Wall Township Public Schools	Board Approval Date: August 18, 2026

Course Title: ELA 8 Advanced

Course Description:
In this class, students will embark on a journey through the world of literature, language, and communication. Designed to foster critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication skills, this course will allow students to become confident readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Students will explore a wide range of literary genres, including novels, short stories, poetry, drama, and non-fiction texts. They will analyze and interpret various literary elements such as plot, character development, setting, and theme, deepening their understanding of the complexities of storytelling.

Students will focus on honing their writing skills through a variety of writing assignments, including short answer responses, narratives, persuasive pieces, and research papers. Students will learn how to articulate their ideas effectively, structure their writing logically, and revise and edit their work to improve clarity and coherence.

This class will emphasize the development of language skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. Through targeted instruction and practice activities, students will enhance their ability to communicate accurately and fluently, both orally and in writing. Students will engage in meaningful conversations concerning self-selected texts from a thoroughly curated list, share their perspectives, and learn from one another. Through peer feedback and group projects, students will develop teamwork and

communication skills essential for success in school and beyond.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards

Vision for English Language Arts Education in New Jersey

A New Jersey education in English Language Arts builds readers, writers, and communicators prepared to meet the demands of college and career and to engage as productive American citizens with global responsibilities. Throughout their kindergarten through grade 12 experience, students will:

- Develop the necessary skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundations for creative and purposeful expression in language.
- Read rich, challenging texts that build their knowledge of the world, grow their confidence and identities as readers, and develop critical thinking skills and vocabulary necessary for long-term success.
- Engage in regular, meaningful, writing authentic tasks, exploring valued topics, writing for impact and expression, and sharing their work with others (including authentic audiences).
- Leverage complex texts and digital media to develop comprehension, active listening, and discussion skills.
- Ground daily writing and discussion in evidence, fostering an ability to read critically, build arguments, cite evidence, and communicate ideas to contribute meaningfully as productive citizens.
- Evaluate the reliability, credibility, and perspective of authors and speakers across all forms of media.
- Express ideas and knowledge through a variety of modalities and media, and serve as effective communicators who purposefully read, write, and speak across multiple disciplines.
- Learn to persist in reading complex texts, establishing lifelong habits to read voluntarily for pleasure, for further education, for information on public policy, and for advancement in the workplace.

Practices of English Language Arts

The English Language Arts Practices offer the capacities held by students who have progressed through a kindergarten through grade 12 English Language Arts program in New Jersey. These practices describe students who are proficient in literacy, possessing the ability to read deeply, create their own works, and listen and speak to a broad range of ideas. As New Jersey students advance through the grades and demonstrate proficiency in the standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, they are able to exhibit with increasing fullness and regularity the following capacities of the literate individual.

Student capacities include:

- Developing Responsibility for Learning: Cultivating independence, self-reflection, and responsibility for one's own learning.
- Adapting Communication: Adapting communication in response to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- Valuing Evidence in Argumentation: Constructing viable claims and evaluating, defending, challenging, and qualifying the arguments of others.
- Building Knowledge: Building strong content knowledge and connecting ideas across disciplines using a variety of text resources and media.
- Leveraging Technology: Employing technology and digital media thoughtfully, strategically, and capably to enhance reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use.
- Understanding Self and Others: Using literacy as a vehicle to affirm all the aspects of one's own identity, as well as understand, connect to, and respect other perspectives and cultures.

Inclusion of Climate Change Opportunities

( **)** notes opportunities to integrate specific examples of climate change education provided by additional

age-appropriate resources

The goal of inclusion of climate change education implementation is to foster generations of New Jersey students that can analyze, question, interpret, to think independently, and bring critical deduction to fulfill, and to lead in jobs created by burgeoning industries of the future green economy.

Course Sequence & Pacing	
Unit Title	**Estimated Number of Instructional Days**
Unit 1: The Wanderings of Odysseus In this unit, students will embark on a captivating journey through the realms of ancient Greek mythology. Through reading *The Wanderings of Odysseus*, a young adult adaptation of Homer's epic masterpiece, 'The Odyssey,' and a selection of other mesmerizing myths, students will unravel the tapestry of gods, heroes, and monsters that define ancient storytelling while also cultivating their skills in critical reading and analysis. By the end of the unit, students will emerge as more proficient readers and thinkers equipped with the tools necessary to unlock the richness of reading fiction and analyze the importance of reading and evaluate literature.	28 days MP 1
Unit 2: Crafting Realistic Fiction In this unit students will craft a realistic piece of narrative fiction using the skills that authors employ to create interesting, thoughtful, and well-written literature. This unit will delve into the key areas of narrative writing including setting, character, dialogue, sensory language, plot development, tone, and reflective ending. Students will incorporate writing techniques such as imagery and figurative language to create original pieces of narrative fiction. Students will gain a deeper appreciation for the	16 days MP 1-2

complexities of crafting fiction while honing their creative writing. By the end of the unit, students will be able to successfully compose a realistic narrative in an on-demand setting.	
Unit 3: Reading Nonfiction Texts In this unit, students will engage in close reading and thoughtful analysis of nonfiction mentor texts. Students will examine how authors craft arguments by employing rhetorical appeals and strategic techniques to influence their audiences. Students will evaluate the strength and relevance of evidence, analyze the coherence of reasoning, and develop a deeper understanding of how effective arguments are constructed and conveyed.	17 days MP 2
Unit 4: Crafting an Argument Students will develop their own arguments on various topics employing rhetorical appeals. Through engaging discussions, writing exercises, student-teacher conferences, and peer feedback, students will enhance their ability to construct well-supported arguments while honing their skills in persuasive writing.	31 days MP 2-3
Unit 5: Dystopian Book Clubs This unit will aim to engage students in thought-provoking discussions about contemporary societal challenges through the lens of dystopian literature. Participants will read and analyze a book of their choice that explores various social issues, encouraging empathy, understanding, and critical reflection on these topics. Students will explore societal issues together in book club discussions and work collaboratively to design a Dystopian Newspaper to present to their peers.	30 days MP 3-4
Unit 6: Explanatory/Informative Writing: Explaining The Holocaust In this unit, students will develop and write an explanatory essay that explains a specific topic related to the Holocaust. Through reading, research, discussion, and writing, students will examine historical information, analyze credible sources, and organize evidence clearly and effectively. Students will learn	10 days MP 4

how to introduce a topic, develop ideas with relevant facts and details, use appropriate transitions, and maintain a formal, informative style. By the end of the unit, students will produce a well-structured expository essay that demonstrates their understanding of both the writing process and the historical topic they have studied.	
Unit 7: Timeless Poetic Voices In this unit, students will closely read and analyze poetry written by influential and diverse poets. Through careful study of selected works by established authors, students will develop a deeper understanding of how poetry communicates meaning through language, structure, and literary devices. The unit will guide students in interpreting poems thoughtfully, supporting their thinking with textual evidence, and engaging in discussions that build understanding of both content and craft. By the end of the unit, students will be able to read poetry with greater insight and explain how poets use language to convey ideas, emotions, and themes.	10 days MP 4
Unit 8: Introduction to the Bard: Reading & Performing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* In this unit students will be introduced to William Shakespeare and one of his comedies, A MIdsummer Night's Dream. Students will become acquainted with and analyze the lines in the play. They will also work collaboratively to perform an Act with their acting groups.	20 days MP4

Unit 1

Desired Results
Unit 1 Title: The Wanderings of Odysseus

Unit Summary: In this unit, students will embark on a captivating journey through the realms of ancient Greek mythology. Through reading *The Wanderings of Odysseus*, a young adult adaptation of Homer's epic masterpiece, 'The Odyssey,' and a selection of other mesmerizing myths, students will unravel the tapestry of gods, heroes, and monsters that define ancient storytelling while also cultivating their skills in critical reading and analysis. By the end of the unit, students will emerge as more proficient readers and thinkers equipped with the tools necessary to unlock the richness of reading fiction and analyze the importance of reading and evaluate literature.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.VL.8.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

A. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
B. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

RL.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.CI.8.2. Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RL.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

RL.TS.8.4. Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.

RL.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums, including the representation/s or various perspectives of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), as well as what is emphasized or absent in each work.

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.RW.8.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal

9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8)

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

8.1.8.DA.1: Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.2.8.HistoryCC.3.a: Determine the extent to which religion, economic issues, and conflict shaped the values and decisions of the classical civilizations.

6.2.8.HistoryUP.3.a: Compare and contrast social hierarchies in classical civilizations as they relate to power, wealth, and equality.

6.2.8.HistoryCA.3.a: Evaluate the importance and enduring legacy of the major achievements of Greece, Rome, India, and China over time.

6.3.8.CivicsPI.2: Evaluate the extent to which different forms of government reflect the history and values of various societies (e.g., monarchy, democracy, republic, dictatorship)

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How do authors use literary elements such as plot, character development, and theme to convey meaning in texts?
- What techniques do authors use to reveal characters' traits, motivations, and transformations throughout a narrative?
- How do characters' interactions with others reveal their personalities and influence the plot?
- What can we learn about characters from the way they respond to conflicts, challenges, or changes in their circumstances?
- How does the setting of a story contribute to its mood, atmosphere, and overall impact on the reader?
- In what ways does the physical, cultural, or historical

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Settings in literature serve as more than mere backdrops; they influence character actions, shape mood, and contribute to thematic development.
- Understanding the cultural, historical, and geographical context of a setting enhances comprehension and interpretation of literary works.
- Plot structures vary in complexity and organization, impacting the pacing, suspense, character development, and thematic resonance of a narrative.
- Characters evolve through their actions, dialogue, thoughts, and interactions with others, revealing their motivations, conflicts, and relationships.
- Recognizing similarities and differences in text structures across diverse literary works enhances critical thinking

<table>
<tr>
<td>setting influence characters' actions and decisions?
• How do patterns in language, dialogue, or imagery contribute to the overall structure and impact of a text?
• What strategies can we use to analyze and interpret complex texts, including fiction and nonfiction?
• How do themes evolve throughout a text or across several translations of one author’s work?
• What factors influence changes in the emphasis or interpretation of themes over time?</td>
<td>and appreciation of narrative techniques.
• Themes are central ideas or messages about human nature, society, and the world that emerge through characters, plot events, and settings.
• Exploring multiple perspectives on similar themes across texts enriches understanding of universal truths and cultural diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Vocabulary/Grammar:
• Vocabulary Workshop
• Words their Way

from The Wanderings of Odysseus:
• in-text vocabulary for comprehension

Academic Vocabulary:
• cite, relevant, sufficient, theme, compare, contrast, theme, structure, style, diction (word choice), analyze/analysis, medium/media, objective

Grammar
• Grammar for Writing Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td colspan="2">Students will be able to:
• Cite textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis</td>
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- Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details of the text
- Provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- Analyze how particular elements of a text interact.
- Compare and contrast the structure of texts.
- Analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.
- Evaluate the choices made when presenting an idea in different mediums.
- Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details
- Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone
- Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented orally and explain how the ideas clarify a topic or text
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Anticipation Guide for *The Wanderings of Odysseus* and the hero's journey
- Whole class read aloud and independent, silent, sustained reading
- Reading responses comparing the original translation of the poem (Homer's *The Odyssey*) to the prose translation (*The Wanderings of Odysseus)*
- Reading responses pertaining to the nonfiction paired texts (The Myth of the Trojan War, When the Games Were Everything, and Athena and Poseidon's Contest for Athens) and the fictional prose translation (*The Wanderings of Odysseus*)
- Class discussions concerning elements of fiction, i.e. characters, setting, plot, etc.
- Socratic Seminar: The Hero's Journey
- Mini Lessons:
    - Writing an objective summary of a text
    - Characterization
    - Fiction and nonfiction comparisons and contrasts
    - How setting shapes characters

- How plot points drive a story forward + The Hero's Journey
- How characters influence events + xenia
- Determining theme
- How text structure effects meaning
- Analyzing various translations of the same original text

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
  - *The Wanderings of Odysseus* by Rosemary Sutcliff
    - Sutcliff's adaptation emphasizes empathy, moral consequence, and respect for human dignity, aligning with DEI values. Students analyze power, justice, temptation, and leadership, and discuss bias, pride, and empathy—core elements of DEI instruction. It also encourages appreciation of diverse cultural heritages and world literatures, fulfilling the DEI mandate through multicultural literary inclusion.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- IXL
- Reading responses
- Close Reading Comprehension Practice
- Think, Pair, Share
- Turn and Talk
- Socratic Seminars
- Group Work/Discussions
- Closure/Exit Tickets

- Levels of Understanding

Summative Assessments:

- Cold Read: Prometheus and Pandora's Box + Cold Write: short answer (TEXAS) concerning theme
- The Wanderings of Odysseus Board Game

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- IXL
- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- *The Wanderings of Odysseus* by Rosemary Sutcliff Children's Book Project

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- Whole Class Text
  - *The Wanderings of Odysseus* by Rosemary Sutcliff
- Paired Texts:
  - *The Odyssey* (translation by Emily Watson)
  - Ancient Greece: The Birthplace of Western Individualism (CommonLit)
  - The Myth of the Trojan War - britishmuseum.com
  - The Life and Death of Sisyphus (multimedia)
  - When the Games Were Everything (NYT)
  - Athena and Poseidon's Contest for Athens (CommonLit)
  - The Hero's Journey (CommonLit)
  - Apollo and Hyacinthus (CommonLIt)

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,

Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines with notes
- Chapter summaries

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal Glossary

- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Audiobooks
- Outlines with notes
- Chapter summaries

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping
- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines with notes
- Chapter summaries

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.

504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 2

Desired Results

Unit 2 Title: Crafting Realistic Fiction

Unit Summary: In this unit students will craft a realistic piece of narrative fiction using the skills that authors employ to create interesting, thoughtful, and well-written literature. This unit will delve into the key areas of narrative writing including setting, character, dialogue, sensory language, plot development, tone, and reflective ending. Students will incorporate writing techniques such as imagery and figurative language to create original pieces of narrative fiction. Students will gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of crafting fiction while honing their creative writing. By the end of the unit, students will be able to successfully compose a realistic narrative in an on-demand setting.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.SS.8.1. Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

A. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
B. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
C. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
D. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

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

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

A. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
C. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
E. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

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

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.CI.2: Repurpose an existing resource in an innovative way (e.g., 8.2.8.NT.3).

9.4.8.CI.3: Examine challenges that may exist in the adoption of new ideas (e.g., 2.1.8.SSH,6.1.8.CivicsPD.2).

9.4.8.CI.4: Explore the role of creativity and innovation in career pathways and industries.

9.4.8.IML.13: Identify the impact of the creator on the content, production, and delivery of information (e.g., 8.2.8.ED.1)

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.2.8.HistoryCC.3.a: Determine the extent to which religion, economic issues, and conflict shaped the values and decisions of the classical civilizations.

6.2.8.HistoryUP.3.a: Compare and contrast social hierarchies in classical civilizations as they relate to power, wealth, and equality.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- What makes effective storytelling?
- How does language choice impact the tone and voice of a piece?
- How do writers create compelling characters that readers care about?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Effective storytelling includes the development of well-rounded characters with distinct traits, motivations, and conflicts
- Skillful use of sensory details, vivid imagery, and figurative language enriches the narrative experience, making scenes and settings come alive.

• What techniques do authors use to build suspense and engage readers in a story? • How does setting influence the mood and tone of a narrative? • How can writers effectively use dialogue to develop characters and advance the plot? • Why is it important to structure a narrative with a clear beginning, middle, and end? • How do authors balance showing versus telling in their narratives? • What role does conflict play in driving a narrative forward? • How can writers use descriptive language to enhance their storytelling? • How do writers revise and edit their narratives to improve clarity and impact? • Why is feedback valuable in improving our writing?	• Narrative structure, including exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution, organizes events to create meaning and impact for readers. • The narrative voice and point of view influence how readers interpret and connect with the story, enhancing authenticity and emotional resonance. • Central conflicts and obstacles faced by characters propel the plot forward, creating tension and opportunities for character growth. • The process of revising and editing allows writers to refine their narratives, improving coherence, pacing, and thematic coherence. • Authors make deliberate choices in crafting narratives, including thematic elements, symbolism, and narrative techniques, to convey messages and evoke reader responses.

Vocabulary/Grammar:

- Vocabulary Workshop
- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary:

- narrative, climax, resolution, setting, characters, mood, plot, tension, point of view, figurative language, imagery, conflict

Grammar:

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Possible Prompts
    - Various picture prompts with short explanations (reminiscent on NJSLA-A)
    - The Overheard Conversation: You hear something not intended for you, forcing a difficult choice.
    - Shifting Friendships: A single, unforgivable comment causes a long-term friendship to fracture.
    - The New Kid's Secret: A mysterious student arrives mid-year.
    - No Adults: A scenario where students arrive at school to find no adults present.
    - The Unpopular Decision: Choosing between peer pressure and personal morals.
    - The Forgotten Favor: A small favor spirals into unexpected responsibility.
    - The Secret Box: Discovering a locked, mysterious box belonging to parents.
    - Broken Traditions: A broken family tradition exposes long-standing tension.
    - The Unwanted Move: A story of moving to a new country and starting over.
    - Sibling Rivalry: Exploring the evolution of a sibling relationship.

        - The Wrong Item: A suitcase mix-up at the airport triggers self-reflection.
        - Overcoming Fear: Tackling a personal fear, like public speaking or making a team in front of a crush.
        - The Misdelivered Letter: A wrong-address letter changes two lives.
        - Constructive Criticism: Struggling to accept fair but harsh feedback.
        - Hidden Talent: Uncovering an unexpected talent.
        - The "Responsible" One: A reliable student pushes back against high expectations.
        - "I didn't realize the conversation would matter until I replayed it later, word by word."
        - "The message stayed unread for three hours before I finally decided what to do."
        - "Today seemed like the perfect day, until..."
        - "I swore I would never tell anyone what really happened."
        - "The object had been sitting there for years before I suddenly recognized it as evidence..."
- Mini Lessons
    - Sensory Language
    - Dialogue
    - Plot
    - Setting
    - Character
    - Conflict
    - Reflective Ending
    - Grammar for Writing: Colorful Language 2.6 (p.47)
    - Grammar for Writing: Denotation & Connotation 2.7 (p.50)
    - Grammar for Writing: Figurative Language 2.8 (p.53)

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity*, *Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]

- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
  - The novel addresses race, ethnicity, language, immigration, poverty, gender roles, and social class through Esperanza's experiences growing up in a predominantly Latino neighborhood.

Assessment Evidence
Formative Assessments: • IXL • Think, Pair, Share • Turn and Talk • Group Work/Discussions • Closure/Exit Tickets • Levels of Understanding
Summative Assessments: • Realistic Fiction Narrative
Common Benchmark Assessments: • All ELA 8A Summative Assessments • IXL
Alternate Assessments: • Slides Presentation

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials
• Whole Class Text (model)   ○ The House on Mango Street, Teacher-written models

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,
Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

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- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
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- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Audiobooks
- Outlines
- Notes with summaries

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping
- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines
- Notes with summaries

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.

504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 3

Desired Results
Unit 3 Title: Reading Nonfiction Texts
Unit Summary: In this unit, students will engage in close reading and thoughtful analysis of nonfiction mentor texts. Students will examine how authors craft arguments by employing rhetorical appeals and strategic techniques to influence their audiences. Students will evaluate the strength and relevance of evidence, analyze the coherence of reasoning, and develop a deeper understanding of how effective arguments are constructed and conveyed.
Learning Standards
NJSLS: L.SS.8.1. Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or

speaking.

E. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
F. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
G. Recognize spelling conventions.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.PP.8.5. Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text and by acknowledging and responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.AA.8.7. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

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

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.1.8.FP.6: Compare and contrast advertising messages to understand what they are trying to accomplish.

9.1.8.FP.7: Identify the techniques and effects of deceptive advertising.

9.2.8.CAP.4: Explain how an individual's online behavior (e.g., social networking, photo exchanges, video postings) may impact opportunities for employment or advancement.

9.4.8.DC.1: Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.

9.4.8.DC.2: Provide appropriate citation and attribution elements when creating media products (e.g., W.6.8).

9.4.8.DC.5: Manage digital identity and practice positive online behavior to avoid inappropriate forms of self-disclosure.

9.4.8.DC.6: Analyze online information to distinguish whether it is helpful or harmful to reputation.

9.4.8.IML.1: Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information.

9.4.8.IML.2: Identify specific examples of distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation of information.

9.4.8.IML.3: Create a digital visualization that effectively communicates a data set using formatting techniques such as form, position, size, color, movement, and spatial grouping (e.g., 6.SP.B.4, 7.SP.B.8b).

9.4.8.IML.4: Ask insightful questions to organize different types of data and create meaningful visualizations.

9.4.8.IML.5: Analyze and interpret local or public data sets to summarize and effectively communicate the data.

9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

9.4.8.IML.9: Distinguish between ethical and unethical uses of information and media (e.g., 1.5.8.CR3b, 8.2.8.EC.2).

9.4.8.IML.10: Examine the consequences of the uses of media (e.g., RI.8.7).

9.4.8.IML.12: Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

9.4.8.TL.4: Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event (e.g., MS- LS4-5,6.1.8.CivicsPI.3).

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*):

8.1.8.DA.1: Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.3.8.CivicsPD.1: Deliberate on a public issue affecting an upcoming election, consider opposing arguments, and develop a reasoned conclusion.

6.3.8.CivicsPD.3: Construct a claim as to why it is important for democracy that individuals are informed by facts, aware of diverse viewpoints, and willing to take action on public issues.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How can persuasive techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos strengthen or weaken an argument?
- What criteria should be used to evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources in argumentative writing?
- What strategies can writers use to effectively organize and structure an argumentative essay?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Students will understand how persuasive techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos are used to effectively convey arguments and influence audiences.
- Students will develop the ability to critically analyze texts to identify arguments, evidence, and logical reasoning, distinguishing between strong and weak arguments.

• How does understanding your audience impact the effectiveness of your argument? • What role does evidence play in supporting claims and counterclaims in argumentative writing? • How can language and tone influence the persuasiveness of an argument? • How do ethical considerations influence the development and presentation of arguments? • In what ways can argumentative writing contribute to constructive dialogue and informed decision-making in society?	• Effective arguments are deliberately crafted; authors use rhetorical appeals and strategic techniques to shape audience perception and influence thinking. • Critical readers actively interrogate texts, evaluating the quality, relevance, and sufficiency of evidence rather than accepting claims at face value. • Authors make purposeful choices in structure, language, and evidence to achieve specific effects and advance their intended message. • Understanding how arguments work empowers readers to become more discerning consumers of information in an increasingly complex media landscape. • Skilled analysis of nonfiction texts deepens comprehension and enables readers to engage thoughtfully with real-world issues and perspectives.

Vocabulary/Grammar:

- Vocabulary Workshop
- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary:

- Argument, Claim, Counterclaim, Evidence, Reasoning, Persuasive Techniques, Rebuttal, Credibility, Bias, Audience, Context, Ethos, Pathos, Logos, Plagiarism

Grammar

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections that strongly support an analysis.
- Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details
- Provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.
- Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text and by acknowledging and responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
- 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.
- Analyze and reflect on informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Anticipation Guide Activity
- Engage in whole-class reading
- Execute standards-based mini-lessons to develop skills and strategies:
    - Logical Appeals (Ethos, Logos, Pathos, Kairos)
    - Argument Structure
    - Argumentative/Persuasive Techniques (i.e. counterarguments/counterclaims)
    - Evaluating a Thesis (Grammar Resource pg. 129)
- Identify and employ the key skills of reading at grade-level complexity.
- Engage in protected time for independent reading.
- Confer individually with the teacher.
- Engage in small-group reading skills-based instruction.
- Share and collaborate with assigned partners.

- Experience activities with partners where critical reading skills are discussed as they relate to argumentation and persuasion.
- Demonstrate understanding through various assessments.
- Shared reading of a play

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- Climate Change, LGBTQ and People with Disabilities and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Smarter Than You Think* by Clive Thompson
        - Thompson discusses how data analytics, communication technology, and global collaboration help humanity tackle large-scale problems like climate change. His argument that "connected thinking" makes us collectively smarter directly supports Climate Change education, as it encourages innovation, cooperation, and scientific literacy to address environmental crises. The book reinforces the role of technology in sustainability and global responsibility.
        - *Smarter Than You Think* emphasizes how digital spaces empower marginalized voices, including LGBTQ individuals and people with disabilities, by offering platforms for visibility, community, and self-expression. Thompson discusses technology as an equalizer, enabling those with disabilities to communicate, learn, and create in ways previously limited by physical barriers. The text also supports LGBTQ inclusion by showing how digital communities foster identity formation, empathy, and acceptance.
        - At its core, the book is about equity in knowledge and representation. Thompson argues that technology, when used responsibly, democratizes access to education, amplifies diverse voices, and fosters global empathy. His case studies highlight collaborative intelligence across gender, race, ability, and geography, aligning perfectly with DEI's mission to create inclusive, equitable spaces for learning and innovation. The book can be used to promote classroom dialogue about ethical tech use, global citizenship, and respect for diversity in digital spaces.

- Asian American & Pacific Islanders and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell
        - *Outliers* meaningfully fulfills the AAPI mandate by examining the influence of Asian cultural values on learning, work ethic, and communication. Gladwell's analysis of Chinese rice farming and its relationship to perseverance and mathematical skill in education provides positive, research-based representation of AAPI cultures. This discussion encourages students to explore how culture shapes cognitive and behavioral patterns, moving beyond stereotypes to appreciation and understanding. Teachers can deepen this by pairing with AAPI narratives or immigrant success stories to meet full representation goals.
        - *Outliers* is a foundational DEI text. It explicitly explores how race, class, geography, and culture shape human outcomes. It provides a framework for understanding equity vs. equality, inviting students to examine privilege, access, and opportunity gaps. Gladwell's narratives promote cultural empathy, cross-cultural understanding, and the dismantling of bias, which are central DEI outcomes. The book's underlying message, that success is collective, not individual, fosters collaborative and inclusive worldviews in alignment with DEI education.
- Amistad & Holocaust and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - 12 Angry Men by Reginald Rose
        - The play examines prejudice, stereotyping, civic responsibility, and the consequences of allowing bias to influence decision-making. Juror #10's openly prejudiced remarks provide a powerful opportunity to discuss discrimination, human dignity, and the importance of standing against injustice.
        - The jurors confront personal biases, assumptions, socioeconomic stereotypes, and differing life experiences while working toward a just decision. The play highlights the importance of listening to diverse perspectives and ensuring equitable treatment under the law.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- IXL

- Think, Pair, Share
- Turn and Talk
- Group Work/Informal Discussions
- Closure/Exit Tickets
- Levels of Understanding
- Minute Writes
- Class Polls
- Gamified Practice: Kahoot/BlookIt/Gimkit
- Minor: Rhetorical Appeals and Argument Structures and Techniques
- Minor: Timed Writing

Summative Assessments:

- Nonfiction Reading Assessment (multiple choice)

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- IXL
- Vocabulary Workshop Unit Assessment
- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- Nonfiction Reading Project

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

Mentor Texts:

- CommonLit: The Value of Being Confused
- The New York Times: College Essays and ChatGPT
- *Smarter Than You Think* by Clive Thompson (Chapter 1)
- *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell (Chapters 1-2)
- The Social Dilemma (Netflix)

- Embark Behavioral Health: “Can Social Media Be a Positive Influence on Teens?”
- “Instagram Influencers”
- 12 Angry Men

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,
Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal Glossary
- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Outlines

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping
- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.

504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 4

Desired Results

Unit 4 Title: Crafting An Argument

Unit Summary: Students will develop their own arguments on various topics employing rhetorical appeals. Through engaging discussions, writing exercises, student-teacher conferences, and peer feedback, students will enhance their ability to construct well-supported arguments while honing their skills in persuasive writing.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.SS.8.1. Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

E. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
F. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

G. Recognize spelling conventions.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.PP.8.5. Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text and by acknowledging and responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.AA.8.7. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

W.AW.8.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
D. Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.SE.8.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.RW.8.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.1.8.FP.6: Compare and contrast advertising messages to understand what they are trying to accomplish.

9.1.8.FP.7: Identify the techniques and effects of deceptive advertising.

9.2.8.CAP.4: Explain how an individual's online behavior (e.g., social networking, photo exchanges, video postings) may impact opportunities for employment or advancement.

9.4.8.DC.1: Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.

9.4.8.DC.2: Provide appropriate citation and attribution elements when creating media products (e.g., W.6.8).

9.4.8.DC.5: Manage digital identity and practice positive online behavior to avoid inappropriate forms of self-disclosure.

9.4.8.DC.6: Analyze online information to distinguish whether it is helpful or harmful to reputation.

9.4.8.IML.1: Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information.

9.4.8.IML.2: Identify specific examples of distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation of information.

9.4.8.IML.3: Create a digital visualization that effectively communicates a data set using formatting techniques such as form, position, size, color, movement, and spatial grouping (e.g., 6.SP.B.4, 7.SP.B.8b).

9.4.8.IML.4: Ask insightful questions to organize different types of data and create meaningful visualizations.

9.4.8.IML.5: Analyze and interpret local or public data sets to summarize and effectively communicate the data.

9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

9.4.8.IML.9: Distinguish between ethical and unethical uses of information and media (e.g., 1.5.8.CR3b, 8.2.8.EC.2).

9.4.8.IML.10: Examine the consequences of the uses of media (e.g., RI.8.7).

9.4.8.IML.12: Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

9.4.8.TL.4: Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event (e.g., MS- LS4-5,6.1.8.CivicsPI.3).

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*):

8.1.8.DA.1: Organize and transform data collected using computational tools to make it usable for a specific purpose.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.3.8.CivicsPD.1: Deliberate on a public issue affecting an upcoming election, consider opposing arguments, and develop a reasoned conclusion.

6.3.8.CivicsPD.3: Construct a claim as to why it is important for democracy that individuals are informed by facts, aware of diverse viewpoints, and willing to take action on public issues.

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: • How can persuasive techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos strengthen or weaken an argument? • What criteria should be used to evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources in argumentative writing?	**Unit Enduring Understandings:** • Students will understand how persuasive techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos are used to effectively convey arguments and influence audiences.

• How do different perspectives and counterarguments contribute to a more robust argument? • What strategies can writers use to effectively organize and structure an argumentative essay? • How does understanding your audience impact the effectiveness of your argument? • What role does evidence play in supporting claims and counterclaims in argumentative writing? • How can language and tone influence the persuasiveness of an argument? • How do ethical considerations influence the development and presentation of arguments? • How can collaboration and peer feedback improve the quality of argumentative writing? • In what ways can argumentative writing contribute to constructive dialogue and informed decision-making in society?	• Students will learn how to research and evaluate sources for credibility, relevance, and bias when supporting their arguments with evidence. • Students will grasp the importance of organizing their arguments logically and effectively within the structure of an essay, including clear introduction, body paragraphs with supporting evidence, and a compelling conclusion. • Students will recognize the significance of considering their audience's perspectives, values, and beliefs when constructing persuasive arguments. • Students will appreciate the ethical considerations involved in presenting arguments honestly, fairly, and with respect for differing viewpoints. • Students will understand the iterative nature of writing, engaging in revision and editing processes to refine their arguments, improve clarity, and strengthen their overall persuasive impact. • Students will develop their ability to articulate and defend their ideas confidently through argumentative writing, contributing to meaningful dialogue and informed decision-making.
Vocabulary/Grammar: • Vocabulary Workshop	

- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary:

- Argument, Claim, Counterclaim, Evidence, Reasoning, Persuasive Techniques, Rebuttal, Credibility, Bias, Audience, Context, Ethos, Pathos, Logos, Plagiarism

Grammar

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections that strongly support an analysis.
- Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details
- Write arguments on discipline-specific content to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

- 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.
- Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Anticipation Guide/Activity
- Engage in whole-class reading
- Execute standards-based mini-lessons to develop skills and strategies:
    - Logical Appeals (Ethos, Logos, Pathos, Kairos)
    - Argument Structure
    - Argumentative/Persuasive Techniques (i.e. counterarguments/counterclaims)
    - Developing and Evaluating a Thesis (Grammar Resource pg. 129)
- Identify and employ the key skills of writing at grade-level complexity.
- Engage in protected time for independent reading and writing.
- Confer individually with the teacher.
- Engage in small-group reading/writing skills-based instruction.
- Share and collaborate with assigned partners.
- Experience activities with partners where critical reading skills are discussed as they relate to argumentation and persuasion.
- Demonstrate understanding through various assessments.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- IXL
- Think, Pair, Share
- Turn and Talk
- Group Work/Informal Discussions
- Closure/Exit Tickets
- Levels of Understanding
- Minute Writes
- Class Polls
- Gamified Practice: Kahoot/BlookIt/Gimkit
- Minor: Rhetorical Appeals and Argument Structures and Techniques
- Minor: Timed Writing

Summative Assessments:

- Argumentative Speech Presentation

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- IXL
- Vocabulary Workshop Unit Assessment
- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- Persuasive Essay

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

Mentor Texts:

- Teacher-created model of argumentative essay
- Student curated articles based on topic, using library databases and credible google sources

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,
Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts

- Personal Glossary
- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Outlines

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
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Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 5

Desired Results

Unit 5 Title: Dystopian Book Clubs

Unit Summary: This unit will aim to engage students in thought-provoking discussions about contemporary societal challenges through the lens of dystopian literature. Participants will read and analyze a book of their choice that explores various social issues, encouraging empathy, understanding, and critical reflection on these topics. Students will explore societal issues together in book club discussions and work collaboratively to design a Dystopian Newspaper to present to their peers.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

RL.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.CI.8.2. Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RL.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

RL.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on how the author's idea in fiction and literary nonfiction texts (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) is shaped by the author's emphasis on different evidence, advancing different interpretations of facts, or fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period.

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.RW.8.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.CI.1: Assess data gathered on varying perspectives on causes of climate change (e.g., cross cultural, gender-specific, generational), and determine how the data can best be used to design multiple potential solutions

9.4.8.CT.3: Compare past problem-solving solutions to local, national, or global issues and analyze the factors that led to a positive or negative outcome.

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

9.4.8.IML.11: Predict the personal and community impact of online and social media activities.

9.4.8.TL.2: Gather data and digitally represent information to communicate a real-world problem

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally. 9.4.8.TL.4: Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event 9.4.8.TL.6: Collaborate to develop and publish work that provides perspectives on a real-world problem.
Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*): 8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.
Interdisciplinary Connections: 6.3.8.CivicsPI.3: Use a variety of sources from multiple perspectives to examine the role of individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a local or global issue and share this information with a governmental or nongovernmental organization as a way to gain support for addressing the issue. 6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: • How do characters' identities shape their experiences and interactions within the story? • What injustices or inequalities are portrayed in the book, and how do characters respond to them? • How do these issues reflect broader societal challenges or systemic issues? • How does the book depict the impact of community actions or movements on social issues? • What can we learn from these depictions about the potential for collective action and change?	**Unit Enduring Understandings:** • Students will come to understand that social issues are multifaceted and often interconnected with various aspects of identity, power dynamics, and systemic structures. • Engaging with diverse characters and narratives allows students to empathize with different perspectives and experiences. • Through discussions on characters' actions and choices within the literature, students will explore how characters navigate ethical dilemmas and advocate for change, reflecting on their own roles in societal issues.

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- What similarities or differences exist between the issues faced by characters and those faced in different parts of the world?
- What lessons can readers take from these characters' actions in terms of personal responsibility?
- How does the book convey messages of hope or resilience in the face of social challenges?

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- By studying narratives that depict social change efforts or community resilience, students will explore strategies for addressing social issues in their own lives and communities, inspired by the examples set forth in literature.

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Vocabulary/Grammar:

- Vocabulary Workshop
- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary

- Social justice; Inequality; Marginalization; advocacy; empowerment; community engagement; resilience; activism

Grammar:

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

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Students will be able to:

- Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

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- Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
- Analyze and reflect on how the author's idea in fiction and literary nonfiction texts (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) is shaped by the author's emphasis on different evidence, advancing different interpretations of facts, or fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period.
- 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.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- 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.
- 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.
- Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Student-directed reading calendar creation
- Read aloud: The Uglies by Scott Westerfeld
    - Sketch notes
    - Seminar
- Execute standards-based mini-lessons to develop skills and strategies:
    - Identifying the Dystopian World

    - Characterization (STEAL)
    - Dialogue and Plot
    - Dramatic Irony
    - Theme
- Engage in protected time for independent reading and writing
- Confer individually with the teacher
- Engage in small-group reading/writing skills-based instruction.
- Share and collaborate with assigned partners in book clubs
- Experience activities with partners where critical reading skills are needed for discussion.
- Demonstrate understanding through various assessments

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity*, *Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Unwind* by Neal Shusterman
        - Students examine how bias, power, privilege, and societal norms shape who is valued and who is marginalized. The novel challenges readers to consider the ethical implications of discrimination and the importance of empathy and advocacy.
- LGBTQ and People with Disabilities and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *This Mortal Coil* by Emily Suvada
        - The novel includes explicitly LGBTQ+ representation and explores issues of identity, belonging, bodily autonomy, and acceptance. Additionally, themes surrounding illness, genetic conditions, and societal responses to individuals affected by disease can foster discussions about empathy and inclusion.

        - Students examine questions of privilege, access to medical resources, ethical use of technology, and how societies decide whose lives are prioritized during times of crisis. The novel encourages readers to value diverse identities and perspectives.
- Climate Change and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *The Testing* by Joelle Charbonneau
        - The story takes place in a post-war society devastated by environmental destruction and resource scarcity. Students can examine how environmental crises affect communities, influence policy decisions, and shape future generations.
        - The Testing process raises questions about fairness, access, privilege, meritocracy, and who is granted opportunities to succeed. Students examine how power structures influence outcomes and how diverse perspectives contribute to more equitable systems.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Divergent* by Veronica Roth
        - The faction system categorizes individuals into narrow identities, creating stereotypes, exclusion, and unequal treatment. The novel challenges readers to consider the value of individuality, diverse perspectives, and inclusive communities.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Flawed* by Cecelia Ahern
        - The novel challenges readers to consider who defines "normal," how systems create insiders and outsiders, and the dangers of judging individuals based on labels rather than their humanity.
- Asian American & Pacific Islanders and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Legend* by Marie Lu
        - Marie Lu is a Chinese American author whose success in young adult literature provides an opportunity to highlight AAPI voices and contributions to contemporary literature. However, AAPI identities are not central themes within the plot itself.

        - The divide between the wealthy elite and impoverished sectors of the Republic highlights issues of privilege, inequity, access to resources, and systemic bias. The novel encourages students to question who benefits from societal structures and who is excluded.
- Asian American & Pacific Islanders, LGBTQ and People with Disabilities, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Skyhunter* by Marie Lu
        - Marie Lu is a Chinese American author. An author study provides an authentic opportunity to recognize AAPI contributions to contemporary young adult literature and discuss the importance of diverse voices.
        - The protagonist, Talin, is nonverbal as a result of wartime trauma. Her experiences navigating communication, identity, and others' perceptions offer authentic opportunities to discuss disability, accessibility, and inclusion.
        - The novel explores xenophobia, nationalism, belonging, and the treatment of refugees and marginalized populations. Students examine how societies define who belongs and how individuals resist systems rooted in fear and exclusion.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman
        - The novel asks students to consider how bias, privilege, and power influence decisions. It challenges readers to examine fairness, representation, and the responsibility of leaders to act ethically and equitably.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - *Matched* by Ally Condie
        - The novel encourages students to examine individuality, belonging, privilege, and the consequences of forcing people to conform. It raises questions about whose voices are valued and what happens when diversity of thought and identity is suppressed.

Assessment Evidence
Formative Assessments: • IXL

- Think, Pair, Share
- Turn and Talk
- Group Work/Discussions
- Closure/Exit Tickets
- Levels of Understanding

Summative Assessments:

- Dystopian Newspaper

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- IXL
- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternative Assessments:

- Dystopian Worlds Essay

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials
Read Aloud: *The Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld or Teacher-Chosen Text
Book Club Options • *Unwind* by Neal Shusterman • *This Mortal Coil* by Emily Suvada • *The Testing* by Joelle Charbonneau • *Divergent* by Veronica Roth • *Flawed* by Cecelia Ahern • *Legend* by Marie Lu • *Skyhunter* by Marie Lu • *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman • *Matched* by Ally Condie

from CommonLit:

- Cracking Code Purple (nonfiction pairing for This Mortal Coil)
- Explainer: How CRISPR Works (nonfiction pairing for This Mortal Coil)
- The Face of Immortality (nonfiction pairing for Scythe)

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,
Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines

- Notes with Chapter Summaries

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal Glossary
- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Audiobooks
- Outlines
- Notes with Chapter Summaries

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping
- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice

- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Outlines
- Notes with Chapter Summaries

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.
504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 6

Desired Results

Unit 6 Title: Explanatory/Informative Writing: Explaining The Holocaust

Unit Summary: In this unit, students will develop and write an explanatory essay that explains a specific topic related to the Holocaust. Through reading, research, discussion, and writing, students will examine historical information, analyze credible sources, and organize evidence clearly and effectively. Students will learn how to introduce a topic, develop ideas with relevant facts and details, use appropriate transitions, and maintain a formal, informative style. By the end of the unit, students will produce a well-structured expository essay that demonstrates their understanding of both the writing process and the historical topic they have studied.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.SS.8.1. Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

A. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
B. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
C. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
D. Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
E. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
F. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented.

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.RW.8.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.

9.1.8.PB.5: Identify factors that affect one's goals, including peers, culture, location, and past experiences.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*):
8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.
8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.
Interdisciplinary Connections:
6.2.8.CivicsHR.3.a: Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of free men, women, slaves, and foreigners in the political, economic, and social structures of classical civilizations.
6.2.8.HistoryUP.3.a: Compare and contrast social hierarchies in classical civilizations as they relate to power, wealth, and equality.

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: • Why is it important to learn about and remember the Holocaust today? • How did individuals, groups, and governments contribute to or resist injustice during the Holocaust? • What is the role of evidence in helping us understand and explain the past? • How can we organize complex historical information so others can understand it clearly? • What makes an explanation clear, effective, and engaging? • How can writers use evidence to support and develop their ideas? • Why is organization important when explaining a topic? • How do transitions help guide a reader's understanding?	**Unit Enduring Understandings:** • Students will understand that examining the Holocaust reveals how prejudice, discrimination, and unchecked power can lead to large-scale injustice and human rights violations. • Students will understand that individuals and groups can choose to act as perpetrators, bystanders, or upstanders in times of injustice. • Students will understand that historical events are complex and must be understood through multiple perspectives and sources. • Students will understand that credible, well-researched information is essential for accurately explaining historical events.

• What does it mean to write in a formal, informative style? • How can writing help us make sense of difficult or complex topics? • Why is it important to communicate historical information accurately and thoughtfully? • How can we use writing to inform others about important events and ideas?	• Students will understand that evaluating sources for reliability and bias is necessary when constructing an informed explanation. • Students will understand that evidence must be carefully selected, interpreted, and organized to support clear understanding. • Students will understand that effective explanatory writing clearly introduces a topic, organizes ideas logically, and develops them with relevant evidence. • Students will understand that strong writing uses precise language, formal tone, and appropriate transitions to guide the reader. • Students will understand that writing is a process that involves planning, drafting, revising, and refining ideas for clarity and impact.
Vocabulary/Grammar: • Vocabulary Workshop • Words their Way **Academic Vocabulary**: • Holocaust • Genocide • Nazi • Antisemitism • Propaganda	

- Perpetrator
- Resister
- Victim
- Concentration Camp
- Ghetto
- Extermination Camp
- Discrimination
- Prejudice
- Human Rights
- Liberation
- Explanatory Essay
- Introduction
- Thesis Statement
- Body Paragraph
- Conclusion
- Evidence
- Relevant
- Elaboration
- Paraphrase
- Quotation
- Transition
- Organization
- Clarity
- Cohesion
- Credible Source
- Primary Source

- Secondary Source
- Bias
- Analysis
- Formal Tone
- Objective
- Precise Language

Grammar:

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- analyze informational texts and cite relevant textual evidence to support their ideas.
- draw inferences from informational texts and connect those inferences to explicit details in the text.
- interpret text features, including charts, graphs, and diagrams, to build understanding.
- write an informative/explanatory essay that clearly introduces and develops a topic.
- organize ideas and evidence using an appropriate text structure.
- support ideas with relevant facts, details, quotations, and examples.
- use transitions, precise language, and academic vocabulary to clarify ideas.
- maintain a formal style and produce a concluding section that synthesizes information.
- apply the conventions of standard English in writing and speaking.
- strengthen writing through planning, revising, editing, reflection, and feedback.
- write effectively for different tasks, purposes, and audiences over varied time frames.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Anticipation Guides
- Text Previewing
- Multimedia supports

- Essay Structure Graphic Organizer
- Sample Essay
- Mini Lessons:
    - Historical Context/Background Information
    - Understanding a Prompt
    - Reading and Annotating Sources
    - Writing Topic Sentences
    - Paraphrasing
    - Introducing and Citing Evidence
    - Crafting Analysis
    - Writing an Introduction and a Conclusion

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- *Amistad & Holocaust*
    - Write an expository essay concerning a topic about the Holocaust

Assessment Evidence
Formative Assessments: • IXL • Think, Pair, Share • Turn and Talk • Group Work/Discussions • Closure/Exit Tickets

- Levels of Understanding

Summative Assessments:

- Write an expository essay concerning a topic about the Holocaust

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- IXL
- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- Holocaust Presentation

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials
The United States Holocaust Museum: • **Research from:** https://www.ushmm.org/

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students
Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities: Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner. • Small group/One to one • Additional time • Review of directions • Student restates information

- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Audio Recording of Shakespeare
- Side by Side Translation

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal Glossary
- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Audio Recording of Shakespeare
- Side by Side Translation

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping
- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice
- Audio Recording of Shakespeare
- Side by Side Translation

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.
504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Full-text version of Shakespearian

Unit 7

Desired Results

Unit 7 Title: Timeless Poetic Voices

Unit Summary: In this unit, students will closely read and analyze poetry written by influential and diverse poets. Through careful study of selected works by established authors, students will develop a deeper understanding of how poetry communicates meaning through language, structure, and literary devices. The unit will guide students in interpreting poems thoughtfully, supporting their thinking with textual evidence, and engaging in discussions that build understanding of both content and craft. By the end of the unit, students will be able to read poetry with greater insight and explain how poets use language to convey ideas, emotions, and themes.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.VL.8.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

B. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
C. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
D. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
E. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.8.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
B. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
C. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
D. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).

RL.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

RL.TS.8.4. Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.IML.1: Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information.

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

9.4.8.IML.12: Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

9.4.8.TL.4: Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event (e.g., MS-LS4-5, 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3).

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.

8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

8.2.8.EC.1: Explain ethical issues that may arise from the use of new technologies.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.3.8.CivicsPI.3: Use a variety of sources from multiple perspectives to examine the role of individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a local or global issue and share this information with a governmental or nongovernmental organization as a way to gain support for addressing the issue.

6.3.8.CivicsHR.1: Construct an argument as to the source of human rights and how they are best protected.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How do poets use language to express ideas, emotions, and experiences?
- What makes poetry different from other forms of writing?
- How can a poem have multiple meanings depending on the reader?
- How do literary devices (such as imagery, metaphor, and symbolism) shape meaning in poetry?
- What strategies can readers use to interpret and understand challenging poems?
- How does structure (line breaks, rhythm, stanzas) affect a poem's meaning?
- How can different interpretations of a poem all be valid?
- What can poetry reveal about human experiences, identity, and the world around us?
- How does a reader's perspective influence their understanding of a poem?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Students will understand that poetry is a powerful form of expression that conveys meaning through carefully chosen language, structure, and literary devices.
- Students will understand that poets use figurative language, imagery, symbolism, rhythm, and sound to shape meaning and evoke emotion.
- Students will understand that a poem can have multiple interpretations, and meaning is influenced by both the text and the reader's perspective.
- Students will understand that structure (such as line breaks, stanza arrangement, and form) contributes to a poem's meaning and impact.
- Students will understand that close reading and repeated analysis deepen comprehension of complex texts.

• How do poets make intentional choices about language and structure? • How can understanding poetry improve our own writing and expression? • What can we learn from studying the techniques of skilled poets?	• Students will understand that readers use evidence from the text to support interpretations and claims about meaning. • Students will understand that poetry reflects human experiences, emotions, and perspectives across time and culture. • Students will understand that studying skilled poets can strengthen a reader's own writing and understanding of language choices.

Vocabulary/Grammar

- Vocabulary Workshop
- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary:

- Verse
- Stanza
- Line break
- Line
- Speaker
- Tone
- Mood
- Theme
- Meaning
- Imagery
- Figurative language

- Metaphor
- Simile
- Personification
- Symbolism
- Alliteration
- Onomatopoeia
- Repetition
- Hyperbole
- Structure
- Form
- Rhyme
- Rhyme scheme
- Pattern
- Interpretation
- Analysis
- Inference
- Textual evidence
- Close reading
- Context
- Perspective
- Multiple meanings

Grammar:

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot, how ideas influence individuals or events, or how characters influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
- Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.

Learning Activities:

- Execute standards-based mini-lessons to develop skills and strategies:
    - Poetry Analysis: SSWIFT
- Figurative Language Question Trail
- Tone and Mood Practice
- Engage in protected time for independent reading and writing
- Confer individually with the teacher
- Engage in small-group reading/writing skills-based instruction.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- IXL
- Think, Pair, Share
- Turn and Talk
- Group Work/Discussions

- Closure/Exit Tickets
- Levels of Understanding

Summative Assessments:

- IXL
- Vocabulary Unit
- Poetry Assessment (skills application)

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- Found Poem, Writing and Analyzing a Personal Poem

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

• Poetry Foundation (https://www.poetryfoundation.org/) / Teacher chosen poems
  ○ Arthur Sze (current U.S. Poet Laureate, 2025–present)
  ○ Ada Limón (2022–2025, immediate past Poet Laureate)
  ○ Joy Harjo (2019–2022, first Native American U.S. Poet Laureate)
  ○ Robert Frost
  ○ Maya Angelou
  ○ Rita Dove
  ○ Billy Collins
  ○ Robert Pinsky
  ○ Louise Glück
  ○ Natasha Trethewey
  ○ Juan Felipe Herrera
  ○ Tracy K. Smith

- Emily Dickinson
- Walt Whitman
- Langston Hughes
- Sylvia Plath
- Edgar Allan Poe
- Gwendolyn Brooks
- T.S. Eliot
- Amanda Gorman

Accommodations and Modifications:
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,
Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists

- Immediate feedback
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Notes
- Video guides

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal Glossary
- Extended Time
- Simplified/Verbal Instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups
- Notes
- Video guides
- Audiobooks

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection
- Homogeneous Grouping

- Supplemental Instruction
- Think-Pair-Share
- Small Group Instruction
- Work Alone Choice vs. Group Work Choice
- Audiobooks
- Graphic Organizers
- Notes
- Video guides

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.
504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Small Group In-Depth Instruction
- Differentiated Online Practice
- Enrichment Activities

Unit 8

Desired Results

Unit 8 Title: Introduction to the Bard: Reading & Performing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Unit Summary: In this unit students will be introduced to William Shakespeare and one of his comedies, A Midsummer Night's Dream. Students will become acquainted with and analyze the lines in the play. They will also work collaboratively to perform an Act with their acting groups.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.VI.8.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

RL.TS.8.4. Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.

RL.PP.8.5. Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text through the use of different perspectives of the characters and that of the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony).

RL.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums, including the representation/s or various perspectives of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), as well as what is emphasized or absent in each work.

W.RW.8.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal. 9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors. 9.1.8.PB.5: Identify factors that affect one's goals, including peers, culture, location, and past experiences.
Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):** 8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues. 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.
Interdisciplinary Connections: 6.2.8.CivicsHR.3.a: Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of free men, women, slaves, and foreigners in the political, economic, and social structures of classical civilizations. 6.2.8.HistoryUP.3.a: Compare and contrast social hierarchies in classical civilizations as they relate to power, wealth, and equality.

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: • How does Shakespeare's use of poetic language, imagery, and rhetoric contribute to the overall impact of his plays? • What strategies can actors use to effectively interpret and deliver Shakespearean language to convey meaning and emotion? • How does Shakespeare structure his plays (e.g., acts, scenes, soliloquies) to build tension, develop plot, and engage audiences? • What choices do directors and actors make to bring Shakespeare's characters and scenes to life on stage?	**Unit Enduring Understandings:** • Through performance, students understand that Shakespeare creates multifaceted characters with depth, motivations, and complexities that resonate across time and cultures. • Performing Shakespeare's language helps students appreciate the power of poetic expression, metaphor, and rhetoric in conveying emotions, ideas, and themes effectively. • Engaging in group rehearsals and performances fosters collaboration, teamwork, and communication skills essential for effective theater production.

• How can performance choices (e.g., staging, costume, gesture) influence audience understanding and engagement with Shakespeare's plays? • Why do Shakespeare's plays continue to be performed and studied worldwide, centuries after they were written?	• Students appreciate the balance between honoring Shakespeare's original intent and making creative choices that resonate with contemporary audiences and contexts.

Vocabulary/Grammar:

- Vocabulary Workshop
- Words their Way

Academic Vocabulary:

- Drama
- Play
- Script
- Dialogue
- Act
- Scene
- Stage directions
- Characterization
- Monologue
- Soliloquy
- Aside
- Tragedy
- Comedy
- Foil
- Protagonist

- Antagonist
- Mechanicals
- Nobility
- Fairy
- Mortal
- Ruler
- Lover
- Archaic language
- Elizabethan English
- Blank verse
- Prose
- Iambic pentameter
- Rhythm
- Rhyme

Grammar:

- Grammar for Writing Ch. 8

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.
- Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text through the use of different perspectives of the characters and that of the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony).
- Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums, including the representation/s or various perspectives of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums (e.g., a person's life

story in both print and multimedia), as well as what is emphasized or absent in each work.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self- correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Learning Activities: *Potential Learning Activities can include:*

- Anticipation Guides
- Elizabethan Background Information
- Shakespeare's Language Practice
- Text Previewing
- Whole class read aloud and performance
- Reading responses
- Whole-Class discussions
- Mini Lessons:
    - Introduction to Shakespeare Groups
    - Shakespearean Vocabulary
    - Historical Context/Background Information

To satisfy the laws related to *Amistad & Holocaust*, *Asian American & Pacific Islanders*, *Climate Change*, *LGBTQ and People with Disabilities*, *Diversity*, *Equity & Inclusion [DEI]* in the state of New Jersey, teachers must implement at least one of the following texts, activities, or approaches in their lesson planning:

- LGBTQ and People with Disabilities and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI]
    - A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare
        - The play's exploration of love without boundaries (including same-sex friendship and emotional intimacy between Hermia and Helena) invites inclusive discussion about the spectrum of relationships and identities. The frequent use of disguise and transformation allows for rich analysis of gender roles and self-expression, supporting LGBTQ-inclusive pedagogy. The "mechanicals," a group of common laborers whose performance is

mocked by the upper class, offer a lens on classism and ableism, helping students discuss how societies value or marginalize individuals based on perceived “difference” or ability. Puck, an androgynous figure who moves between worlds and roles, symbolizes nonbinary or fluid identity, making the play a safe entry point for LGBTQ inclusion and visibility.

- It encourages discussion about equity and autonomy, particularly how patriarchal or hierarchical systems affect choice (e.g., Egeus demanding Hermia marry Demetrius). It presents multiple social classes, personalities, and perspectives, demonstrating that wisdom and humanity exist beyond nobility or privilege. Through humor and conflict, Shakespeare invites audiences to recognize commonality across differences, aligning with DEI’s goals of empathy and inclusion. Students can also analyze how language and misunderstanding create conflict, reinforcing DEI principles of communication, respect, and understanding.

Assessment Evidence
Formative Assessments: • IXL • Think, Pair, Share • Turn and Talk • Group Work/Discussions • Closure/Exit Tickets • Levels of Understanding
Summative Assessments: • Final Performance   ○ Student Choice: Original Text or Student Translation
Common Benchmark Assessments: • IXL

- All ELA 8A Summative Assessments

Alternate Assessments:

- The Final Performance is Student Choice

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

Whole Class Text:

- A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

from CommonLit:

- Shakespeare: Who Was the Bard (nonfiction pairing)

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- Checklists
- Immediate feedback
- Audio Recording of Shakespeare
- Side by Side Translation

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- Differentiated Online Practice
- Full-text version of Shakespearian