

Big Idea: Engaging with Texts

By the time a student shows up in a high school class, he or she has probably become accustomed to using a host of survival strategies for reading; however, not all of those strategies may be preparing that student to read complex texts independently. When confronted with a challenging text, many readers may tend to skip unfamiliar words and phrases and more syntactically complex sentences and instead focus on what they can more easily glean. In addition, many students may successfully mask their confusion and rely on a teacher's or a peer's summary of a reading passage as a substitute for analyzing the text itself. The first big idea encourages a shift from teaching around complex texts to equipping students to engage directly with a wide variety of literary and nonfiction texts.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1.1

Close, critical reading of complex literary and nonfiction texts leads to a deeper understanding of the explicit and implicit meanings of the works.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 1.1A Analyze a wide range of texts for multiple meanings.	EK 1.1A1 A text may convey both literal and figurative meanings, which in turn can generate a multitude of interpretations. EK 1.1A2 Critical reading requires reading both with and against the ideas presented in a text. EK 1.1A3 An author's purpose may not be stated explicitly and in such cases must be inferred based on textual observations.
LO 1.1B Understand how structural, stylistic, visual, and graphic elements of a text (e.g., photographs, charts, graphs, illustrations, headings, fonts) contribute to its meaning.	EK 1.1B1 The structural or stylistic elements of a text often follow the conventions of its genre. EK 1.1B2 An informational graphic or visual element can be read as a text in and of itself and can also contribute to a reader's interpretation of a corresponding text.
LO 1.1C Use a repertoire of active reading strategies appropriate to the text and task.	EK 1.1C1 Active reading strategies (e.g., annotating, outlining, summarizing, questioning, rereading) can facilitate reading complex texts independently and proficiently. EK 1.1C2 Metacognitive reflection (thinking about one's thinking) during the reading process can enhance comprehension.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1.2

Evaluating an argument is a complex task that includes analyzing stated and implied claims, logical reasoning, supporting evidence, and stylistic elements.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 1.2A Analyze the development of an argument, evaluating its central claim(s), the soundness of the reasoning, and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	<p>EK 1.2A1 An argument is developed through logical reasoning and supporting evidence.</p> <p>EK 1.2A2 Informational graphics can serve as a source of supporting evidence in an argument.</p> <p>EK 1.2A3 An argument often acknowledges and responds to a counterclaim.</p>
LO 1.2B Explain how the rhetorical features of an argument contribute to its effect and meaning.	<p>EK 1.2B1 An awareness of the elements of a rhetorical situation (i.e., text, author, audience, purpose[s], and occasion) is critical to the evaluation of an argument.</p> <p>EK 1.2B2 Authors select organizational patterns (e.g., cause and effect, compare and contrast, refutation, problem-solution) to contribute to the effectiveness of their arguments.</p> <p>EK 1.2B3 The power of an argument's rhetoric can hinge upon effective word choice and syntax.</p>

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1.3

Analyzing literature is a complex task that includes making inferences, examining an author's use of literary and stylistic elements, and drawing conclusions about the meaning of the work as a whole.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 1.3A Analyze how literary elements interact to develop the central ideas of a work of literature.	<p>EK 1.3A1 The complexity of literature can result in multiple, varied interpretations of theme.</p> <p>EK 1.3A2 Literary elements (e.g., character, setting, plot, tone, point of view) may shift or evolve throughout a work of literature, and analyzing those changes results in a deeper understanding of the work as a whole.</p>
LO 1.3B Analyze how the writer's use of stylistic elements contributes to a work of literature's effects and meaning.	<p>EK 1.3B1 An awareness of stylistic features (e.g., figurative language, imagery, syntax, diction) is critical to the appreciation of a work of literature.</p> <p>EK 1.3B2 Objects, settings, and even characters can have symbolic meaning, and that meaning can develop or shift as the work unfolds.</p> <p>EK 1.3B3 A particular literary genre may privilege certain structural and stylistic elements.</p>

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1.4

A text may be read in conversation with other texts or in the broader context in which it was written or read.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 1.4A Explain the relationship between a text and its historical or cultural context.	EK 1.4A1 Texts often reflect or address the historical or cultural contexts in which they were written. EK 1.4A2 Authors consciously or unconsciously convey or question the cultural values of the time and place in which they are writing. EK 1.4A3 A reader's interpretation of a text may be shaped by their own experiences.
LO 1.4B Synthesize ideas from multiple texts and explain how the texts may convey different perspectives on a common theme or idea.	EK 1.4B1 Texts may build on or challenge the ideas of previously written texts. EK 1.4B2 Reading multiple texts that address the same idea, subject, or theme may heighten a reader's awareness of divergent perspectives.

Big Idea: Constructing Texts

An effective piece of writing has the power to take its reader on a journey of ideas, making the reader aware of both the final destination and the interesting stops along the way. In an argument or analysis, the final destination is usually announced at the outset in the form of a claim, and the writer then supports the claim by explicitly guiding the reader through a logical progression of reasoning and evidence. The writer of a narrative, by contrast, constructs a plot to chart the reader’s course. Instead of providing explicit signposts for the reader, the narrative may be intentionally cryptic or surprising, with multiple twists, turns, and thematic destinations. Regardless of genre, a writer rarely arrives at an effective final draft without first mapping out the journey through a combination of outlining, false starts, and maybe even U-turns. This big idea spotlights the recursive nature of composing, the multiple reasons for writing, and the importance of helping each writer forge their own unique path to expression.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2.1

Composing is a recursive process that can be used to explore ideas and illuminate concepts for both the writer and the reader.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 2.1A Establish a purpose for the composition and make deliberate choices about genre, organization, and language according to the purpose and intended audience.	EK 2.1A1 Purpose drives writing; it is what a writer wants their reader to witness, believe, or do. EK 2.1A2 The audience is the intended reader. Although teachers read student writing, they are not the sole audience. EK 2.1A3 Effective writers are skillful in composing in multiple genres and knowing when to blend genres to achieve intended purposes.
LO 2.1B Gather and generate a variety of ideas, and select the most appropriate based on the purpose of the composition.	EK 2.1B1 There are a variety of ways to generate ideas (e.g., free writing, graphic organizers, academic discussions, research, text readings). EK 2.1B2 An important part of the writing process is determining the most relevant and compelling ideas to pursue. EK 2.1B3 Writing facilitates thinking.
LO 2.1C Compose, revise, edit, and eventually share written work to ensure communication is clear and the intended rhetorical purpose and effect are achieved.	EK 2.1C1 Writers know when revision is necessary based on new understandings, personal reflections, and the feedback of others. EK 2.1C2 Careful revision and editing are essential to ensure logic, cohesion, and clear communication. EK 2.1C3 Writers may engage in multiple cycles of revision and editing, and these may not happen in tandem; for example, writers may refine their ideas in one cycle and then edit for grammar, usage, and mechanics as they proofread in a subsequent cycle). EK 2.1C4 Decisions about medium, design, and format should be based on intended audience and purpose.
LO 2.1D Reflect on the writing process and how it shapes one’s ongoing development as a writer.	EK 2.1D1 Metacognitive reflection (thinking about one’s thinking) guides writers to identify the practices that work and do not work for them as writers. EK 2.1D2 A writer’s identity develops over time and is shaped by many factors beyond grades (e.g., finding one’s own voice, receiving and responding to feedback).

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2.2

Constructing an argument is a crucial skill with importance in academic, civic, social, and workplace settings.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 2.2A Assert a precise central claim.	EK 2.2A1 A central claim expresses the writer’s belief or point of view about a topic. EK 2.2A2 Academic writing requires engaging with the ideas of others while recognizing one’s own opinions and biases. EK 2.2A3 There are ethical considerations (e.g., civic responsibilities, accuracy of facts) associated with influencing an audience’s opinions or actions.
LO 2.2B Develop a line of sound reasoning and choose an organizing structure to convey that reasoning to the reader.	EK 2.2B1 An effective argument contains a compelling lead-in and closing that are relevant to the purpose and audience. EK 2.2B2 Reasoning is the glue that holds an argument together and connects ideas in a logical sequence. EK 2.2B3 Arguments often follow organizational patterns that a writer may emulate.
LO 2.2C Support a claim by selecting and incorporating evidence that is relevant, sufficient, and convincing.	EK 2.2C1 Evidence can take many forms, including facts, quotations, examples, anecdotes, quantitative evidence, and summaries of others’ ideas. EK 2.2C2 Evidence must be cited appropriately to acknowledge others’ ideas.
LO 2.2D Recognize and address counterclaims effectively.	EK 2.2D1 Anticipating and acknowledging conflicting points of view can add credibility to an argument. EK 2.2D2 Addressing a counterclaim often includes providing compelling evidence to support and refute it.
LO 2.2E Use carefully selected language, syntax, and stylistic and persuasive elements to strengthen an argument.	EK 2.2E1 Rhetorical appeals to logos, ethos, and pathos are often used to enhance an argument. EK 2.2E2 Precise word choice and sentence types and length help writers capture the attention of readers, convey an intended mood or tone, and present a convincing argument. EK 2.2E3 Writers use a variety of rhetorical devices (e.g., repetition, metaphor, irony) to help the reader understand and affirm the writer’s position.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2.3

Writing an analysis requires interpreting the relevant details and features of a work and explaining their relationship to the meaning of the work as a whole.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
<p>LO 2.3A Assert a precise central claim that establishes the relationship between a work's features and overall meaning.</p>	<p>EK 2.3A1 A thesis statement expresses a precise claim that will require analytical support and not mere summary to further develop.</p> <p>EK 2.3A2 Many writers first develop a working thesis that may be replaced, revised, or tweaked during the writing process.</p> <p>EK 2.3A3 A well-written thesis statement acts as a lens through which the reader can interpret the analysis.</p>
<p>LO 2.3B Organize ideas and evidence to effectively develop and support a thesis.</p>	<p>EK 2.3B1 The presentation of textual evidence in an analysis does not necessarily mirror the chronology or order of the original text.</p> <p>EK 2.3B2 A writer should make explicit connections between evidence and thesis.</p>
<p>LO 2.3C Select and incorporate relevant and compelling evidence to support a thesis.</p>	<p>EK 2.3C1 The nature of the evidence in a textual analysis will depend on the genre of the text.</p> <p>EK 2.3C2 Rhetorical analysis focuses on how a writer has crafted an argument and how its relevant features (e.g., rhetorical appeals, word choice, use of evidence and reasoning) contribute to its overall effect.</p> <p>EK 2.3C3 Literary analysis focuses on how narrative elements and/or stylistic features interact to convey meaning.</p> <p>EK 2.3C4 Citations distinguish the writer's ideas and words from those of the work being analyzed and from those of additional sources.</p>
<p>LO 2.3D Use an appropriate style and carefully selected language to strengthen an analysis.</p>	<p>EK 2.3D1 Precise word choice and sentence variety can focus the reader's attention, convey an intended tone, and present a convincing analysis.</p> <p>EK 2.3D2 Smooth and meaningful transitions are vital to create a logical and cohesive progression of ideas.</p> <p>EK 2.3D3 The writer's own position, voice, and style should be supported but not overshadowed by textual evidence.</p>

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2.4

Writing a narrative allows a writer to convey experience, share perspective, or deepen their own understanding.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
<p>LO 2.4A Establish a narrative point of view.</p>	<p>EK 2.4A1 A narrator provides the lens through which a real or imagined story is told.</p> <p>EK 2.4A2 Consistent first-person or third-person points of view are the most common narrative perspectives; however, some authors prefer to establish multiple or shifting points of view.</p> <p>EK 2.4A3 Third-person narration can be objective and/or omniscient, but a first-person narrator can also be a central figure in the story, so reliability and perspective must be evaluated.</p>
<p>LO 2.4B Use a variety of techniques to advance plot, theme, and the evolution of character(s).</p>	<p>EK 2.4B1 Whereas plot forms the storyline (the events, conflicts, and actions of the characters), themes are those meaningful ideas that surface through the telling of the story.</p> <p>EK 2.4B2 Characters and events are developed through the use of techniques such as description, dialogue, pacing, and reflection.</p> <p>EK 2.4B3 Meaning can be enhanced when objects, settings, or characters are used symbolically to represent larger ideas.</p>
<p>LO 2.4C Use carefully selected language to help the reader imagine or share the experience conveyed in the narrative.</p>	<p>EK 2.4C1 Vivid descriptions, imagery, and figurative language draw the reader into the narrative.</p> <p>EK 2.4C2 Writers can use language to directly or indirectly indicate shifts in time and setting.</p> <p>EK 2.4C3 Word choice helps convey a particular voice with its own syntax, diction, and tone.</p>

Big Idea: Focusing on Language

Words do not live in isolation. They are chameleon-like in their ability to blend their inherent meanings into the textual environments in which they live. Therefore, students benefit from encountering words in authentic contexts rather than in isolated lists. Students can be inspired to develop a sense of word consciousness as they read, appreciating the nuances a word expresses within particular contexts. In turn, students can be guided to make conscious choices about the most precise word or combination of words to express their thoughts in their writing and their speech. Like a musical composer who may configure notes together in a song with a melody and rhythm capable of evoking the feelings and movements of his audience, a writer brings words together in verse and in prose to stir the thoughts, emotions, and actions of readers. This big idea focuses on helping students develop an awareness of how words work together to achieve effects and to then use that awareness to craft their own powerful expressions.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3.1

Critical readers develop a sense of word consciousness that motivates them to investigate word meanings.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 3.1A Use context clues to infer the meaning of multiple-meaning or unfamiliar words.	EK 3.1A1 A word's nuanced meaning is often dependent on the context in which it is used. EK 3.1A2 Words with similar denotations can have significantly different connotations. EK 3.1A3 A word's literal and figurative meanings can influence meaning simultaneously, enabling the reader to interpret the word in multiple ways.
LO 3.1B Analyze a word based on its parts (base word and affixes), and relate its morphology to its meaning.	EK 3.1B1 Applying knowledge of roots and affixes (prefixes and suffixes) can help a reader deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words. EK 3.1B2 Recognizing patterns in word endings (e.g., <i>-ly</i> , <i>-tion</i> , <i>-ify</i>) can contribute to a reader's understanding of a word's part of speech. EK 3.1B3 Recognizing patterns in morphology can help readers see how words are related to one another.
LO 3.1C Research a word's various meanings by consulting online and print reference sources (e.g., dictionaries, thesauri, usage guides).	EK 3.1C1 Online dictionaries can provide definitions as well as a multitude of authentic sentence examples that can guide usage of unfamiliar or multiple-meaning words. EK 3.1C2 A thesaurus can help a writer choose the most appropriate word for a particular usage. EK 3.1C3 Usage guides can offer guidelines for addressing grammar and frequently misused words and phrases.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3.2

Precise word choice and compelling language patterns can stir the thoughts, emotions, and actions of readers.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 3.2A Compose or revise language to honor precision and economy in word choice.	<p>EK 3.2A1 Related words may appear synonymous or interchangeable, but there is value in choosing the best word to achieve a particular rhetorical effect.</p> <p>EK 3.2A2 Concise writing avoids wordiness and instead relies on the use of the strongest and most effective words.</p> <p>EK 3.2A3 Although writers may use repetition as a rhetorical strategy, redundancy should be avoided.</p>
LO 3.2B Compose or revise language to ensure that word choice and language patterns are consistent with the intended style, voice, register, and tone of a text or presentation.	<p>EK 3.2B1 Varying sentence structures can maintain the reader's interest, enhance voice, and contribute to fluency.</p> <p>EK 3.2B2 Word choice and language patterns should be appropriate for the subject, audience, occasion, and purpose of the writing or presentation.</p> <p>EK 3.2B3 Linguistic diversity across dialects and registers contributes to the power and richness of language.</p>

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3.3

Conventions of Standard English are used to aid the reader's understanding, and authors may use or defy these conventions to achieve different stylistic effects.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 3.3A Compose or revise language to ensure sentences are grammatically correct and that their internal structures provide clarity.	<p>EK 3.3A1 Capitalization and punctuation can indicate sentence boundaries and clarify the relationships between and among words, phrases, and clauses within a sentence.</p> <p>EK 3.3A2 Complex sentences require the use of appropriate punctuation, parallel structure, and coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.</p> <p>EK 3.3A3 Modifying phrases need to be appropriately placed within a sentence so that readers can clearly understand what they are modifying.</p>
LO 3.3B Compose or revise language to ensure proper agreement and appropriate verb tense.	<p>EK 3.3B1 To ensure clarity, there should be agreement between subjects and verbs and between pronouns and their antecedents.</p> <p>EK 3.3B2 Inappropriate shifts in verb tense can disorient a reader.</p>
LO 3.3C Understand the ways in which language choices can be made to achieve intended effects.	<p>EK 3.3C1 Writers consider the flexibility of the genre (e.g., poetry, dramatic dialogue) as they make decisions about adhering to conventions.</p> <p>EK 3.3C2 Deliberately defying conventions of Standard English may influence voice, tone, and rhetorical effect.</p>

Big Idea: Investigating Through Research

Since today’s students are likely to consult their smartphones before consulting a traditional periodical or encyclopedia, we need an appropriately broad approach to teaching research. As students encounter a text with an unfamiliar context or unfamiliar allusions, they need to be encouraged to take advantage of online resources that allow them to get immediate, real-time answers to their questions. In addition to undertaking such informal research, students must also have opportunities to conduct longer, more sustained research that attempts to solve problems and propose solutions that are informed by credible sources. This big idea guides students to achieve the delicate balance between the synthesis and analysis of outside sources and the assertion of their own voices and opinions, and to present their findings in both informal and formal settings.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 4.1

Research is a powerful, recursive process used to gain knowledge, solve problems, make informed decisions, and enhance understanding.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 4.1A Identify a problem, idea, or central question and complete preliminary readings to determine the purpose, scope, and process of the research.	EK 4.1A1 Research can be formal or informal, sustained or on the spot. EK 4.1A2 Preliminary research can confirm, challenge, or expand the initial problem, question, or idea.
LO 4.1B Gather, evaluate, and synthesize evidence from multiple authoritative sources (e.g., print, digital, multimedia) to address the research question or problem.	EK 4.1B1 Researchers may rely on a wide variety of primary and other sources (e.g., collected data, books, journal articles, websites, video footage, historical documents). EK 4.1B2 Effective research requires integrating the findings of multiple sources accurately and strategically.
LO 4.1C Determine the credibility, reliability, and relevancy of selected sources.	EK 4.1C1 Sources must be evaluated based on established criteria (e.g., authenticity, accuracy, merit, fact or opinion, direct relationship to the topic). EK 4.1C2 Source bias must be considered within the research process.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 4.2

Research presentations and reports include new findings as well as a synthesis of the prior research of others.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 4.2A Make an independent claim that addresses the research question or problem and is supported by the findings.	EK 4.2A1 A claim is the researcher’s own answer to the research question or problem, and it is grounded in credible evidence found during the process.
LO 4.2B Communicate findings and their significance, incorporating written, spoken, and multimedia approaches according to task, purpose, and audience.	EK 4.2B1 Research findings can be conveyed through a variety of methods (e.g., reports, data tables, social media, videos, spreadsheets). EK 4.2B2 It is important to distinguish the researcher’s point of view from that of experts in the field. EK 4.2B3 Sharing research goes beyond simply restating findings to include interpretation, significance, and implications for additional research.
LO 4.2C Summarize, paraphrase, or directly quote others’ words appropriately and effectively.	EK 4.2C1 Whether summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting, researchers must acknowledge the sources of words and ideas. EK 4.2C2 Direct quotations can add credibility, but they should be used judiciously to ensure that the researcher provides sufficient analysis of a quotation and how it relates to their central claim.
LO 4.2D Attend to the ethical responsibilities of research, including the presentation of citations and references in a specified, standard format (e.g., APA, MLA) and the use of appropriate and legal sources for texts, images, and sound.	EK 4.2D1 Evidence must be cited appropriately to acknowledge others’ words and ideas. EK 4.2D2 Writers must also properly credit sources and ideas that exist in formats other than traditional print (e.g., images, video clips, music, personal interviews). EK 4.2D3 Standard citation formats assist readers and provide a means for fact-checking and conducting additional research.

Big Idea: Entering the Conversation

Academic conversation requires the open exchange of ideas among students who aim to assert their evidence-based views on a topic or text while actively listening to and elaborating on others' ideas, whether in agreement with those ideas or not. In addition to academic discussions, students must also learn to express their formulated ideas through oral presentations. This big idea prepares students with the verbal skills necessary for confident participation in college, the workplace, and a democratic society, ensuring that they can engage fully in the wider conversations surrounding the issues and events of importance to academic and civic life.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5.1

Academic discourse requires collaboration to advance and deepen understanding of topics or texts.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 5.1A Extend the conversation around an idea, topic, or text by formulating questions and recognizing the claims and perspectives of others.	EK 5.1A1 Preparing for academic conversations requires considering topics and/or texts and developing a point of view. EK 5.1A2 Creating talking points prior to a discussion helps the speaker stay focused and present ideas clearly. EK 5.1A3 Listening to others' opinions requires attending carefully, responding appropriately, reflecting on what was shared, and weighing others' ideas against one's own position.
LO 5.1B Cite relevant evidence and evaluate the evidence presented by others.	EK 5.1B1 Effective academic discussions include substantial evidence that adds to the credibility of the speaker and the significance of the discussion. EK 5.1B2 When considering positions presented by others, the listener should assess the soundness of others' reasoning and the strength of evidence presented.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5.2

Effective speakers design and deliver presentations according to their subject, purpose, audience, and occasion.

Learning Objective <i>Students will be able to ...</i>	Essential Knowledge <i>Students need to know that ...</i>
LO 5.2A Determine the purpose for communication and select an appropriate format.	EK 5.2A1 The formality, length, and overall style of a presentation are influenced by the speaker’s subject and purpose, the audience’s background, and the occasion that prompted the presentation.
LO 5.2B Incorporate effective visual and multimedia tools to enhance the presentation and achieve the intended effect.	EK 5.2B1 Visual and multimedia aids require purposeful selection in order to engage listeners and clarify information without creating a distraction or communication barrier.
LO 5.2C Demonstrate an awareness of the audience during both the planning and delivery of a presentation, and make adjustments based on the audience’s responses.	EK 5.2C1 Effective speakers consider the audience’s likely reaction to the topic and develop a presentation that engages the audience without compromising the message. EK 5.2C2 Audiences provide verbal and nonverbal cues, and effective speakers use those cues to adjust elements such as pacing, volume, and tone throughout a presentation.
LO 5.2D Communicate clearly and effectively, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal techniques.	EK 5.2D1 A speaker’s vocal delivery (e.g., volume, rate, enunciation) and physical actions (e.g., posture, gestures, movement) can enhance or undermine a presentation.