



Mount Pleasant Central School District

Critical Writing & Research, English Language Arts

We believe that all students should acquire the necessary literacy skills, strategies, and knowledge to cultivate their identities as readers and writers in order to engage in critical thinking and communication for authentic purposes and audiences in our diverse world.

Unit Title	Month	Content	Vocabulary	Standards	Skills	Big Ideas	Assessments
Foundations of Critical Thinking & Academic Writing	Quarter 1	Introduction to argument; rhetorical situation (speaker, audience, purpose); distinguishing fact, opinion, and claim; developing thesis statements	- claim, evidence, reasoning, rhetoric, tone, bias, credibility, purpose, audience	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1; W.9-10.4; RI.9-10.8; SL.9-10.1	- Identify author's purpose and bias; analyze argument structure; write clear, arguable thesis statements; engage in academic discussion	All writing begins with critical thought—questioning, analyzing, and evaluating information.	Diagnostic writing sample; rhetorical analysis paragraph; Socratic discussion participation
Reading for Rhetorical Analysis	Quarter 2	Close reading of nonfiction texts (essays, op-eds, speeches); SOAPStone strategy; analyzing ethos, pathos, logos	- ethos, pathos, logos, diction, syntax, connotation, denotation, tone, rhetoric	RI.9-10.1; RI.9-10.2; RI.9-10.5; W.9-10.9	- Annotate and analyze nonfiction texts; identify rhetorical devices; explain how style contributes to argument	Writers craft meaning through purposeful choices in language and structure.	Rhetorical analysis essay on a nonfiction text; peer review workshop
Research	Quarter 4	- Introduction to research process; using databases; evaluating sources; avoiding plagiarism	- source, citation, plagiarism, credibility, bias, paraphrase, synthesis, database	W.9-10.7; W.9-10.8; L.9-10.6	- Conduct guided research; take notes; summarize and paraphrase; cite sources in MLA	Research is a process of inquiry—asking questions, gathering evidence, and drawing conclusions.	Annotated bibliography; mini-research project using 3 credible sources

Educating Each Student Today for Endless Possibilities Tomorrow



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Argumentative Writing	Quarters 1 - 4	- Structure of an argument; counterclaims and rebuttals; transitions and coherence	- counterclaim, rebuttal, concession, refutation, cohesion, logical fallacy	W.9-10.1; W.9-10.5; L.9-10.1; L.9-10.2	Construct organized, well-supported argumentative essays; revise for clarity and flow	Strong arguments balance logic and empathy, evidence and perspective.	Multi-draft argumentative essay; peer review conference; rubric-based revision
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