.5a Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

L.8.5b Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

L.8.5c Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

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

Reading Short Texts and Writing On Demand: Test Prep

Overview

This micro-unit is to prepare students for the upcoming SBAC assessments for reading and writing. A major aim of this unit is to support students in bringing forward strategies for each genre that they have been taught throughout the year.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review of test taking Reading Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review of timed writing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review SBAC Grammar and usage

Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

READING**Key Ideas and Details:**

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

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

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

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

RI.8.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is

relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

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

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes:

W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

W.8.1a Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

W.8.1b Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

W.8.1c Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.8.1d Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.1e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-

structured event sequences.

W.8.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

W.8.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

W.8.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

W.8.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

W.8.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing:

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.8.9a Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new").

W.8.9b Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced").

Range of Writing:

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING**Comprehension and Collaboration:**

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

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

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

SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

LANGUAGE**Conventions of Standard English:**

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language:

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.8.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*).

L.8.4c Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

L.8.4d Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.8.5a Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

L.8.5b Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

L.8.5c Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*).

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

Interpreting and Communicating Universal Themes Across Time, Genre, and Medium

Overview

The essential focus of this unit is Common Core Standard Reading Literature Strand 9: Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine the characteristics of the genre• Maintain an awareness of the three types of literary conflict when interpreting a new text• Determine important events/scenes.• Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story provoke a decision in a character• Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events or character types from myths or traditional stories, including how the story is rendered new• Analyze how the author’s experiences relate to theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using formal MLA style, writers create a literary essay to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence• Develop and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing, focusing on how well purpose and formal audience have been addressed• Use technology to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently• Develop the skill for choosing the approach for the literary essay (examples, cause and effect, anecdote, answering a rhetorical question), based on the question or prompt.• Establish a position between the evidence and the position being advocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gerunds• Underlining and quotation marks• Apostrophe: Plural possessive nouns• Sentence fluency and variety• Colons and semicolons• Possessive pronouns• Infinitives• Unit-specific vocabulary• Advanced vocabulary “word attack” skills (roots, context, prefixes, etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain focus in their writing • Use a consistent, personal voice in their writing • Revise and editing work carefully to eliminate errors and communicate ideas clearly and concisely 	
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

READING

Key Ideas and Details:

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

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

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure:

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

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

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

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

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

RL.8.9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or

religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

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

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

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

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

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

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8

topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.8.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1b Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1c Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

SL.8.1d Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

L.8.3a Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.8.4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.8.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede, recede, secede*).

L.8.4c Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

L.8.4d 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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L.8.5a Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

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L.8.5c Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute*).

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

Reflecting on our Growth as Readers and Writers – Making Plans for Summer Literacy

Overview

Reading and writing truly does change the way that we look at the world. At the end of the year, student will formally reflect on their progress as readers, writers, and thinkers by asking two important questions:

1. Who am I now, at the end of the school year, as a reader and a writer?
2. How can I tell the story of my growth as a reader and a writer?

The end of the year is an important time for students, parents, and teachers to celebrate achievements – this unit proves the opportunity to do just that. During this unit, students review reading logs and notebooks as well as their writing folders to identify specific examples of how their reading and writing lives have developed.

Research demonstrates that the single best predictor of reading achievement is the amount of time spent reading. Therefore, as the school year comes to a close, this is an important time for students to craft plans for their reading and writing lives over the summer. Students consider where they might read and write, what they plan to read and write, and how much time they plan to spend reading and writing. These plans are discussed with teachers and parents and students decide on ways to measure the successful implementation of their plans.

As students prepare to leave middle school and enter the high school, the concluding lesson for all students is that one of the best ways to keep their summer reading lives exciting is to be passionate about whatever it is they plan to read.

Reading Focus	Writing Focus	Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Vocabulary Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate contents of literacy folder to determine portfolio entries• Create a portfolio that demonstrates progress towards literacy goals and evidence of growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• write a self-reflective piece in which they analyze the ways in which they use language effectively, appropriately, and conventionally and the ways in which they have to grow in their effective,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of major concepts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate their evolution as writers and readers by sharing their portfolio with parent/guardian • Analyze independently a theme common to more than one text • Provide textual evidence to support interpretations of themes in their independent reading • Choose personally challenging independent reading selections and reflect upon these choices • Create personal meaning from their independent reading 	<p>appropriate, and conventional use of language</p>	
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Connecticut Core Standards Emphasized in the Unit

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

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