

**English Language
Arts/Artes del Lenguaje
Inglés**



Roanoke City
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Teacher Contact
Information:**
Información de
contacto del
profesor:

**Family Learning
Resources:
Remote Learning Edition
Recursos de
Aprendizaje Familiar:
Edición de Aprendizaje
Remoto**

8th Grade/8° grado



Family Learning Resources: Remote Learning Edition

Winter 2026 - 5 Days of Resources

Content Areas Included

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Objective

This document will provide families with remote learning resources in the four core content areas for the anticipated extended closure of schools due to inclement weather.

Recommendations for Usage

- These necessary materials focus on reinforcing previously learned concepts - no new materials are covered.
- Students should be able to complete with minimal adult assistance. However, discussing the purpose and understandings from resources can help establish a deeper connection to the materials.
- Students are encouraged to write down questions that they might have about the materials so that they may be discussed with teachers.
- In addition to the completion of these materials, RCPS recommends that students take time to read - either independently or with others.

Questions & Follow Up Notes

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your student's teachers with any questions. These resources are designed to support remote learning during school closures and help minimize disruptions to instruction. **Students should bring this booklet with them when they return to school.**



Recursos de Aprendizaje Familiar: Aprendizaje Remoto



Invierno 2026 – 5 días de recursos

Áreas de contenido

- Lenguaje (Inglés)
- Matemáticas
- Ciencias
- Estudios Sociales

Objetivo

Este documento ofrece a las familias recursos de aprendizaje remoto en las cuatro áreas académicas principales, pensados para apoyar la continuidad educativa durante cierres escolares prolongados debido a las inclemencias del tiempo.

Recomendaciones de Uso

- Estos materiales necesarios se centran en reforzar conceptos aprendidos previamente - no se cubre material nuevo.
- Los estudiantes deberían poder completar las actividades con una asistencia mínima de un adulto. Sin embargo, conversar sobre el propósito y los aprendizajes de los recursos puede ayudar a establecer una conexión más profunda con el material.
- Se anima a los estudiantes a escribir las preguntas que puedan tener sobre los materiales para que puedan ser comentadas con los maestros.
- Además de completar estos materiales, RCPS recomienda que los estudiantes dediquen tiempo a la lectura, ya sea de manera independiente o con otras personas.

Preguntas y notas de seguimiento

Por favor, no dude en comunicarse con los maestros de su estudiante si tiene alguna pregunta. Estos recursos están diseñados para apoyar el aprendizaje remoto durante los cierres escolares y ayudar a minimizar las interrupciones en la instrucción. **Los estudiantes deben traer este folleto cuando regresen a la escuela.**



Grade 8 ELA Remote Learning Packet

Complete one day per remote learning day. Work at your own pace. Write in complete sentences. Turn in all work when you return to school OR submit online if your teacher asks you to do so.

Day 1 – Setting Goals & Close Reading

Curriculum Alignment: Intro Unit- Great Beginnings

Focus Skills: Main idea, text features, purpose (RI.1, RI.2)

Activities

1. Independent Reading (10 min)

- a. Read any school appropriate book of choice.
- b. Write a brief summary of what you read.

2. Vocabulary Development (10 min)

- a. What does the Latin Root **tract** mean?
- b. Write five words that include **tract**.
- c. Use those five words in a sentence.

3. Informational Reading (15–20 min)

Read one informational document

- a. Examples: Student handbook, School expectations, classroom syllabus, cell phone policy, any other formal document

4. Comprehension Task (15 min)

Answer the following questions about the informational selection you read:

- a. What did you read?
- b. What is the **purpose** of the document? Who is this document written for?
- c. List **two text features** (headings, bold print, bullets).
- d. Write a **3–4 sentence summary** of the main idea.

5. Exit Reflection (5 min)

Why is it important to understand technical or school documents?

Day 2 – Technology & Theme

Curriculum Alignment: Unit 1 Gadgets & Glitches

Focus Skills: Theme, Character

Activities

1. Independent Reading (10 min)

- Read any school appropriate book of choice.
- Write a brief summary of what you read.

2. Vocabulary Development (10 min)

- What does the Latin Root *port* mean?
- Write five words that include *port*.
- Use those five words in a sentence.

2. Literary Reading (15–20 min)

- Read this passage:

The best way to deal with failure

Selin Malkoc

Chances are you've failed at something in your life. But that doesn't mean it has to be for nothing. In this informational text, Selin Malkoc explores the best way to deal with failures and benefit from them.

As you read, take notes on the different ways people can think about their failures.

Failure is a part of life, and we make mistakes pretty much every day. How do we cope? Or better yet, how should we cope?

Academics and mainstream media tend to offer a simple solution: Don't let it get to you and think about how things could have been worse.

These self-protective thoughts usually make you feel better. You move on.

But is it possible that popular wisdom is missing a bit of the puzzle? Does setting aside the negative emotions make you any less likely to repeat the mistake? Noelle Nelson, Baba Shiv and I decided to explore possible upsides of feeling bad about failure.

Feeling the pain

Even though they're unpleasant, we feel negative emotions for a reason: They likely played an important role in human evolution and survival.

Negative emotions tell us to pay attention, signaling that something's wrong — with our body, with our environment, with our relationships.

So, if you avoid negative emotions, you also might be avoiding the things that need your attention. Could deciding to focus on the negative emotions associated with failure lead to thoughts about self-improvement — and, with time, actual improvement?

We designed a series of experiments to test this question.

In the studies, we used something called a two-stage paradigm: First, participants attempted a task in which they failed; then — after a series of unrelated tasks — they would have the opportunity to redeem themselves.

In one, we asked our participants to search the internet for the lowest price for a particular blender brand and model (with the possibility of winning a cash prize if they were successful). In reality, the task was rigged. At the end, the participants were simply told that the lowest price was US \$3.27 less than what they had found. We then asked half the participants to focus on their emotional response to having failed, while the other half were instructed to focus on their thoughts about how they did. Then we asked them to reflect, in writing, on how they felt.

After a few unrelated tasks, we gave the participants a chance to redeem themselves. In this seemingly unrelated task, we told participants to imagine that they were going to the birthday of a friend who wanted a book as a gift. We also told them that the book they find should be a bargain.

We found that participants who were previously instructed to focus on the negative emotions following their failure in the blender task spent nearly 25 percent more time searching for a low-priced book than those who had been instructed to focus on their thoughts.

When we examined the written responses, we also found some important differences.

Those who had focused on their failure — rather than dwelling on how they felt — tended to have defensive responses: "I didn't care much about this anyway"; "It would have been impossible to find that price."

In contrast, the participants who had spent time parsing their emotions produced thoughts oriented toward self-improvement: “If I’d only searched longer, I would have found that price”; “I gave up too quickly.”

Not all mistakes are the same

It appears that focusing on the emotions of failure can trigger different thoughts and behaviors. Perhaps when you reflect on how bad you feel after failing, it motivates you to avoid experiencing that feeling again.

But could this improvement migrate into other endeavors — for tasks unrelated to the original?

To test this question, we added a variation of the second gift scenario. Instead of telling the participants to find an affordable book (which involved a price search like the original task), we asked them to find a book that they thought their friend would like. In this case, it didn’t matter whether participants had focused on their emotions or thoughts after the first task; they spent similar times searching for the best gift. It seems as though the improvement only happens if the second task is somewhat similar to the original, failed one.

While “feeling your failure” can be a good thing, it doesn’t change the fact that this can hurt. There’s a reason people tend to instinctively rationalize or have self-protective thoughts after they’ve made a mistake.

It would be debilitating if you were to focus on how bad you felt after each failure, big and small. So, it’s up to you to decide which failures to try to improve upon, and which failures to shield yourself from. Clearly, one-off events or inconsequential mistakes — taking the wrong turn in a foreign city or being late to a party with friends — don’t make the best candidates (hence the saying “don’t sweat the small stuff”).

But if you’ve failed at something that you know you’re going to have to confront in the future — say, a task for a new role at work — pause and feel the pain. Use it to fuel improvement. If you focus on how bad you feel, you’ll probably work harder to ensure you don’t make the same mistake again.

["The best way to deal with failure"](#) by Selin Malkoc, The Ohio State University, October 24, 2017. Copyright © The Conversation 2017, CC-BY-ND.

3. Story Analysis (15 min)

Read and answer these questions:

1. PART A: Which statement identifies the main idea of the text?

- a. Focusing on the negative emotions of failures can help you make better decisions in tasks related to, and unrelated to, the original failed task.
 - b. It's important to embrace the negative emotions that come with certain failures, as this could help you do better in the future and avoid additional failures.
 - c. It's better to focus on how you can improve in the future than the negative emotions associated with a perceived failure.
 - d. People who avoid focusing on the negative emotions associated with failure report being happier overall but tend not to learn from their mistakes.
2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
- a. "Academics and the mainstream media tend to offer a simple solution: Don't let it get to you and think about how things could have been worse." (Paragraph 2)
 - b. "Those who had focused on their failure — rather than dwelling on how they felt — tended to have defensive responses: 'I didn't care much about this anyway'" (Paragraph 14)
 - c. "Perhaps when you reflect on how bad you feel after failing, it motivates you to avoid experiencing that feeling again." (Paragraph 16)
 - d. "Clearly, one-off events or inconsequential mistakes — taking the wrong turn in a foreign city or being late to a party with friends — don't make the best candidates (hence the saying 'don't sweat the small stuff')." (Paragraph 20)
3. How does the introduction of the text contribute to our understanding of failure (Paragraphs 1-4)?
- a. They explore why people often don't learn from the mistakes they make.
 - b. They discuss the benefits of remaining positive in the face of failure.

- c. They explore how people are typically encouraged to deal with failure.
 - d. They emphasize how normal it is to experience failure at some point in your life.
4. What is the relationship between how a person thinks about negative emotions and their actions?
- a. Focusing on negative emotions can encourage someone to do what is necessary to avoid feeling that way again.
 - b. Acknowledging negative emotions can make someone more upset and act more impulsively.
 - c. Avoiding negative emotions makes people feel better about themselves and helps them make better decisions.
 - d. Thinking about negative emotions or experiences as an opportunity for growth helps people perform better in tasks.
5. The author discusses different tasks participants were asked to do after failing at something. How does this contribute to our understanding of the effects of focusing on failure? Write your response.

6. **Vocabulary Application (5 min)**

Review the vocabulary words below. Write a sentence for 3 of them.

1. **Cope** (*verb*): to deal with something difficult in a successful way
 2. **Redeem** (*verb*): to make up for a poor performance
 3. **Parse** (*verb*): to analyze something to uncover a deeper meaning
 4. **Debilitate** (*verb*) : to make someone weak
 5. **Inconsequential** (*adjective*) : not important; insignificant
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Day 3 – Informational Text & Claims

Curriculum Alignment: Unit 1 – Gadgets and Glitches

Focus Skills: Claims, Evidence, Main Idea

Activities

1. Independent Reading (10 min)

1. Read any school appropriate book of choice.
2. Write a brief summary of what you read.

2. Vocabulary Development (10 min)

1. What does the Latin Root **struct** mean?
2. Write five words that include **struct**.
3. Use those five words in a sentence.

3. Literary Reading (15–20 min) Read this selection:

The Value of Being Confused

Barrett Smith

No one likes to feel confused, but could there actually be benefits to confusion? In this informational text, Barrett Smith explores why feeling confused is actually a good thing.

As you read, take notes on how people respond to confusion.

We've all felt confused before, and it can be one of the most frustrating feelings to deal with. Students might be confused about how to solve a math problem or finish a project. Young people might be confused about who they are and what to do in the future. No matter what is making us confused, the feeling of not knowing what the answers or solutions are can make us feel useless, stupid, and cause us to worry.

A lot of people are hard on themselves and others when there's a lack of understanding. People often tend to think that the person who has all of the answers is smarter than the one who asks a lot of questions. Because of the negative judgment that surrounds confusion, people often try to hide their confusion in a variety of ways. Instead of admitting or accepting that they don't have the solution, people sometimes try to pretend they have the

answers. At other times, people make educated guesses or create an answer even if they know it isn't right.

Students are often guilty of hiding their lack of understanding. If confused about a topic in school, they might pretend to know the answers. They can sometimes be embarrassed to ask questions. As young individuals, they can be confused about who they are and might try harder to behave in a particular way. They can be too embarrassed to explore other groups or identities, afraid perhaps of being called a "wannabe". They can be afraid people will know they're confused.

But confusion might actually be a good thing. When we jump to an answer, we don't have time to explore and understand the thing we're confused about. Fighting confusion ends up making us more confused. Instead of fighting or trying to ignore your confusion, accepting it and taking the opportunity to analyze what's confusing can benefit our learning. In fact, scientific studies show that confusion leads to deeper understanding. A 2004 study explored six moods that people feel while learning, including frustrated, bored, and confused. They found that students who spent more of the lesson confused learned the most. In another study, published in 2014, scientists tried to confuse students by giving them contradictory information. Students who expressed confusion during the lesson did better on the final test. Based on these studies, scientists believe being confused is a step to learning. Not knowing the answer to a problem gives us space to look at different ways to solve it. The feeling of confusion also motivates us to look more deeply into the problem. In the end, this helps us understand the topic at a deeper level.

Confusion isn't just an important step to learning in school; it's also important for learning who you are. Psychologists call that sense of who you are identity. Your identity can involve being part of groups like race, gender, and subcultures. Identity is also made up of your values and goals. People figure out their identity in two steps. The first step is exploration, where you try out different groups and values and see what fits. The next step is commitment, when you decide firmly about some parts of your identity. Exploring your identity can feel very confusing. You might be afraid that people will judge you for going through different phases or not committing to a group. But the phases are completely natural. A study published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Development* found that people who do the most exploring about who they are, have better outcomes such as higher self-esteem later in life. Confusion gives us the space to try new things and be creative. Allowing ourselves to be confused and ask questions leads to

deeper understanding, more learning, and higher self-confidence. So, try not to be embarrassed when you're confused about something. Instead of trying to hide or fight your confusion, try to resolve it by trying new things. Embrace the confusion and explore different solutions to your problem. Sometimes being confused is hard, not just because we judge ourselves, but because it can be frustrating. When we try over, and over to understand something without making any progress, we can feel defeated and stop caring and eventually give up. Trying a new method, asking for help, or researching different ways to approach the problem online can all be great resources to work through your confusion. Before you give up, make sure you have someone to help you and the resources you need to resolve your confusion.

"The Value of Being Confused" by Barrett Smith. Copyright © 2018 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

4. Literary Response (15-20 min)

1. PART A: Which statement best expresses the main ideas of the text?

- a. Allowing yourself to feel confused is a necessary part of developing your brain and understanding yourself.
- b. Confusion is more important to intellectual growth than it is to understand your identity.
- c. It takes a certain degree of self-confidence and maturity to admit that you don't have all the answers.
- d. Feeling confused is something that will fade with time and experience as you acquire all of the answers.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- a. "No matter what is making us confused, the feeling of not knowing what the answers or solutions are can make us feel useless, stupid, and cause us to worry." (Paragraph 1)
- b. "Instead of admitting or accepting that they don't have the solution, people sometimes try to pretend they have the answers." (Paragraph 2)
- c. "Students are often guilty of hiding their lack of understanding. If confused about a topic in school, they might pretend to know the answers." (Paragraph 3)
- d. "Confusion isn't just an important step to learning in school, it's also important for learning who you are." (Paragraph 5)

3. PART A: Which of the following describes the author's main purpose in the text?

- a. to provide readers with tools to overcome their confusion
- b. to reassure readers that it's completely normal to feel confused
- c. to encourage readers to work through their confusion, rather than avoid it
- d. to explore why teenagers are more susceptible to confusion than adults

4. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- a. "We've all felt confused before, and it can be one of the most frustrating feelings to deal with." (Paragraph 1)
- b. "As young individuals they can be confused about who they are and might try harder to behave in a particular way." (Paragraph 3)
- c. "A 2004 study explored six moods that people feel while learning, including frustrated, bored, and confused." (Paragraph 4)
- d. "Instead of trying to hide or fight your confusion, try to resolve it by trying new things." (Paragraph 5)

5. Explain the relationship between confusion and growth in the text. Cite evidence from the text to support your response. Write your response

5. Quick Write (10 min)

Psychologists found that struggling through multiple phases in your life helps you decide who you are. What makes you who you are? Have you ever been confused by your identity or gone through a phase that didn't seem true to yourself? Has a friend? Describe the experience.

Day 4 – Suspense

Curriculum Alignment: Unit 2 – *The Thrill of Horror*

Focus Skills: Mood, Suspense, Literacy Devices

Activities

1. Independent Reading (10 min)

1. Read any school appropriate book of choice.
2. Write a brief summary of what you read.

2. Vocabulary Development (10 min)

1. What does the Greek root ***therm*** mean?
2. Write five words that include ***therm***.
3. Use those five words in a sentence.

3. Literary Reading (15–20 min)

Read this selection:

How to Make Your Writing Suspenseful

Victoria Smith

This text provides advice to aspiring writers.

As you read, take notes on how the author develops their argument.

What makes a good horror story? Sure, you could throw in some hideous monsters, fountains of blood, and things jumping out from every corner, but as classic horror author H.P. Lovecraft wrote, “The oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.”

And writers harness that fear not by revealing horrors, but by leaving the audience hanging in anticipation of them. That is, in a state of suspense.

The most familiar examples of suspense come from horror films and mystery novels. What’s inside the haunted mansion? Which of the dinner guests is the murderer? But suspense exists beyond these genres.

Will the hero save the day? Will the couple get together in the end? And what is the dark secret that causes the main character so much pain?

The key to suspense is that it sets up a question, or several, that the audience hopes to get an answer to and delays that answer while maintaining their interest and keeping them guessing.

So, what are some techniques you can use to achieve this in your own writing?

Limit the point of view. Instead of an omniscient narrator who can see and relay everything that happens, tell the story from the perspective of the characters. They may start off knowing just as little as the audience does, and as they learn more, so do we. Classic novels, like *Dracula*, for example, are told through letters and diary entries where characters relate to what they've experienced and fear what's to come.

Next, choose the right setting and imagery. Old mansions or castles with winding halls and secret passageways suggest that disturbing things are being concealed. Nighttime, fog, and storms all play similar roles in limiting visibility and restricting characters' movements. That's why Victorian London is such a popular setting. And even ordinary places and objects can be made sinister as in the Gothic novel *Rebecca*, where the flowers at the protagonist's new home are described as blood red.

Three, play with style and form. You can build suspense by carefully paying attention not just to what happens but how it's conveyed and paced. Edgar Allan Poe conveys the mental state of the narrator in "The Tell-Tale Heart" with fragmented sentences that break off suddenly. And other short declarative sentences in the story create a mix of breathless speed and weighty pauses. On the screen, Alfred Hitchcock's cinematography is known for its use of extended silences and shots of staircases to create a feeling of discomfort.

Four, use dramatic irony. You can't just keep your audience in the dark forever. Sometimes, suspense is best served by revealing key parts of the big secret to the audience but not to the characters. This is a technique known as dramatic irony, where the mystery becomes not what will happen but when and how the characters will learn. In the classic play *Oedipus Rex*, the title character is unaware that he has killed his own father and married his mother. But the audience knows and watching Oedipus gradually learn the truth provides the story with its agonizing climax.

And finally, the cliffhanger. Beware of overusing this one. Some consider it a cheap and easy trick, but it's hard to deny its effectiveness. This is where a chapter, episode, volume, or season cuts off right before something crucial is revealed, or in the midst of a dangerous situation with a slim chance of hope. That wait, whether moments or years, makes us imagine possibilities about what could happen next, building extra suspense. The awful thing is almost always averted, creating a sense of closure and emotional release. But it doesn't stop us from worrying and wondering the next time the protagonists face a near-certain disaster.

4. Literary Response: Answer the following questions:

1. What is the main idea of the text?

- a. Making one's writing suspenseful is a great way to engage one's audience.
- b. One should include scary monsters and violence when writing suspense.
- c. Writers debate if including cliffhangers is a good way to build suspense.
- d. It is easier to build suspense in films than in writing.

2. How does paragraph 9 develop a claim made by the author?

- a. It shares famous parts of horror stories.
- b. It explains how filmmakers build suspense.
- c. It provides information about how the author writes her own stories.
- d. It describes how building suspense can be done through writing style.

3. According to the article, how does dramatic irony affect the audience?

- a. It keeps the audience unaware of what is happening, which creates a sense of uneasiness.
- b. It leaves clues for the audience about what could happen, which creates a sense of mystery.
- c. It makes the audience aware of something the characters are not, which creates a sense of distress.
- d. It prevents the characters from sharing with the audience all that they know, which creates a sense of tension.

4. What does the word "averted" mean as it is used in paragraph 11?

- a. avoided
- b. enabled
- c. forbidden
- d. turned around

5. How does paragraph 7 contribute to the author's argument? Write your response.



Day 5 – Reflection & Writing

Curriculum Alignment: 1st and 2nd Nine Weeks Writing

Focus Skills: Writing, voice, reflection (W.1, W.2)

Activities

1. Independent Reading (10 min)

1. Read any school appropriate book of choice.
2. Write a brief summary of what you read.

2. Vocabulary Development (10 min)

1. What does Latin root **socio** mean?
2. Write five words that include **socio**.
3. Use those five words in a sentence.

3. Personal Narrative Writing (25–30 min)

Write a one-page response to **one** the following prompts:

A. **Technology and Me**

Think about a specific experience from your own life that involves technology. It could be something small (a phone, video game, app, or social media post) or something big (online learning, staying in touch with family, or how technology affects your school life)

Write a personal narrative (2–3 paragraphs) explaining:

- *How technology has personally affected you*
- *Whether that impact has been mostly helpful, harmful, or both*
- *What this experience has taught you about the role technology plays in people’s lives*

You may include:

- *A moment when technology helped you*
- *A moment when technology caused a problem*
- *How have your thoughts about technology changed over time. Focus on your thoughts, feelings, and growth — not just facts.*
- *Use first-person point of view*

B. **Why I Like (or Don’t Like) Being Scared**

Think about a time when you watched, read, or listened to something scary or suspenseful. This could be a book, story, movie, show, podcast, or even a story someone told you.

Write a personal narrative (2–3 paragraphs) explaining:

- How the story made you **feel while experiencing it**
- Why you think you (or people your age) enjoy feeling frightened or tense
- What fear or suspense allows us to experience in a safe way

You might describe:

- A specific scary scene or moment
- Your physical or emotional reaction
- Why you kept reading, watching, or listening even though it made you nervous
- Use sensory details and reflection to help the reader understand your experience.

4. Self Reflection (10 min)

- a. What reading skill did you improve this week?
- b. Which activity was most challenging?
- c. What strategy helped you succeed?

