

GRADE 8



In eighth grade, students begin to study complex psychological, philosophical, and moral themes in literature. They begin the year with two units on setting, the first on urban settings in America and the second on rural contexts. In these units, students consider relationships between setting and theme in literature and write their own stories set in cities and the countryside. From there, the units take various directions. One unit offers a historical perspective on America, while another looks at the relationship between art and artists. In the unit on drama, students read Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and compare it with a film version of the play. The sixth unit focuses on the philosophical theme of "the greater good," beginning and ending with Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken." Through class discussion, close reading, and writing, and through continued study of etymology, students deepen their understanding of all of these works and concepts. They continue to use graphic organizers to plan their writing. In their reports, research essays, and oral presentations, students draw on multiple sources, including literary, informational, and multimedia texts. In class discussions and literary responses, they pay close attention to figurative language and its effects. By the end of eighth grade, students should have a rich background in literature and literary nonfiction, with a grasp of the historical context and many nuances of the works they have read. They are ready for the rigors of high school.

Standards Checklist for Grade Eight

Standard	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Standard	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
Reading—Literature							3c	A		A			A
1	A	A	A	A	A	A	3d	A		A			A
2	A	A	A	FA	A	A	3e	A		A			A
3			A	A	FA	A	4	A	A	A	A	A	A
4	A	A	A	A	A	A	5		A	A	A	A	A
5	A	FA	A	A	A	A	6		A	A	A	A	A
6		A	A	A	FA	A	7	A	A	FA	A	A	
7	A				FA	FA	Speaking and Listening						
8 n/a							1	F	FA	A	A	A	A
9			FA	A	A	A	1a	FA	A	A	A	A	A
10	A					A	1b	FA	A	A	A	A	A
Reading—Informational Text							1c		FA	A	A	A	A
1	FA	A	A	A	A	A	1d		FA	A	A	A	A
2	A	FA	A	A	A		2		A	FA			
3	A	A	FA	A	A		3			A	A	A	FA
4			A	A			4		A	A	FA	A	A
5	A	A		F			5		A		A	FA	A
6	FA	A	A	A	A	A	6	A	A	A	A		A
7	A	FA	A	A			Language						
8	A	A	A	FA		A	1	A	A	A	A	FA	A
9	A		FA	A			1a	A	A	A	A	A	A
10	A					A	1b	A	A	A	A	A	A
Writing							1c	A	A	A	A	A	A
1		FA		A	FA	A	2	A	A	A	A	A	A
1a		A			A	A	2a	A	A	A	A	A	A
1b		A			A	A	2b	A	A	A	A	A	A
1c		A			A	A	3	A	A	A	A	A	FA
1d		A			A	A	3a	A	A	A	A	A	A
1e		A			A	A	4	FA	FA	A	A	A	A
2	A		A	FA	A	A	4a	FA	A	A	A	A	A
2a	A		A	A	A	A	4b	A	FA	A	A	A	A
2b	A		A	A	A	A	4c	FA	A	A	A	A	A
2c	A		A	A	A	A	4d	A	FA	A	A	A	A
2d	A		A	A	A	A	5		A		FA		A
2e	A		A	A	A	A	5a		A		A		A
2f	A		A	A	A	A	5b		A		A		A
3	FA		A			FA	5c		A		A	A	A
3a	A		A			A	6			FA			A
3b	A		A			A							

F = Focus Standard; A = Activity/Assessment

Urban Settings in America: “It Happened in the City”

This six-week unit of eighth grade begins the year with reflections on the settings of stories and events—from poems and short stories to novels and nonfiction.



INITIAL QUESTION

What does the urban setting contribute to these

?

OVERVIEW

Students continue to explore characters and plots, but this unit takes a unique approach to examining how setting, directly or indirectly, affects these story elements. Students work on citing textual evidence that reveals the setting, analyze the effect of the setting on individuals and events, and write their own urban narrative. This unit ends with an informative/explanatory essay in response to the essential question.

FOCUS STANDARDS

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

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

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

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

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

SL.8.1(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.

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

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

L.8.4(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.

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

SUGGESTED STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Compare and contrast story characters, plots, themes, and settings from works about urban America.
- Distinguish between explicit and implicit ways of describing the effect of setting on characters, plots, and themes.
- Analyze the ways in which the structure of a work affects how the setting is conveyed.
- Analyze different accounts of the same event.
- Write poetry (concrete or haiku) and perform it for classmates.
- Compare elements of the musical *Chicago* to other poetry and prose about the city of Chicago.
- Define related words and identify their parts of speech (e.g., *urban*, *urbanization*, *suburban*; *city*, *citify*; *metropolitan*, *metropolis*).

SUGGESTED WORKS

(E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

LITERARY TEXTS

Stories

- *The Great Fire* (Jim Murphy) (E)
- *The Catcher in the Rye* (J. D. Salinger)
- *KiKi Strike: Inside the Shadow City* (Kirsten Miller)
- *All of the Above* (Shelley Pearsall)
- *A Long Way from Chicago: A Novel in Stories* (Richard Peck)
- *The King of Dragons* (Carol Fenner)

Short Stories

(Note: These are used again in Unit Two.)

- *Nine Stories* (J. D. Salinger)
- *The Umbrella Man and Other Stories* (Roald Dahl) (EA)
- *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories* (Anne Mazer, ed.)
- *Bag in the Wind* (Ted Koozer)

Poetry

- “Chicago” (Carl Sandburg) (E)
- “O Captain! My Captain!” (Walt Whitman) (E)
- *Stone Bench in an Empty Park* (Paul Janeczko)
- *Technically, It’s Not My Fault* (John Grandits)

Picture Books (as an Introduction to This Unit)

- *City by Numbers* (Stephen T. Johnson)
- *Bag in the Wind* (Ted Kooser)

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Nonfiction

- *The Building of Manhattan* (Donald Mackay) (E)
- *Skyscraper* (Lynn Curlee)
- *The New York Subways* (Great Building Feats Series) (Lesley DuTemple)
- *New York* (This Land is Your Land Series) (Ann Heinrichs)
- *September 11, 2001: Attack on New York City—Interviews and Accounts* (Wilborn Hampton)
- *September 11, 2001* (Cornerstones of Freedom, Second Series) (Andrew Santella)
- *Let’s Roll! Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage* (Lisa Beamer)
- “The Evolution of the Grocery Bag” (*American Scholar Magazine*, Autumn 2003) (Henry Petroski) (E)
- *America’s Top 10 Cities* (Jenny E. Tesar)
- *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793* (Jim Murphy) (EA)

ART, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

Art

New York

- Edward Hopper, *Nighthawks* (1942)
- Piet Mondrian, *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (1942–1943)
- Joseph Stella, *Bridge* (1936)
- Jean Michel Basquiat, *Untitled* (1981)

Chicago

- Pablo Picasso, *Untitled* or “The Picasso” (1967)
- Anish Kapoor, *Cloud Gate* (2004–2006)
- Edward H. Bennett and Marcel F. Loyau, *Buckingham Fountain* (1927)

Music and Lyrics

- “Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning” (Alan Jackson)

Film

- Video footage from September 11, 2001

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

1. INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY (FOR THE YEAR)

You will be reading a variety of literature and informational texts this year, including some genres that you may not have read before. On a shared spreadsheet, your teacher will give you a list of twenty genres (such as adventure, historical fiction, comedy, ancient history, science fiction, and fantasy) from which to select titles and to which you may add titles. Be sure to select titles, and topics, of enduring interest. One of your goals by the end of the year is to read books from at least four genres that are new to you. (RL.8.10, RI.8.10)

2. INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY/CLASS DISCUSSION

Your teacher will read *Alphabet City* and *City by Numbers*, both by Stephen T. Johnson, to the class. What is the author's purpose in creating these texts? How can we use these books to begin looking at cities (urban settings) in a different way? What are the advantages and disadvantages to using picture books to examine setting? Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. (RI.8.1, RI.8.5, RI.8.6, RI.8.7)

3. LITERARY GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

As you read one of the novels and/or short stories from this unit, take notes in your journal or on a spreadsheet about the story characters, plot, theme, and setting. As you take notes about these categories, think about how the setting affects the story. Be sure to note page numbers with relevant information that is explicitly stated or implied, so you can cite the text during class discussion.

- Who is/are the major character(s)?
- What is the problem faced by the character(s)? How does he/she/they resolve the problem?
- What is the theme of the novel? (i.e., good vs. evil, overcoming challenges, etc.)
- What is the effect of the setting(s) on the characters?
- Is the effect of the setting stated or implied?
- What unique words and phrases does the author use to describe the setting(s)?

Prior to class discussion, your teacher may give you the opportunity to share your notes with a partner who read the same text. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4)

4. CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare and contrast settings, characters, plots, and themes of the various novels read. Can you make any generalizations about the effect the urban setting has on these stories? What are they? After class discussion, create a Venn diagram in your journal or with an online template that outlines the similarities and differences among the settings, characters, plots, and/or themes. Post your thoughts on the classroom blog in order to continue the conversation with your classmates. (SL.8.1a,b, RL.8.4)

5. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

(Use the research process learned and practiced in sixth and seventh grades when writing this essay.) Read at least three different informational texts about New York City, from books about the events of

September 11, 2001, or Ellis Island, to Manhattan architecture or the New York art world. Analyze how different texts make connections or distinctions among individuals, ideas, or events. Explain your findings in a well-developed essay. Cite at least three examples from each text to illustrate how their approaches to the topic are similar and different. Use a mixture of paraphrasing and direct quotations. Share ideas with a partner and revise your ideas, if desired. Edit your writing for gerunds, participles, infinitives, commas, ellipses, and dashes. Your teacher may ask you to upload your essay to the classroom blog. (RI.8.1, RI.8.3, RI.8.7, RI.8.9, SL.8.2, L.8.1a, L.8.2a)

6. NARRATIVE WRITING

While reading the short stories in this unit, explore your own style of writing. Compare and contrast the following aspects of the stories: Which author orients the reader to a story in a manner that is similar to your own? What sensory details do authors use that you like to use too? How does the author incorporate setting as an integral part of the story? Also, what new vocabulary words can you incorporate into your story? How will your story end? Write your own short story about a real or imagined experience that effectively explores the effect of an urban setting on characters and plot. (You may conduct brief research on a city of choice and incorporate facts about that city into your story, if you wish.) Edit your writing for gerunds, participles, infinitives, commas, ellipses, and dashes. Publish your story as a podcast or on a class blog and request feedback on your literary style from your classmates. (W.8.3, W.8.7, L.8.1a, L.8.2a)

7. NARRATIVE WRITING (AND MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION)

Read haiku poems from *Stone Bench in an Empty Park* by Paul Janeczko and concrete poems from *Technically, It's Not My Fault* by John Grandits. Next, compare the portrayal of the grocery bag in *Bag in the Wind* by Ted Kooser to “The Evolution of the Grocery Bag” by Henry Petroski. How does the structure of each text affect the meaning? Write a concrete or haiku poem about a grocery bag and recite your poem accompanied by a visual/digital illustration. Edit your writing for gerunds, participles, infinitives, commas, ellipses, and dashes. Recite your poem for your classmates and record it using a video camera so you can evaluate your performance. (RL.8.2, RL.8.5, W.8.4, RI.8.2, SL.8.6)

8. CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare how different poems about the same item (i.e., the grocery bag) are unique in presentation, structure, and style. Which of these elements affects the meaning of the poem? Why? Write your thoughts in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. Your teacher may ask you to respond to this prompt on the classroom blog and discuss your responses online with your classmates. (SL.8.1a,b)

9. MEDIA APPRECIATION/CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare and contrast the poem “Chicago” by Carl Sandburg and *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy. These works are set in the same city. How is the urban setting portrayed in each? How does the structure of each contribute to its meaning? Write your thoughts in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. (RI.8.1, RI.8.9, RL.8.5, RL.8.7)

10. CLASS DISCUSSION

It has been said that places have a character of their own. How is setting used as a “character”? Write your thoughts in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. Be sure to cite specific information from the texts. You may also post responses to this prompt on a class blog in order to get feedback from others outside of your classroom. (SL.8.1a,b, RL.8.1, RI.8.1)

11. LITERATURE RESPONSE

What's in a name? Write a journal entry where you respond to this question based on a place read about in class, such as New York City or Chicago. Alternatively, create an ABC list describing a city of interest. An optional extension is to create a digital presentation of your ABC list. (W.8.9a,b, RL.8.1, RI.8.1)

12. WORD STUDY

Where do words come from? How does knowing their origin help us not only to spell the words, but also to understand their meaning? This is why we study etymology. Create a personal dictionary of terms found, learned, and used throughout this unit (e.g., *urban, urbanization, suburban, city, citify, metropolitan, metropolis*). This dictionary will be used all year long to explore the semantics (meanings) of words and their origins, especially those with Greek and Latin roots. (L.8.4a,b)

13. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Write an informative/explanatory essay in response to the essential question: "What does the urban setting contribute to these stories?" Make sure to include words and phrases learned in this unit, including figurative and connotative language. After your teacher reviews your first draft, work with a partner to edit and strengthen your writing. Edit your writing for gerunds, participles, infinitives, commas, ellipses, and dashes. Be prepared to record your essay and upload it as a podcast on the class web page for this unit. (W.8.2, W.8.4, W.8.9a,b, SL.8.1a,b, L.8.1a, L.8.2a)

14. GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Your teacher will teach mini-lessons on the individual language standards. For example, he/she will explain verbals, and then will give you underlined words in a quotation to identify as a gerund, participle, or infinitive. For example:

- Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city. (George Burns) (*participle*)
- Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city. (George Burns) (*gerund*)
- I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve it through not dying. (Woody Allen) (*infinitive*)

Select a piece of your own writing, circle the verbals, and see if you can identify whether they are gerunds, participles, or infinitives. (L.8.1a)

15. MECHANICS/GRAMMAR WALL

As a class, create a Mechanics/Grammar bulletin board where, throughout the year, you will add to a checklist of editing topics as they are taught through targeted mini-lessons. Once skills are taught in a mini-lesson and listed on the bulletin board, you are expected to edit your work for the elements before publication. (L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)

16. VOCABULARY/WORD WALL

As a class, create a Vocabulary Word Wall bulletin board where, throughout the year, you will add and sort words as you learn them in each unit of study. (L.8.4)

17. ART/CLASS DISCUSSION

Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks* and Piet Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, which both depict New York City, were painted in the same year. Notice the dramatic difference in these artists' styles. The

difference goes beyond realism versus abstraction. Discuss the painters’ color palettes, the distance at which they placed the viewer, and the type of space in the work. Dwell on the extent to which each artist was focused on the people versus the place. Were they depicting the same time of day? (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5)

18. ART/CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare *Cloud Gate* with the Picasso sculpture. Both public art sculptures are located in Chicago. Discuss the role(s) fine art can play in a public setting. What makes a public artwork successful? How is viewing art in public different from viewing it in a private setting? (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Exploring Setting: Constructing Character, Point of View, Atmosphere, and Theme* (ReadWriteThink) (This lesson is geared toward grades 9–12, but may be adapted.) (RL.8.1)
- *Critical Media Literacy: Commercial Advertising* (ReadWriteThink) (RI.8.8)
- *Internalization of Vocabulary Through the Use of a Word Map* (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.4, RI.7.4)
- *Improve Comprehension: A Word Game Using Root Words and Affixes* (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.4, RI.7.4)
- *Flip-a-Chip: Examining Affixes and Roots to Build Vocabulary* (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.4, RI.7.4)
- *You Can’t Spell the Word Prefix Without a Prefix* (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.4, RI.7.4)
- <http://carl-sandburg.com/chicago.htm>

TERMINOLOGY

Connotation	Literal versus figurative	Setting
Explicit textual evidence	language	Theme
Implicit textual evidence		

SL.8.1(c): Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

SL.8.1(d): Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

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

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

L.8.4(d): 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).

SUGGESTED STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Compare and contrast story characters, plots, themes, and settings in stories about rural North America.
- Evaluate the structure of various texts and discuss the effect of structure on their meaning.
- Write an argument, supported by clear reasons and evidence, about a memorable portrayal of rural North America.
- Recognize nuances in meaning among similar words (e.g., *rural*, *agrarian*, *agriculture*, *hamlet*, *village*, *country*, *countryside*, *rustic*).

SUGGESETED WORKS

(E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

LITERARY TEXTS

Stories

- *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (John Steinbeck) (E)
- *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie* (Elizabeth Partridge) (E)
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Mark Twain) (E)
- *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (Mildred D. Taylor) (E)
- *The Land* (Mildred D. Taylor)
- *Of Mice and Men* (John Steinbeck)
- *The Last of the Mohicans* (James Fenimore Cooper)
- *Shane* (Jack Schaefer)
- *The Daybreakers (The Sacketts)* (Louis L'Amour)
- *Barrio Boy* (Ernesto Galarza)
- *The Incredible Journey* (Sheila Burnford)

Short Stories

(Note: These were also used in Unit One.)

- *Nine Stories* (J. D. Salinger)
- *The Umbrella Man and Other Stories* (Roald Dahl) (EA)
- *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories* (Anne Mazer, ed.)

Poetry

- “The Railway Train” (Emily Dickinson) (E)
- “Mending Wall” (Robert Frost) (EA)
- *Spoon River Anthology* (Edgar Lee Masters)
- *My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States* (Lee Bennett Hopkins)

Picture Books (as an Introduction to This Unit)

- *A Mountain Alphabet* (Margriet Ruurs)
- *B is for Big Sky Country: A Montana Alphabet* (Sneed B. Collard III and Joanna Yardley)
- *P is for Piñata: A Mexico Alphabet* (Tony Johnston)

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Nonfiction

Rural United States

- *The Alamo* (Cornerstones of Freedom, Second Series) (Tom McGowen)
- *African-Americans in the Old West* (Cornerstones of Freedom Series) (Tom McGowen)
- *Trail of Tears* (Cornerstones of Freedom Series) (R. Conrad Stein)
- *Wild Horses I Have Known* (Hope Ryden)

American Science/Technical Subjects

- California Invasive Plant Council (Invasive Plant Inventory) (E)
- *Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho* (Jon Katz) (E)
- “The Marginal World” (1955) in *The Edge of the Sea* (Rachel Carson)

North America

- *Never Cry Wolf: The Amazing True Story of Life Among Arctic Wolves* (Farley Mowat)
- *One Hundred & One Beautiful Small Towns in Mexico* (Guillermo Garcia Oropeza and Cristobal Garcia Sanchez)

ART, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

Art

- Grant Wood, *American Gothic* (1930)
- Edward Hopper, *Gas* (1940)
- Edward Hopper, *Early Sunday Morning* (1930)
- Edward Hopper, *Cape Cod Evening* (1939)

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

1. INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY/CLASS DISCUSSION

Your teacher will read *A Mountain Alphabet* by Margriet Ruurs or *P is for Piñata: A Mexico Alphabet* by Tony Johnston to the class. What was the author's purpose in creating this text? Contrast the way in which these authors present rural life to the way in which authors in the previous unit present urban life. What are the advantages and disadvantages to using picture books to examine setting? How is this portrayal similar to or different from information you find online? Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. Consider creating your own ABC book or digital presentation while reading the stories in this unit, and you will find it can be as easy or as complex as you choose to make it. (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.6, RI.8.7)

2. NOTE TAKING ON LITERARY ELEMENTS

As you read novels and/or short stories from this unit, take notes in your journal or on a spreadsheet about the story characters, plot, theme, and setting. As you take notes about these categories, think about how the setting affects the story, especially in comparison with the urban settings discussed in the previous unit. Be sure to note page numbers with relevant information or mark your book with sticky notes so you can cite the text during class discussion.

- Who is/are the major character(s)?
- What is the problem faced by the character(s)? How does he/she/they resolve the problem?
- What is the theme of the novel? (i.e., good vs. evil, overcoming challenges, etc.)
- What is the effect of the setting(s) on the characters?
- Is the effect of the setting stated or implied?
- What unique words and phrases are used to describe the setting(s)?

Prior to class discussion, your teacher may give you the opportunity to share your notes with a partner who read the same text. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.5)

3. RESEARCH PROJECT (EXTENSION)

Use the research process to research the setting for a novel that you are reading. For example, if you are reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, you can research Missouri in the 1830s and explain to the class what the area was like at that time. Paraphrase or cite from at least three sources, using the standard bibliographic format preferred by your teacher. You may want to present your findings in a multimedia format. (W.8.7)

4. CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare and contrast the settings of the various novels read in this unit; compare these works as a group with those that have urban settings (from the previous unit). Can you make any generalizations about the effect that the rural setting has on these stories? After class discussion, create a Venn diagram in your journal (or by using an online template) that outlines the similarities and differences. Post your thoughts on the classroom blog in order to continue the conversation with your classmates started in the first unit. (SL.8.1, RL.8.4)

5. INFORMATIONAL/LITERATURE TEXT RESPONSE COMPARISON

Read and compare the portrayals of Canada in *Never Cry Wolf: The Amazing True Story of Life Among Arctic Wolves* by Farley Mowat and in *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford. Develop a

multimedia presentation that explores the visual similarities and differences. (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RL.8.2, RL.8.5, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

6. LITERARY RESPONSE

Travels with Charley is considered a “travelogue.” How does the structure contribute to the meaning in a way that is different from the way poetic structures shape meaning in poetry? Talk about your ideas with a partner. Then, in your journal, describe how Steinbeck uses point of view and other literary devices to convey his thoughts and feelings about America. Cite specific examples and page numbers from the text. Your teacher may ask you to post your thoughts on the classroom blog in order to get feedback from your classmates. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, RL.8.6, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

7. INFORMATIONAL TEXT RESPONSE

What “power of nature” does Carson find in “The Marginal World”? How does the structure contribute to the meaning? Talk about your ideas with a partner. Then, in your journal or on the classroom blog, discuss the phrase “the shore has a dual nature” in your explanation and cite additional support from the text. (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.3, RL.8.4, RI.8.5, RI.8.6, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

8. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Respond to this line from the poem “Mending Wall” by Robert Frost: “Good fences make good neighbors.” Why does this surface contradiction make sense, not only in the context of the poem, but also in daily life? How does the structure contribute to the meaning? After discussing it as a class, write a well-developed essay, citing at least three specific examples. Edit your writing, especially for active and passive voice and the use of ellipses to indicate an omission. Share with a partner prior to class discussion. Your teacher may ask you to upload your essay to the classroom blog. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, SL.8.1, SL.8.3, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

9. POETRY ANALYSIS/RECITATION

After reading selections from *My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States* by Lee Bennett Hopkins, select your favorite poem. How does the structure of poetry contribute to its meaning in a different way than the structure of prose does? What does the poem reveal about life in America? Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner. Memorize and recite your favorite poem for your classmates. Record it using a video camera so you can evaluate your performance. (RL.8.5, SL.8.6)

10. WRITING (ARGUMENT)

What has been the most memorable portrayal of rural America that you have read? What made it memorable to you? Did your familiarity with urban settings (by contrast) help or hinder the powerful effect of the piece you chose? Write a well-developed paper that includes an engaging opening statement of your position, at least three clear reasons, and relevant evidence cited from the text. (If needed, you may conduct brief research on your rural area choice and incorporate those facts into your argument.) Edit your writing for active and passive voice and ellipses to indicate an omission. Publish your story on a class blog and request feedback on the strength of your argument from your classmates and others outside your class. (W.8.1, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

11. ART AND INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

How is rural life in America portrayed in Wood’s famous painting *American Gothic*? Notice the symmetry of the elements in the painting and the frontality of the figures. What does this imply? Who is

looking at you and who is not? Why do you believe that Wood made these choices? How does the structure of art affect meaning in ways similar to and different from writing? Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. (RL.8.5, SL.8.1)

12. WORD STUDY (1)

[Continuing activity from the first unit.] Where do words come from? How does knowing their origin help us not only to spell the words, but also to understand their meaning? Add words found, learned, and used throughout this unit to your personal dictionary (e.g., *rural*, *agrarian*, *agriculture*, *hamlet*, *village*, *country*, *countryside*, *rustic*). This dictionary will be used all year to explore the semantics (meanings) of words and their origins. (L.8.4)

13. CLASS DISCUSSION/WORD STUDY (2)

Discuss the etymology of the word *suburban*. In your experience, what elements of urban and rural settings qualify as “suburban”? Discuss similarities and differences found in suburban settings. Your teacher may ask you to create an online concept map connecting *urban*, *rural*, and *suburban*. (SL.8.1, L.8.4)

14. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY ESSAY

Write an informative/explanatory essay in response to the essential question: What does the rural setting contribute to these stories? Make sure to include words and phrases learned as part of word study, including figurative and connotative language. After your teacher reviews your first draft, work with a partner to strengthen your writing and edit it, especially for active and passive voice and for the use of ellipses to indicate an omission. Be prepared to record your essay and upload it as a podcast (or other multimedia format of your choice) on the class web page for this unit. (W.8.4, W.8.9a,b, SL.8.1, L.8.1a,b, L.8.2a,b)

15. GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Edit a newspaper article or magazine article (or a classmate’s essay) by changing passive to active voice when possible. Discuss with your partner how these changes affect the tone and/or meaning of the text. (L.8.3)

16. MECHANICS/GRAMMAR WALL

As a class, continue adding to the Mechanics/Grammar bulletin board started in Unit One. Remember—once skills are taught in a mini-lesson and listed on the bulletin board, you are expected to edit your work for these elements before publication. (L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)

17. MECHANICS

Your teacher will teach mini-lessons on the individual language standards. For example, your teacher will give you a set of paragraphs that do not contain commas. Working with a partner, you will insert commas when necessary. (L.8.2b)

18. VOCABULARY/WORD WALL

As a class, create a Vocabulary Word Wall bulletin board where, throughout the year, you will add and sort words as you learn them in each unit of study. (L.8.4)

19. ART/CLASS DISCUSSION

Examine the Hopper paintings. What is different in these rural works versus the urban paintings viewed in the previous unit? Do you see a source of light in Hopper’s paintings? Where? Why do you think he

included the elements that he did—or left certain elements out? What role do the people play in these works? (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Exploring Setting: Constructing Character, Point of View, Atmosphere, and Theme* (This unit is geared toward grades 9–12, but may be adapted.) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.8.1)
- *Critical Media Literacy: Commercial Advertising* (ReadWriteThink) (RI.8.8)
- *Cowboys* (Discovery Channel, Discovery Education Lesson Plans Library) (RL.8.5)
- Robert Frost reads “Mending Wall”

TERMINOLOGY

Explicit textual evidence
Genre

Implicit textual evidence
Setting

Text structures
Travelogue

Grade Eight, Unit Two Sample Lesson Plan

“The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson

In this series of two lessons, students read “The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson, and they:

- Conduct close reading of the poem (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, L.8.5, SL.8.6)
- Explicate the poem (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.4, SL.8.1, SL.8.4)

Summary

Lesson I: Preparing to Write About “The Railway Train”	Lesson II: Writing About Poetry
<p>Perform close reading of “The Railway Train” (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.6)</p> <p>Identify new vocabulary words (RL.8.1, RL.8.4, L.8.4, L.8.5, SL.8.6)</p> <p>Note the presence of alliteration (RL.8.1, RL.8.4, L.8.5, SL.8.1)</p> <p>Examine the use of personification (RL.8.1, RL.8.4, L.8.3)</p> <p>Explore the use of metaphors in the poem (RL.8.1, RL.8.4, L.8.5)</p> <p>Look at the use of allusions (RL.8.1, RL.8.4, L.8.5)</p>	<p>Revisit “The Railway Train” (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.1)</p> <p>Examine and discuss notes from Lesson I (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.1, SL.8.6)</p> <p>Explore “The Courage That My Mother Had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay (RL.8.2, SL.8.1, SL.8.4, L.8.4, L.8.5)</p> <p>Critically examine the sample paragraph explicating “The Courage That My Mother Had” (RL.8.2, SL.8.1, SL.8.4, L.8.6)</p> <p>Explicate “The Railway Train” (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.4, SL.8.1, SL.8.4)</p>

Lesson II: Writing About Poetry

Objectives

- Revisit “The Railway Train” (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.1)
- Examine and discuss notes from Lesson I (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.1, SL.8.6)
- Explore “The Courage That My Mother Had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay (RL.8.2, SL.8.1, SL.8.4, L.8.4, L.8.5)
- Critically examine the sample paragraph explicating “The Courage That My Mother Had” (RL.8.2, SL.8.1, SL.8.4, L.8.6)
- Explicate “The Railway Train” (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.4, SL.8.1, SL.8.4)

Required Materials

- ☐ Class set of “The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson
- ☐ Class set of “The Courage That My Mother Had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay
- ☐ Class set of a sample paragraph: “Explication of the First Stanza of ‘The Courage That My Mother Had’”
- ☐ Class set of writing guidelines for explicating a stanza

Procedures

1. Lead-In:
Silently reread “The Railway Train,” by Emily Dickinson.
2. Step by Step:
 - a. A class discussion of the findings from Lesson 1 follows.
 - b. Students read “The Courage That My Mother Had,” by Edna St. Vincent Millay*:

The Courage That My Mother Had

*The courage that my mother had
Went with her, and is with her still:
Rock from New England quarried;
Now granite in a granite hill*

*The golden brooch my mother wore
She left behind for me to wear;
I have no thing I treasure more:
Yet, it is something I could spare.*

*Oh, if instead she'd left to me
The thing she took into the grave! —
That courage like a rock, which she
Has no more need of, and I have.*

-
-
- c. Students read the sample paragraph:

Explication of the First Stanza of “The Courage That My Mother Had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

In “The Courage That My Mother Had,” Edna St. Vincent Millay pays tribute to her mother’s courage. The first line of the poem seems to be important since it is a repetition of its title “The Courage That My Mother Had.” Millay uses the past tense, suggesting that the mother is no longer around. The first three words of the second line, “Went with her,” refer to the courage that she had. The active use of the verb “went” hints at an independent power that the poet attributes to her mother’s courage. Millay then notes that this courage is “with her still.” The use of the word *still*

may suggest more than just a simple meaning that her courage is with her now. “Still” can also indicate rest, quiet, or tranquility; these available interpretations add to the reader’s vision of her courage. In the next two lines, through the use of a metaphor, Millay describes her mother: “Rock from New England quarried;/ Now granite in a granite hill.” These lines no longer describe the courage, but rather the mother. The use of “rock” as the metaphor depicts her strength. Millay also tells us that her mother is from New England; she says that her mother *is* the rock that is chiseled from that area. The next line is an extension of the metaphor. Her mother is not only a rock from New England, now she *is* “granite in a granite hill.”

d. Students discuss the paragraph. They note the following:

The poet and poem are identified

A topic is established

A close reading, using short quotations, follows

The paragraph is deliberately developed

Simple present tense is used

3. Closure:

Distribute and explain the homework.

Differentiation

Advanced

- Prior to this lesson, select student volunteers to read the poems for classmates (on an MP3 player, below). Give the students an opportunity to practice reading dramatically, recorded with a video camera, so they can evaluate and improve upon their performances.
- Encourage students to find other examples of alliteration, personification, metaphor, and allusion used by authors.
- Encourage students to create a modern-day interpretation of one of the poems from this unit. They must be able to justify how the modern version stays true to the original while also changing style. Perhaps challenge them to create a movie.

Struggling

- Read the poems to the students or allow them to listen (or re-listen) to prerecorded versions.
- Give students paper copies of the poems that they can write on, possibly even with sketches (nonlinguistic representations) to help memory and understanding. Students can circle vocabulary words and highlight examples of alliteration, personification, metaphor, and allusion. Alternatively, allow them to annotate in a text document. Perhaps pre-create a key for this to facilitate student work.
- Lead a small group discussion about why authors use the techniques of alliteration, personification, metaphor, and allusion.
- Distribute a paper copy of the “‘Explication of the First Stanza of ‘The Courage That My Mother Had’” so they can highlight or mark *where*:
 - The poet and poem are identified
 - The topic is established
 - The paragraph is deliberately developed
 - The simple present tense is used

Alternatively, students can do this in a text document using highlighting and comments features. After analyzing this explication, allow some students to begin homework while you read and start the homework with other students.

Homework/Assessment

In a well-organized paragraph, explicate a stanza of your choice from “The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson.

Writing Guidelines

Clearly establish the topic of the paragraph and contextualize it.

Organize the sequence of ideas according to the purpose of the paragraph.

Present a clear, thorough, explication of the stanza of your choice.

Cite the text using short quotes that are integrated into your narrative.

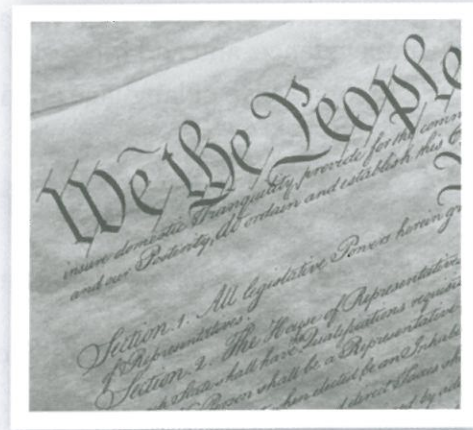
Avoid grammatical errors.

Use present simple tense.

*“The Courage That My Mother Had,” Copyright © 1954, 1982 by Edna St. Vincent Millay and Norma Millay Ellis. Reprinted with permission of Holly Peppe, Literary Executor, The Millay Society.

Looking Back on America

This eight-week unit of eighth grade continues with reflections on the settings of stories and events, this time from a historical perspective.



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How does learning history through literature differ from learning through national text?

OVERVIEW

Students read works of historical fiction and discuss how authors' perspectives might produce accounts of historical events that differ from what we know happened. Students work collaboratively to reconcile different authors' points of view and discuss why these differences occur. Students read "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and study the actual events of that night to consider the effect that poetry can have on historical memory. An in-depth research project accompanied by a multimedia presentation is a highlight of this unit, because these creative processes integrate essential skills and meaningful content. This unit ends with an informative/explanatory essay in response to the essential question.

FOCUS STANDARDS

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUGGESTED STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Compare and contrast story characters, plots, themes, and settings from stories about American history.
- Analyze how historical fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths or traditional stories.
- Determine the author’s point of view in two texts about the same topic and discuss the effect it has on the work.
- Conduct an in-depth research project on a historical event of choice, followed by a multimedia report that includes insights from historical fiction.

SUGGESTED WORKS

(E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

LITERARY TEXTS

Stories

- *Cast Two Shadows: The American Revolution in the South* (Great Episodes) (Ann Rinaldi)
- *Johnny Tremain* (Esther Forbes)
- *Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two* (Joseph Bruchac)
- *The Year of the Hangman* (Gary Blackwood)

Poetry

- “Paul Revere’s Ride” (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow) (E)
- “I, Too, Sing America” (Langston Hughes) (E)
- “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” (Maya Angelou)
- *Hour of Freedom: American History in Poetry* (Milton Meltzer)

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Nonfiction

- Preamble to the United States Constitution (1787) (E)
- First Amendment to the United States Constitution (1791) (E)
- 1812, February 3: Adams to Jefferson (John Adams) (E)
- *The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* (Linda R. Monk) (E)
- *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Russell Freedman) (E)
- *The American Revolutionaries: A History in Their Own Words 1750–1800* (Milton Meltzer)

- Paul Revere's Ride (David Hackett Fischer)
- *Lincoln: A Photobiography* (Russell Freedman)
- *We Shall Not Be Moved: The Women's Factory Strike of 1909* (Joan Dash)
- *Day of Infamy, 60th Anniversary: The Classic Account of the Bombing of Pearl Harbor* (Walter Lord) (EA)
- *George vs. George: The American Revolution As Seen from Both Sides* (Rosalyn Schanzer)
- *Good Women of a Well-Blessed Land: Women's Lives in Colonial America* (Brandon Marie Miller)
- *The Boys' War: Confederate and Union Soldiers Talk About the Civil War* (Jim Murphy) (EA)

Biographies

- *George Washington, Spymaster: How the Americans Outspied the British and Won the Revolutionary War* (Thomas B. Allen)
- *Tell All the Children Our Story: Memories and Mementos of Being Young and Black in America* (Tonya Bolden)
- *America's Paul Revere* (Esther Forbes and Lynd Ward)

Picture Books (as an Introduction to This Unit)

- *We the People* (Peter Spier)

ART, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

Art

- Grant Wood, *The Midnight Ride* (1931)
- Emanuel Leutze, *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (1851)
- John Trumbell, *Declaration of Independence* (1819)
- James Rosenquist, *F-111* (1933)
- Robert Rauschenberg, *Retroactive 1* (1964)

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

1. LITERARY GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

As you read historical fiction from this unit, take notes in your journal or on a spreadsheet about the characters, plot, themes, patterns of events, and setting. As you take notes about these categories, continue to think about how the historical setting affects the story. Be sure to note page numbers with relevant information or mark your text with sticky notes so you can cite the text during class discussion.

- Who is/are the major character(s)?
- Do they remind you of any character types from myths or other traditional stories? How?
- What is the problem faced by the character(s)? How does he/she/they resolve the problem?
- What is the theme of the novel? (i.e., good vs. evil, overcoming challenges, etc.)
- What is the effect of the historical setting(s) on the characters, plot, or theme?
- Are there any recognizable patterns of events? What are they, and what do they remind you of?

Prior to class discussion, your teacher may give you the opportunity to share your notes with a partner who read the same text. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.5, RL.8.9)

2. CLASS DISCUSSION

Compare and contrast the effect of historical settings on characters, plots, and themes in the various novels read. Can you make any generalizations about the effect historical setting has on these stories? After class discussion, create a Venn diagram in your journal (or in an online template) that outlines the similarities and differences among the settings, characters, plots, and/or themes. Post your thoughts on the classroom blog in order to continue the conversation with your classmates. (SL.8.1, RL.8.9)

3. CLASS DISCUSSION AND INFORMATIONAL TEXT RESPONSE

Read the Preamble to the United States Constitution silently and reread it with the class. As a class, discuss how new the idea of freedom described in the Preamble was at the time it was written. Then, in small groups:

- Discuss why you think the framers included a Preamble for the Constitution
- Note the words that are new to you (perhaps *ordain*, *tranquility*, or *posterity*) and discuss what you think they mean
- Confirm the meanings of the words by using a dictionary
- Discuss how carefully you think the framers of the Constitution chose these words
- (On chart paper) work together to diagram the sentence.
- Note the multiple verbs and their direct objects
- What kind of phrase is the introductory phrase?

For homework, memorize the Preamble and be prepared to recite it for fellow classmates. (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.4, RI.8.7, RI.8.9, W.8.2, L.8.1, L.8.3, SL.8.6)

4. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Read John Adams's letter to Thomas Jefferson of February 3, 1812, and note the translation of the Latin phrase he includes. Discuss in small groups:

- Whether you think Adams believes the new union will survive
- On what does Adams think the preservation of the union depends?

Reconvene as a class to discuss the small groups' opinions. For homework, write a one- to three-paragraph argument in which you discuss your opinion on whether Adams thinks the new nation will survive. (*Note:* Another letter or excerpt may be used at teacher's discretion. See the Additional Resources section for a link to more options.) (RI.8.2, RI.8.4, RI.8.6, W.8.1, SL.8.1)

5. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Compare the two sides of the American Revolution as presented in *George vs. George: The American Revolution As Seen from Both Sides* by Rosalyn Schanzer. In your journal, describe how events are perceived differently depending on your point of view. What specific lines or incidents in the book helped you to learn more about the revolution? Then, write a well-developed paper, citing at least three specific examples from the text that answers this question. Edit your writing for form and use of verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods, as well as for spelling. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.6, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)

6. POETRY RESPONSE/CLASS DISCUSSION

Respond to this line from the poem "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "The fate of a nation was riding that night." What is the literal versus figurative meaning of this line? Discuss how

literature can give a different view of history than informational texts. Why are we so drawn to poetry? Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, SL.8.1, SL.8.3, L.8.3)

7. DRAMATIZATION/FLUENCY

After reading “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” by Maya Angelou, discuss the meaning of this poem as it relates to life in America. How does the structure of poetry contribute to its meaning in a different manner than prose? Does the caged bird remind you of any character types from other stories read? Decide how to share lines or stanzas with a classmate, and perform a dramatic reading of this poem for your classmates. Record your performance using a video camera so you can evaluate your performance. (RL.8.5, RL.8.9, SL.8.6, L.8.3)

8. RESEARCH, INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING, AND MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION

Focusing on the connections among individuals, ideas, and events, choose an event from America’s past to research. In order to find multiple perspectives on the event, draw on several sources, including a variety of literary, informational, primary, secondary, and multimedia texts. Write an informative/explanatory essay and, as you draft your essay, work with classmates to strengthen its quality. Be sure to cite your sources accurately using the standard bibliographic format preferred by your teacher. Prior to publishing, integrate multimedia and/or visual displays into your report to clarify information and strengthen your claims with evidence. Edit your writing for form and use of verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods, as well as for spelling and punctuation when paraphrasing and including direct quotations. Present your report to the class and upload it to a class web page for this unit. (RL.8.6, RI.8.3, RI.8.6, RI.8.7, RI.8.8, W.8.2, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, SL.8.4, SL.8.5, L.8.1a,b,c; L.8.2, L.8.3)

9. ART/CLASS DISCUSSION

Before the advent of photography, painters would document, interpret, and record important events in paintings. The artists who created these works were not usually present during the event they depicted. View the works by Wood, Leutze, and Trumbell. What did each of these artists record? To what extent do the artists seem to be trying to document the event literally, or to capture its essence? How do works such as these help us to appreciate the events they depict? (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5)

10. ART/CLASS DISCUSSION

View Rauschenberg’s and Rosenquist’s works. Can you tell which events both artists wanted to highlight? Do you believe there is any social commentary present in these works? How are these different from documentary works, like the first three examined? (SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.4, SL.8.5)

11. WORD STUDY

[Continuing the activity from the second unit.] Add the words we’ve found, learned, and used throughout this unit to your personal dictionary (e.g., from “Paul Revere’s Ride”: *moorings*, *muster*, *barrack*, *grenadiers*, *belfry*, and *encampment*). This dictionary will be used all year long to explore the semantics (meanings) of words and their origins. (L.8.4)

12. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

Write an informative/explanatory essay in response to the essential question: How does learning history through literature differ from learning through informational text? Make sure to include words and

phrases you have learned as part of word study, including figurative and connotative language, and refer to literature and informational texts you have read. After your teacher reviews your first draft, work with a partner to strengthen your writing and edit it for the use of verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods, as well as for spelling. Be prepared to record your essay and upload it as a podcast, or other multimedia format of your choice, on the class web page for this unit. (W.8.4, W.8.9a,b, SL.8.1, SL.8.4, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)

13. GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Your teacher will teach mini-lessons on the individual language standards. For example, he/she will teach the class about verbs in the (a) indicative, (b) imperative, (c) interrogative, (d) conditional, and (e) subjunctive mood, and you will alter a given sentence so that each new sentence exemplifies the use of each mood. For example,

- a. I want to be an astronaut.
- b. Be an astronaut!
- c. Do you want to be an astronaut?
- d. If you don't like science, you might not like being an astronaut.
- e. If I were you, I would become an astronaut.

Select a piece of your own writing, find the verbs and identify whether they are in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, or subjunctive mood. (L.8.1c)

14. MECHANICS/GRAMMAR WALL

As a class, continue adding to the Mechanics/Grammar bulletin board started in Unit One. Remember—once skills are taught in a mini-lesson and listed on the bulletin board, you are expected to edit your work for these elements before publication. (L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3)

15. VOCABULARY/WORD WALL

As a class, create a Vocabulary Word Wall bulletin board where, throughout the year, you will add and sort words as you learn them in each unit of study. (L.8.4)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *The Real Midnight Ride* (KidsandHistory.Com) (RI.8.9)
- *Pocahontas Married John Rolfe on This Date in 1614* (ReadWriteThink) (RI.8.9)
- *Battling for Liberty: Tecumseh's and Patrick Henry's Language of Resistance* (ReadWriteThink) (SL.8.3)
- *It's Independence Day! Or is it?* (ReadWriteThink) (W.8.7)
- *The History Behind Song Lyrics* (ReadWriteThink) (RI.8.7)
- *Esther Forbes, Author of Johnny Tremain, Was Born in 1891* (ReadWriteThink) (W.8.3)
- *Picturing America: Grant Wood's Midnight Ride of Paul Revere, 1931* (National Endowment for the Humanities)
- *The Paul Revere House* (Paul Revere Memorial Association)
- *The True Story of Paul Revere's Ride* (Archiving Early America)

- *15 Historical Events that Fascinate Us* (Frikoo.Com)
- *From the Correspondence of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson* (National Humanities Center)
- <http://www.education.ne.gov/SS/DOCUMENTS/PreambleChoralReading.doc>

TERMINOLOGY

Character types

Patterns of events

Preconceived notion

Historical fiction

Point of view

Grade Eight, Unit Three Sample Lesson Plan

Preamble and First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States

In this interdisciplinary series of seven lessons, students read the Preamble and the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and they:

- Explore the historical origins of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights (RI. 8.2, SL.8.1b,c, SL.8.2, SL.8.4)
- Familiarize themselves with the Constitutional Convention and its delegates (RI.8.1, RI.8.3, RI.8.6)
- Examine the content of the Preamble to the Constitution (RI.8.2, RI.8.4, RI.8.5, SL.8.1b,c, SL.8.2, SL.8.4)
- Assess the importance of the First Amendment to the Constitution (RI.8.2, RI.8.5, SL.8.1, SL.8.4)
- Debate a First Amendment case (SL.8.1, SL.8.4)
- Reflect on and understand the importance of the First Amendment (W.8.2)

Summary

Lesson I: Historical Background to the Constitutional Convention Revisit the Declaration of Independence Recall the emergence of the Articles of Confederation Explore the criticism of the Articles of Confederation	Lesson II: The Constitutional Convention Identify the principal founding fathers — the architects of the Constitution Explore (select excerpts from) “Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787” by James Madison (RI.8.1, RI.8.3, RI.8.6) Examine the philosophical points of view among the founders (RI.8.6) Evaluate the contribution of the debates to the drafting of the Constitution (SL.8.1b,c, SL.8.2, SL.8.4)
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<p>Lesson III: The Preamble to the Constitution</p> <p>Consider the historical significance of the words: “We the people of the United States . . .” (RI.8.2)</p> <p>Identify the declared purpose of the document (“in order . . .”) (RI.8.2)</p> <p>Note the goals for the republic enumerated in the preamble (RI.8.4)</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of a single sentence—the Preamble to the Constitution—on the new nation (RI.8.2, RI.8.4, RI.8.5, SL.8.1b,c, SL.8.2, SL.8.4)</p>	<p>Lesson IV: The Origins of the Bill of Rights</p> <p>Identify the historical origins of the Bill of Rights</p> <p>Consider the historical impact of the following words: “A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular; and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inferences.” (Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 1787) (RI.8.2, SL.8.1b,c, SL.8.2, SL.8.4)</p>
<p>Lesson V: The First Amendment</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of Thomas Jefferson’s words regarding the First Amendment: “I do not like . . . the omission of a bill of rights providing clearly and without the aid of sophisms for freedom of religion, freedom of the press . . .” (RI.8.2)</p> <p>Closely examine the rights guaranteed in the First Amendment (RI.8.2, RI.8.5)</p> <p>Identify the impact of the First Amendment on the individual in American society (SL.8.1, SL.8.4)</p>	<p>Lesson VI: Preparing to Debate the Case of Judge Roy Moore</p> <p>Identify the facts in the 2003 case of Roy Moore, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama</p> <p>Prepare to support or oppose Judge Moore’s decision to install a monument of the Ten Commandments in the rotunda of Alabama’s state judicial building (W.8.1, W.8.2)</p> <p>Examine the role that the First Amendment plays in the position of both sides</p>
<p>Lesson VII: The First Amendment in Action—Debating the Case of Judge Roy Moore</p> <p>Debate the case of Judge Moore (SL.8.1, SL.8.4)</p> <p>Discuss the merits of debates in a democratic society (SL.8.1a, SL.8.7.1b)</p> <p>Reflect on and understand the importance of the First Amendment (W.8.2)</p>	

Lesson VI: Preparing to Debate the Case of Judge Roy Moore

Objectives

- Identify the facts in the 2003 case of Roy Moore, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama
- Prepare to support or oppose Judge Moore's decision to install a monument of the Ten Commandments in the rotunda of Alabama's state judicial building (W.8.1, W.8.2)
- Examine the role that the First Amendment plays in the position of both sides

Required Materials

- ☐ Handouts relating the details of Judge Moore's case
- ☐ Access to the Internet

Procedures

1. Lead-In:

Students will learn about the 2003 case involving Judge Roy Moore of Alabama. (Either offer a brief lecture here, introducing the basic facts, or distribute a handout providing details of the case.)

2. Step by Step:

- Students will split into two groups: one group will gather material that will defend Judge Moore's position, while the other side will gather material to oppose his actions.
- Students will break into three subgroups (six in total).
- Each of the subgroups will be responsible for a single argument and three facts in support of that argument.

3. Closure:

Once students complete the research, each side will produce a three-page document that presents and defends its views. The position papers will include: (1) an introductory paragraph that declares their positions, (2) arguments and supporting facts, and (3) a conclusion that recaps the role that the First Amendment plays in American society. Students should incorporate simple visual aids as necessary to help support their claims.

Differentiation

Advanced

- Pre-assess (all) students for their knowledge of the case of Judge Roy Moore. If students are already familiar with the case, have them find additional materials to help deepen their understanding of the case (e.g., reading the Constitution of the State of Alabama, Judge Roy Moore's book, *So Help Me God: The Ten Commandments, Judicial Tyranny, and the Battle for Religious Freedom*, or news coverage of the case from a variety of perspectives).
- Students can share what they learned about the case with students in different classes and create an online poll to see how the community feels about this case and its outcome (e.g., using Internet tools).

Struggling

- Pre-assess (all) students for their knowledge of the case of Judge Roy Moore. Consider pre-teaching key ideas to students on the day prior (for example, giving them the handout of the lecture to read).
- Read the Preamble to the Constitution as a Reader's Theater where each line is amplified. Discuss the meaning of the amplification in addition to practice reading fluently. (See Additional Resources.)
- Work with a small group to collaboratively outline the facts of the case, and then divide into two groups to choose a position to defend. Groups write the introductory paragraph together on a shared online document or using a digital projector. As partners research facts to support their argument, they can refer back to the initial paragraph to ensure the facts support the introduction.

Homework/Assessment

N/A

Lesson VII: The First Amendment in Action—Debating the Case of Judge Roy Moore

Objectives

Debate the case of Judge Moore (SL.8.1, SL.8.4)

Discuss the merits of debates in a democratic society (SL.8.1a, SL.8.7.1b)

Reflect on and understand the importance of the First Amendment (W.8.2)

Required Materials

- ☐ Handouts relating the details of Judge Moore's case
- ☐ Position papers

Procedures

1. Lead-In:
Prepare for debate.
2. Step by Step:
 - a. Student volunteers read the position papers.
 - b. During the presentations, students take notes in order to prepare rebuttals to the other side's point of view.
 - c. In groups, students prepare to discuss the positions of the case based on the notes they have just taken.
 - d. A debate follows.
3. Closure:
Reflective discussion gives students the opportunity to consider the merits of debate and the importance of supporting a position with evidence.

Differentiation

Advanced

- Students can share what they learned about the case with students in different classes, and create an online poll to see how the community (the rest of the grade level, other students in the school) feels about this case and its outcome (e.g., using Internet tools).

Struggling

- During position paper presentations, provide students with a graphic organizer (T-chart) upon which to note the facts that support opposing positions of the case.
- Before students write their reflective essays, facilitate a small-group discussion so students can talk through the analysis of the debate, make connections to the First Amendment, and outline their ideas on index cards, sticky notes, or in a shared spreadsheet.

Homework/Assessment

Students write a brief (two pages long) reflective essay discussing the debate and emphasizing the importance of the First Amendment. Their essays must:

- Have an introduction that includes a thesis statement
- Contain an analysis — not a summary — of the debate
- Cite specific examples from the debate
- Follow a logical, step-by-step progression of the thesis
- Use Standard English grammar