



Comprehensive Curriculum

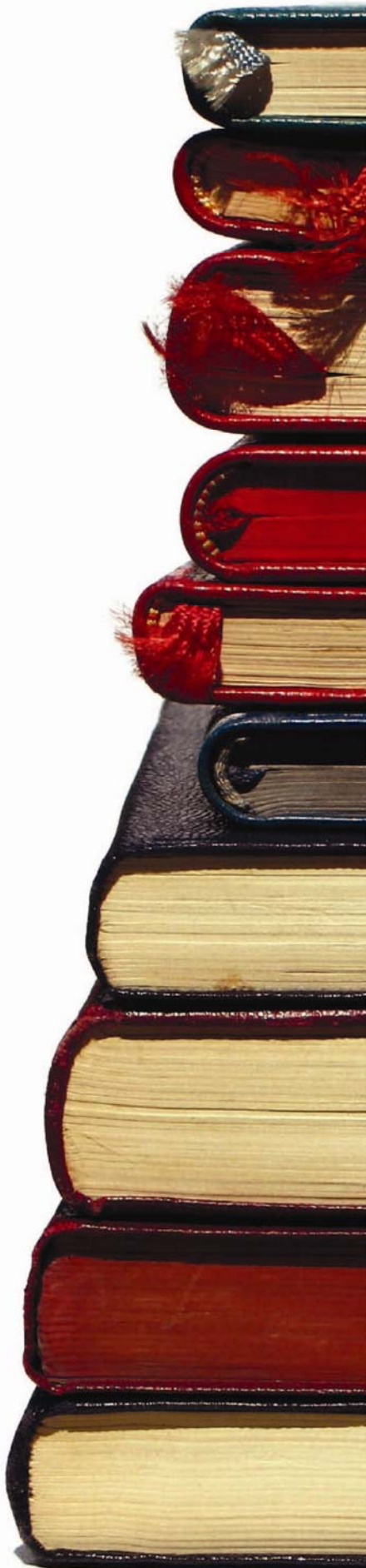
Revised 2008

Grade 8 English Language Arts



Louisiana Department of
EDUCATION

Paul G. Pastorek, State Superintendent of Education



**Grade 8
English Language Arts**

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Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, Revised 2008 **Course Introduction**

The Louisiana Department of Education issued the *Comprehensive Curriculum* in 2005. The curriculum has been revised based on teacher feedback, an external review by a team of content experts from outside the state, and input from course writers. As in the first edition, the *Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum*, revised 2008 is aligned with state content standards, as defined by Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs), and organized into coherent, time-bound units with sample activities and classroom assessments to guide teaching and learning. The order of the units ensures that all GLEs to be tested are addressed prior to the administration of *iLEAP* assessments.

District Implementation Guidelines

Local districts are responsible for implementation and monitoring of the *Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum* and have been delegated the responsibility to decide if

- units are to be taught in the order presented
- substitutions of equivalent activities are allowed
- GLEs can be adequately addressed using fewer activities than presented
- permitted changes are to be made at the district, school, or teacher level

Districts have been requested to inform teachers of decisions made.

Implementation of Activities in the Classroom

Incorporation of activities into lesson plans is critical to the successful implementation of the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum. Lesson plans should be designed to introduce students to one or more of the activities, to provide background information and follow-up, and to prepare students for success in mastering the Grade-Level Expectations associated with the activities. Lesson plans should address individual needs of students and should include processes for re-teaching concepts or skills for students who need additional instruction. Appropriate accommodations must be made for students with disabilities.

New Features

Content Area Literacy Strategies are an integral part of approximately one-third of the activities. Strategy names are italicized. The link ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) opens a document containing detailed descriptions and examples of the literacy strategies. This document can also be accessed directly at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/1de/uploads/11056.doc>.

A *Materials List* is provided for each activity and *Blackline Masters (BLMs)* are provided to assist in the delivery of activities or to assess student learning. A separate Blackline Master document is provided for each course.

The *Access Guide to the Comprehensive Curriculum* is an online database of suggested strategies, accommodations, assistive technology, and assessment options that may provide greater access to the curriculum activities. The *Access Guide* will be piloted during the 2008-2009 school year in Grades 4 and 8, with other grades to be added over time. Click on the *Access Guide* icon found on the first page of each unit or by going directly to the url <http://mconn.doe.state.la.us/accessguide/default.aspx>.



Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 1: Who Am I? - Biography and Autobiography

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, comprehending, interpreting, responding, and writing nonfiction, focusing on biography, autobiography, and the personal essay. Biography and autobiography will be analyzed for defining characteristics and writing techniques. Writing and presenting an autobiography provides an opportunity for student application of the writing process. Researching biographies/autobiographies and writing reports/essays provide opportunities for students' acquisition of informational, technological, and problem-solving skills. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Nonfiction literature tells about real people, real events, real places, and real objects. Students will recognize that nonfiction writing can be subjective or objective. Sometimes known as literary nonfiction, biographies, autobiographies, and essays read like fiction, yet provide factual information. Reading literary nonfiction can also teach students about different periods in history. Reading about other lives may change one's own life, just through the connection to others' personal experiences.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the defining characteristics of a biography/an autobiography?
2. Can students differentiate between subjective and objective writing?
3. Can students use technology effectively for research?
4. Can students apply a writing process effectively?
5. Can students develop a personal narrative composition following standard English structure and usage?
6. Can students relate a biography/an autobiography to personal experience?

Unit 1 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02b	Interpret story elements, including development of character types (e.g. flat,

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
	round, dynamic, static) (ELA-1-M2)
04b.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including consumer materials (ELA-1-M3)
04c.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including public documents (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
06.	Analyze universal themes found in a variety of world and multicultural texts in oral and written responses (ELA-6-M1)
08b.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including nonfiction (e.g., workplace documents, editorials) (ELA-6-M3)
09a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M2)
09c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including interpreting stated or implied main ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (see ELA-1-M2)
09f.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies including predicting the outcome of a story (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
11.	Use technical information and other available resources (e.g., Web sites, interviews) to solve problems (ELA-7-M2)
12.	Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose (ELA-7-M3)
14a	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including identifying cause-effect relationships (ELA-7-M4)
14b	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
14d.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
	skills, including generating a theory or hypothesis (ELA-7-M4)
14e.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including skimming/scanning (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17b	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)
17d	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (ELA-2-M2)
17e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
21.	Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including understatements and allusions (ELA-2-M5)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds, (ELA-3-M3)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M3)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M3)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell-check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g., read, question, write a response, form groups,) from detailed oral instructions (ELA-4-M2)
39a.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices) (ELA-5-M1)
39b.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic storage devices (e.g., CD-ROMs, diskettes, software, drives) (ELA-5-M1)
39c.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)
39d.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic information (e.g., Web resources including online sources and remote sites) (ELA-5-M1)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
	resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)
41.	Explain the usefulness and accuracy of sources by determining their validity (e.g., authority, accuracy, objectivity, publication date, coverage) (ELA-5-M2)
42a.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including surveying (ELA-5-M3)
42b.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including interviewing (ELA-5-M3)
42c.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including paraphrasing (ELA-5-M3)
43a.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including visual representations of data/information (ELA-5-M3)
43b.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including graphic organizers (e.g., outlines, timelines, charts, webs) (ELA-5-M3)
43c.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including works cited lists and/or bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)
44.	Use word processing and/or other technology to draft, revise, and publish a variety of works, including documented research reports with bibliographies (ELA-5-M4)
45c.	Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable use policy, including creating bibliographies and/or works cited lists (ELA-5-M5)

Sample Activities

The notations **[R]** for Reading and **[E]** for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 05, 08b, 10, 14b, 14c, 16) [R]

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, Reading Response notebook or response log, Reading Response Log SSR BLM, Book Talk Checklist BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students (and teachers) are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the Reading Response Log SSR BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection of the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a *learning log*. When time permits, students will discuss and compare their learning log entries. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Sample Reading Response *Learning Log*:

Reading Response Learning Log				Name	
Title & Author	Genre	Date	Pages Read B-E	Response to Reading: (e.g., This reminds me of ___; I liked the part when ___; I wonder why ___;)	Teacher or Guardian Signature
<i>Out of the Dust</i> - Karen Hesse	Historical fiction	8/24	1-4	This reminds me of my friend Sally. Her dad always wanted a boy. So he treated her that way. I wonder if this is what the story is about.	<i>lmb</i>

See http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/instruction_and_assessment.htm for downloadable reading logs.

Students may respond through quarterly book talks. A book talk is a short, informal oral presentation given after completing one of the SSR books. It is neither a book report nor summary; its purpose is for students to recommend good books to classmates. Students will state personal opinions and support those opinions as they discuss the book. See Book Talk Checklist BLM. See <http://www.nancykeane.com> for more information on using book talks in the classroom.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g., writing prompts, response logs, journals, book talks, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>

Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 26, 27) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students may use *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to define words specific to selections read. When students create *vocabulary cards* using index cards, they see connections between words, examples and nonexamples of the word, and the critical attributes associated with the word. Students may also create a graphic representation of the word. This vocabulary strategy also helps students with their understanding of word meanings and key concepts by relating what they do not know with familiar concepts. *Vocabulary cards* require students pay attention to words over time, thus improving their memory of the words. Also by keeping the cards in a binder or small plastic bag, students can easily use them as reference as they prepare for tests, quizzes, and other activities with the words.

Sample Modified *Vocabulary Card* (3x5 index card)

Definition:	Characteristics:
WORD	
Examples	Nonexamples
way of life	shared ideas shared beliefs
CULTURE	
Ex: language music Cajun	NonEx: hair color eye color

Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, optional practice on using connotation and denotation may be found at <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/Terms/Connotation.html>.

Graphic organizers ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>; <http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/>; and http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/teaching_reading_in_the_content_areas.htm

Activity 3: Writer’s Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 16, 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 17e, 19, 21)[E]

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template (see activity for link to download), whiteboard or overhead projector & transparency pen or chalkboard & chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills. For this unit, target writing skills should include making appropriate word choices; using vocabulary to clarify meanings, create images, and set a tone; selecting information/ideas to engage a reader; using a clear voice; enhancing a composition through dialogue; and using a variety of sentence structure. Students should keep a writer’s notebook or learning log. In teaching students writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. The writing craft mini-lesson that can be used for any grade level should occur as follows:

- 1) The teacher should introduce a skill by showing an example from a trade book, picture book, or magazine article or by demonstrating the technique through modeled writing. The teacher thinks aloud as he/she composes in front of the students; models should be prepared beforehand.
- 2) The teacher then has the class discuss the skill by asking questions, such as:
 - Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding?
 - Why do you think the author uses this skill?
 - How do you like it as a reader?
 - Can you construct something like this?
- 3) The teacher then models the skill orally for students.
- 4) The students then try it out orally for practice, with partners.
- 5) Students then apply the skill to a short practice piece of several sentences or more (guided writing).
- 6) Finally, students practice the skill in their independent writing, using a previously composed draft as a practice write. If the practice writes are kept in a notebook and labeled with a table of contents, students will have a writer’s notebook of target skills practices for future reference.

When students have practiced a new writing craft Target Skill several times, they should use it in a new writing draft. In planning a whole-process piece, the teacher will choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for the whole process piece. These skills then become part of the scoring rubric. The Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at <http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Piece%20with%20Target%20Skills%20TEMPLATE.pdf>.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills. The teacher will provide students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors. Target skills should be identified (e.g. varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). Students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols and recording the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart.

Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Grammar instruction mini-lessons with examples may be found in the district adopted textbook. Fun lessons for grammar instruction may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson334.shtml and http://www.internet4classrooms.com/lang_mid.htm.

Activity 5: Literary/Personal Nonfiction Overview (GLEs: 05, 08b, 09a, 09e, 09f, 10, 12) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, literary/personal nonfiction examples, student anthology

The teacher will facilitate a discussion between informational nonfiction and literary/personal nonfiction. A Reading Genres handout is available at http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/instruction_and_assessment.htm. The teacher will present a mini-lesson on the defining characteristics of literary/personal nonfiction (e.g., autobiographies, biographies, personal memoirs, essays, diaries, journals, letters). The teacher should have examples (these may be obtained from the library or Internet) to show class. The class will discuss and then list in journals/notebooks the elements of literary nonfiction (e.g., main idea, drawing conclusions, understanding character, cause/effect, fact/opinion, problem/solution, author's purpose/viewpoint, chronological order, persuasive techniques). During the instructional period, the teacher may need to present mini-lessons (available in the district-adopted anthology) on these strategies.

As a review, the teacher will present a mini-lesson on the elements of fiction. Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on the similarities and differences between fiction and literary/personal nonfiction, the class will complete a Venn diagram/word grid comparing and contrasting the two genres. Students may create a content frame *graphic organizer*

([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to see the shared and unique qualities of the two genres. Content frames should be co-constructed with students, so as to maximize participation in the word learning process. The teacher should have a simple content frame on the wall that will serve as an example for explaining how it is constructed and used. After analyzing a demonstration content frame, students will be much better prepared to create and study from one with actual disciplinary content. Once complete the content frame is an excellent study aid. Students will recognize that literary/personal nonfiction such as biographies and autobiographies often reads like fiction and has elements similar to fiction—interesting characters and dialogue, setting, conflict, plot, point of view, and theme.

Sample content frame:

	Characters	Setting	Plot	Point of View	Theme
Nonfiction-biography	real person other than the author	specific period in the person's life & place(s) where the story occurs	high or low points of person's life	third-person	life lesson
Nonfiction-autobiography	real person writing the story	specific period in author's life & place(s) where the story occurs	high or low points of author's life	first-person	life lesson
Fiction	imaginary	any time and any place	events or problems in the story	first-person or third-person	life lesson or explanation

Reading nonfiction (autobiography/biography) can help students to see their own lives and problems more clearly through others' experiences. Students will review with the teacher the difference between subjective writing (personal feelings expressed) and objective writing (strictly the facts), noting that autobiography and biography are subjective writing.

The teacher will facilitate class discussion on the similarities and differences between biographies and autobiographies, explaining that a biography is an account of a person's life written by someone else, while an autobiography is an account of a person's life written by that person.

Using teacher-selected short autobiographical and biographical excerpts (from the library, student anthology, or <http://www.biography.com>), the teacher will facilitate a discussion on the use of pronouns in these two genres and their relationship to point of view (first person /third person) and viewpoint. The class will discuss an author's purpose in writing

a biography or autobiography and what real-life lessons can be learned. In learning logs (journals/notebooks), students will write a paragraph evaluating the effectiveness of the author's purpose in writing an autobiography or biography, discussing which may tend to be biased. Students will recognize that everyone has a story to tell.

Activity 6: Reading Biographies: (GLEs: 02b, 04c, 05, 06, 08b, 09a, 09b, 09c, 09d, 09e, 10, 12, 14a) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, Biography Web BLM, Elements of Biography/Autobiography Checklist BLM, Character Map BLM, student anthology, library books, trade books, websites

Using a transparency of the Biography Web BLM, the teacher will facilitate a discussion of the common characteristics of a biography. The teacher will discuss the word's etymology, biography (from the Greek words *bios* meaning "life", and *graphein* meaning "write") to clarify that it is an account of a person's life written or told by another person. The teacher will emphasize that a biographer should attempt to be fair, accurate, and complete by researching the subject through personal letters/memoirs, diaries, public documents, and interviews. Students should recognize that the study of biographies is really a study of character development. Students should understand that although biographies are about real people and based on facts, the biographer combines elements of fiction such as lively dialogue, opinion, characterization, and fictional detail to add color and interest. Students will be made aware that some modern biographies are authorized, approved, and permitted in advance by the subject, and others are unauthorized, not approved, and frequently challenged or discredited by the subject.

Using the district-adopted anthology or other teacher resources, students will read and respond to biographical excerpts and selections. The teacher will instruct through mini-lessons on the elements of literary nonfiction (e.g. understanding character, sequencing, summarizing and paraphrasing, interpreting main idea, comparing and contrasting, and identifying cause/effect). Students will acquire vocabulary and will respond to literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions for the teacher-assigned literary nonfiction literature. Students will be assessed formally (multiple choice, constructed response, essay). Students or groups may read, analyze, and evaluate a biographical excerpt using elements of biography checklist *graphic organizers* (See Elements of Biography/Autobiography Checklist BLM). Students/groups may also read, analyze, and evaluate biographical excerpts using a character trait web (Character Map BLM).

Students may also respond to biographies through writing, speaking and listening, research, or art activities. Lessons on biographies may be located at <http://www.aetv.com/class/teach/index.html> (Biography study guides); <http://712educators.about.com/cs/lessonplans/a/biographies.htm> (Teaching through Biographies); http://www.education-orld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson185.shtml (Ten Ways to Teach Biographies); http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=1028 (Teaching Summarizing with the Bio-Cube)

Activity 7: Locating Information for Writing Biographies: (GLEs: 05, 08b, 10, 11, 14d, 14e, 18a, 39a, 39b, 39c, 39d, 40b, 41, 42a, 42b, 42c, 43b, 45c) [E]

Materials List: graphic organizers, Graphic Organizer for Note-taking BLM, Biography Questions for Split-page Notetaking BLM, library or computer with Internet access

Students will select a person about whom they would like to learn more and use the library or Internet (e.g., <http://www.factmonster.com>; <http://www.biography.com>; <http://www.s9.com/>) to research, summarize, and paraphrase events in this person’s life. The teacher will explain important elements in split-page note taking, to sequence main ideas and details, when reading biographical works. *Split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) is a strategy that assists students in organizing their notes. This strategy also helps to encourage active reading and summarizing. It provides a visual study guide for students to use when they review the material in preparation for their test. *Split-page notetaking* is a procedure in which students organize their page into two columns. One column is used to record the questions and the other is used to record the answers. As the students read the material, they record the answers or notes of their findings beside each question. Students will skim and scan their selections while using selected guiding questions and taking notes on key ideas or actions and supporting details.

Sample *split-page notetaking*:

Biography: Harriet Tubman		10/4
<i>Why is this person significant?</i>	<i>conductor on the Underground Railroad who made 19 trips to lead slaves to freedom</i>	
<i>When and where did she live?</i>	<i>Dorchester County, Maryland</i>	

An excellent lesson on biography (Research and Class Presentation) is available online at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=243 wherein, according to the website, “As a class, students brainstorm about famous people and each selects one to research.” Each student finds information about the famous person by reading a biography and doing Internet research, and then creates a graphic organizer (a web) to teach the class about the person's life. Students evaluate themselves and their classmates by using a rubric (available on website) during the research and web-creation process and by giving written feedback on each other's presentations.”

Biography writing information may be located at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/biograph/> (Biography Writing Workshop).

Activity 8: Writing Biographies: (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 23, 30, 43a, 43c, 44) [E]

Materials List: graphic organizers, Graphic Organizer for Note-taking BLM, Biography Rubric BLM, library or computer with Internet access

Students will prewrite by using the *graphic organizer* (Graphic Organizer for Note-taking BLM) made when *brainstorming* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) and/or other prewriting activities to begin a first draft of a biography that uses a hook/lead that engages the reader's interest and uses dialogue to reveal character. After completing the first draft, students will self/ peer edit with a partner, using a checklist focusing on elements of biography, use of dialogue, word choice, vocabulary that creates images and uses stylistic techniques, and voice. After conferencing with the teacher to receive feedback, students will use the Writer's Checklist (<http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf>) to evaluate and revise the drafts for composing (e.g., ideas and organization) and audience awareness/style (e.g., voice, tone, word choice, variety of sentence structure). Students will also correct errors in capitalization, subject-verb agreement, spelling, and sentence structure (e.g., fragments). Students will review previous work and look for patterns of errors.

Students' revisions should include varied sentence structure and patterns, correct use of adjectives, and standard capitalization and punctuation. Students will proofread for fluency, usage, mechanics, and spelling, using print or electronic resources. Students will give credit for borrowed information following acceptable use policy, by creating a bibliography containing at least two sources. The teacher will model how to write bibliographic entries; how to compile the works cited page; and how to determine the validity of sources. An interactive MLA-Style Bibliography Builder is available at http://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/academic/bib_builder/index.html. Using the [Modern Language Association \(MLA\) Format](#) from the Online Writing Laboratory (OWL) at Purdue is available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>.

Students will generate biography reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including tables, outlines, timelines, charts, webs, graphics, and appropriate documentation. The teacher will decide which form to use and will present a mini-lesson for instructional purposes.

Students will utilize available technology to create a final copy of the biography. Students' work will be assessed via Biography Rubric BLM.

Following the teacher's instructions, the class will decide as a whole group how they would like to share the biographies (e.g., reading aloud, class book, skit, bulletin board). An interactive website may also be utilized if computers are available. See <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/bio/biomaker.htm> (The Biography Maker-interactive).

Activity 9: Reading Autobiographies: (GLEs: 02b, 04c, 05, 06, 08b, 09a, 09b, 09c, 09d, 09e, 10, 12, 14a) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, Autobiography Web BLM, Character Map BLM, Elements of Biography/Autobiography Checklist BLM, student anthology, library books, trade books, websites

Using a transparency of an Autobiography Web BLM, the teacher will facilitate a discussion of the common characteristics of an autobiography. The teacher will discuss the word's etymology, autobiography (from the Greek words *auto* meaning "self," *bios* meaning "life," and *graphein* meaning "write"), to clarify that it is an account of a person's life written by that person. It gives readers a direct, personal connection with the author. The teacher will discuss with students the difficulty for an individual to write objectively about him/herself. Students will generate a list of autobiographical writing, such as diaries, journals, memoirs, anecdotes, eyewitness accounts, travelogues, personal essays, and letters.

Using the district-adopted anthology or other teacher resources, students will read and respond to autobiographical excerpts and selections. While reading, students may respond to selections using the Elements of Biography/Autobiography Checklist BLM. The teacher will instruct through mini-lessons on the elements of literary nonfiction (e.g. understanding character, sequencing, summarizing and paraphrasing, interpreting main idea, comparing and contrasting, and identifying cause/effect). Students will acquire vocabulary and will respond to literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions for the teacher-assigned literary nonfiction literature. Students will be assessed formally (multiple choice, constructed response, essay). Students/groups may read, analyze, and evaluate autobiographical excerpts using a character trait web (Character Map BLM).

Students may also respond to autobiographies through writing, speaking and listening, research, or art activities. To make a real-life connection to the autobiography study, students may create their own autobiographies, using one of the following formats (e.g., life collage; life map [http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/unit_autobio9_12_lesson1.htm]; timeline; biopoem/mandala [<http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1986.pdf>]; photo display; *PowerPoint*[®] presentation; All About Me booklet; memory bag).

Activity 10: Writing a Personal Narrative/Autobiographical Incident: (GLEs: 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 30, 44) [E]

Materials List: highlighters, green bar paper, white, unlined paper, sticky notes or Avery dots (1" or larger), markers, crayons, or colored pencils, rulers, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available)

Students enjoy writing about themselves. If the teacher does not have a method for teaching personal narrative writing, these websites may provide instruction: www.webenglishteacher.com/biography.html (Autobiography, Biography, Personal Narrative, and Memoir Lesson plans); <http://www.npatterson.net/memoir/memoir.html> (Memoir writing); http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/LP/LA/memoir_stuff_life.htm (Memoir Writing); http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view_printer_friendly.asp?id=805 ([Exploring and Sharing Family Stories](#))

The following personal narrative writing is suggested: Students should create a personal timeline; choose a topic from the timeline as the focus of a personal narrative; write a first draft of a personal narrative, using a hook, transitions of time and place, a personal narrative ending and chronological order. Students will make focused revisions; peer and self evaluate their draft and make more revisions; publish by word processing the piece and add appropriate clip art to it, and finally share it with their classmates.

Activity 11: Beginning a Personal Narrative/Autobiographical Incident: (GLEs: 18b) [E]

Materials List: markers, crayons, or colored pencils; rulers; white unlined paper; copy of *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox; Personal Narrative Characteristics BLM; Graphic Organizer for a Personal Timeline BLM

The teacher will present a mini-lesson on characteristics of a personal narrative using the Personal Narrative Characteristics BLM. An enlarged version of the BLM may be put on poster paper and attached to the wall so that students may refer to it during the activities. Then the teacher will read aloud to students the children's book by Mem Fox, *Wilfrid Gordon MacDonald Partridge*. This story refers to Memories That Make Us Cry, Memories That Make Us Laugh, Memories from Long Ago, and Memories As Precious As Gold. (This activity can be done without reading the book, but it loses much without it. As the purpose of the read aloud is to initiate a memory discussion, other picture books such as Eve Bunting's *The Memory String*, Mary Bahr's *The Memory Box*, or Susan Bosak's *Something to Remember Me By* may be used.) Students can share an object or other artifact that fits a personal memory from one of these categories. Students will explain its significance to other class members. Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) a list of their own memories that fit each of the categories above and record these using copies of the Graphic Organizer for a Personal Timeline BLM.

Students are now ready to choose one event for the focus of a personal narrative. Students then will create a personal timeline of memorable events from their own lives. Students should draw the events or use clip art or pictures above the line as representing positive experiences (meeting a best friend, a special birthday) and those below the line as representing more negative ones (breaking your arm, losing a friend). Each event recorded on the timeline (by year or by age) should be accompanied by a simple symbol or graphic representing the event (a cake with candles to represent a special birthday, a

baseball to represent winning a team championship, a rattle to represent a new addition to the family, etc.). Students may do these with rulers and pencils, then trace over the symbols in ink, colored pencils, or markers and color each symbol. Students' work may be backed with construction paper and displayed.

Activity 12: Selecting a Topic for a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 18a, 18d, 30) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper; Graphic Organizer for a Personal Narrative BLM; Personal Narrative Beginnings; Personal Narrative Endings BLM; Time Transitions BLM

Students should then focus their planning by identifying the purpose, targeted audience, tone, and mood they want to create for this composition. The teacher will model the use of a graphic organizer for a personal narrative by filling it out about his/her own life (See Graphic Organizer for a Personal Narrative BLM). It should include sensory details, events, people, places, and, most important of all for a personal narrative, thoughts and feelings as events unfold. The teacher will model a good personal narrative by having students read one or more aloud, looking at each of these components as they read. Students then will fill out their own graphic organizer for a personal narrative that has all of these components. The teacher will review the characteristics for a personal narrative and will discuss each element.

The teacher will review good beginnings for narratives (See Personal Narrative Beginnings BLM). Students will practice write at least three different beginnings (hooks) for their own stories. The teacher will read to students the endings of several good personal narratives, since the most important component of the conclusion of a personal narrative is the explanation of a lesson learned or insight gained from the experience (See district-adopted English/writing textbook or models from literature for examples). Then the teacher will review good endings for personal narratives (See Personal Narrative Endings BLM). Writers need to focus on the tiny details that help their readers see a character. In fiction, a character would be make-believe, but for personal narratives, the characters are real. That means each student needs to gather details about his/herself and/or the other characters in their stories from direct observation or from memory. Students should think about their own habits and behaviors and what details they can observe or recall about the person they're writing about, noting things, such as any repetitive habits like nail biting, blinking, talking with lots of hand motions, facial expressions, ways of responding to others, manner of speech, temper, patience, etc.

Students in cooperative groups (of 2 to 4) should then brainstorm and share lists of character traits they can use in revealing their own personalities and characteristics, as well as those of the other people who are part of their personal narratives. The teacher will demonstrate for students the usefulness of creating a word bank of sensory details and/or the usefulness of a thesaurus in building details which are specific and vivid and create images for the reader. The teacher will briefly review chronological ordering for narrative writing and the need to create unity in a composition. The teacher will model

the use of transitions related to time, place, or events in telling a story or personal narrative (See Time Transitions in Narratives BLM).

Activity 13: Drafting a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 18c) [E]

Materials List: highlighters; green bar paper, if available; pen/pencil; Personal Narrative Rubric BLM

The teacher will model the writing of a first draft for students. Students will begin a first draft of a personal narrative. This draft should be double-spaced in order to make revision easier. The teacher will display the target skills for the personal narrative. These target skills will be reflected in the final assessment rubric and should be posted where the students can refer to them throughout the remainder of this lesson. It is suggested that an enlarged copy of the target skills listing be posted in the room for reference.

The Target Skills for the Personal Narrative are that it:

- focuses on one main incident in the author's/writer's life
- has an effective hook (attention grabber)
- gives sufficient background information
- includes setting and some showing, not telling about main/other characters
- is ordered chronologically
- reveals the author's/writer's thoughts and feelings throughout the narrative
- uses transitions of time, place, and events to connect ideas
- ends with the overall meaning of the event, the lesson learned, or the insight gained from the experience for the author

Students will continue to write and revise the first draft.

Activity 14: Focused Revision Activities Suggested for a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 17e, 18e) [E]

Materials List: highlighters; red pen; pen/pencil paper; green bar paper, if available; Specific Emotion Words BLM; Exploding the Moment BLM; Figurative Language BLM

Since showing thoughts and feelings is a major characteristic of a personal narrative, students now need to revise the first drafts to include at least four or more places where they reveal their own thoughts and feelings during the experience. The teacher will model for them the difference between thoughts and feelings. Simply naming an emotion can usually reveal feelings. The teacher will distribute copies of the Specific Emotion Words BLM. The teacher will explain that thoughts, on the other hand, can either be direct quotes or summary sentences. The teacher will have them practice feel/think sentences from the Specific Emotion Words BLM: "I felt _____ when I thought of/about _____." Students should then be ready to revise their drafts to add their four passages that reveal thoughts and feelings. If they do these revisions in red ink, they should be easy to check. Most personal narratives are told in first person, since the author is part of the

story. The teacher will review with students the need to keep the point of view consistent throughout the story. The teacher will conduct a mini-lesson on verb tense if needed by students. The teacher will model revisions for them. For this unit, target writing skills should include making appropriate word choices; using vocabulary to clarify meanings, create images, and set a tone; selecting information/ideas to engage a reader; using a clear voice; enhancing a composition through dialogue; and using a variety of sentence structure. The students may highlight examples in their compositions. See BLMs for suggested focused revision activities.

Activity 15: Student Evaluation & Revision for a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 18d, 18e) [E]

Materials List: highlighters; paper; pen/pencil; green bar paper, if available; sticky notes or Avery dots (1" or larger); Personal Narrative Rubric BLM

Students should now use the Personal Narrative Rubric to self-evaluate their papers (See Personal Narrative Rubric BLM). They should make any revisions needed directly on their paper in a different color of ink so that you can spot their revisions easily. Students should then meet in pairs or small cooperative groups to peer evaluate their papers, using the final scoring rubric as the basis of all comments about the writing. This gives students direct practice in reading their own work aloud in cooperative groups. The teacher should model this sticky note activity so that the students can see it. In these pairs or groups, using sticky notes or Avery dots, students will evaluate one another's papers, one target skill at a time, placing a sticky note or dot next to each place in the paper where the writer hit the target and labeling it with the name (only) of the target skill they achieved (e.g., hook, transition of time, thought, feeling, etc.). Once every target skill has been addressed, students return the papers to their owners.

Activity 16: Proofreading for a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 18f, 23, 26) [E]

Materials List: highlighters; pen/pencil; paper; green bar paper, if available; Proofreading Checklist BLM; Proofreading Strategies That Work BLM

Papers should then be self-assessed and/or peer-assessed for errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. The teacher may instruct the students to use one of the strategies listed in the Proofreading Strategies That Work BLM. Students will correct for errors in capitalization, subject-verb agreement, spelling, and sentence structure (e.g., fragments). Using proofreading charts/checklists (See Proofreading Checklist BLM) to look for their *own* most common errors is vital to students internalizing these skills.

Activity 17: Publication for a Personal Narrative: (GLEs: 18g) [E]

Materials List: paper; pen/pencil; computer, if available; Personal Narrative Rubric BLM

A final copy should then be word processed, if possible. Students may now add clip art, if available, to illustrate their narrative. The paper should then be published in some formal way, and then presented to the teacher for scoring with the Personal Narrative rubric. Student work should be assessed on classroom effort and participation (worksheets, first draft, and all practice writes) and through the use of a rubric for the Personal Narrative Final Draft or the LEAP Writing rubric which is part of the *Assessment Guide* found at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/mark/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that could be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of biographical/autobiographical elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students' completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition will be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions for biographical/autobiographical selections read in a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the biographical/autobiographical study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations, and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the unit. Students will be assessed by a rubric created for the format chosen.
- Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via a teacher-constructed checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students' progress in the research process will be assessed via a teacher-determined timeline checklist or teacher observations.
- Students will use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric is available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.

- Students' writing products may be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf> or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
- Students' writing products will be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writing Rubric for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students will be assessed via teacher observations, teacher-constructed skills assessments and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.

Activity Specific Assessments

- Activity 6 and 9: Reading Biographies/Autobiographies—Students will complete Elements of Biography Checklist (See BLMs Unit 1.)
- Activity 7: Locating Information for Writing Biographies—Students will select four/five questions for research (See BLMs Unit 1.)
- Activity 7: Locating Information for Writing Biographies—Students will complete (See BLMs Unit 1.)
- Activity 8 and 9: Writing Biographies—Students' writing products will be assessed using the Biography Rubric (See BLM Unit 1.)
- Activity 10-17: Writing a Personal Narrative/Autobiographical Incident—Students will be assessed using graphic organizers, checklists, and rubrics (See BLMs Unit 1.)

Teacher Resources

- Culham, Ruth. *6+1 Traits of Writing*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003.
- Fisher, Douglas, William G. Brozo, Nancy Frey, and Gay Ivey. *50 Content Area Strategies for Adolescent Literacy*. Upper Saddle River: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Fletcher, Ralph and Joann Portalupi. *Craft Lessons*. York: Stenhouse, 1998.
- Forney, Melissa. *Razzle Dazzle Writing*. Gainesville, Florida: Maupin House, 2001.
- Freeman, Marcia. *Building a Writing Community*. Gainesville, Florida: Maupin House, 1995.
- Freeman, Marcia. *Listen to This: Developing an Ear for Expository*. Gainesville, Florida: Maupin House, 1997.
- Lane, Barry. *After the End*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1993.
- Lane, Barry. *Reviser's Toolbox*. Shoreham, Vermont: Discover Writing Company, 1999.

- McCarthy, Tara. *Teaching Genre: Grades 4-8*. New York: Scholastic, 1996
- Portalupi, Joann & Ralph Fletcher. *Nonfiction Craft Lessons*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse, 2001.
- Schreengost, Melissa. *Writing Whizardry*. Gainesville, Florida: Maupin House, 2001.

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 2: Content Area/Informational Nonfiction— “I-Search”/ Research Reports—
Writing Products

Time Frame: Approximately six weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, comprehending, interpreting, responding, and writing content area/informational nonfiction. Nonfiction literature will be analyzed for defining characteristics and writing techniques. Researching topics and writing reports/essays provide opportunities for students’ acquisition of informational, technological, and problem solving skills. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Nonfiction describes any prose narrative that tells about things as they actually happened or presents factual information about something. Students will recognize that nonfiction writing can be subjective or objective. Subjective writing (e.g., autobiographies, biographies, personal memoirs, essays, diaries, letters) expresses the writer’s feelings and opinions. Objective writing (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, historical documents, scientific/technical writing, encyclopedia entries, handbooks, manuals, recipes) presents the facts.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students interpret and respond to nonfiction orally and in writing through analysis of nonfiction elements?
2. Can students generate a topic of personal interest, formulate open-ended questions for research, and develop a plan for gathering information?
3. Can students identify appropriate sources and gather relevant information?
4. Can students correctly document sources in a works cited list or bibliography?
5. Can students use a variety of communication techniques to present information gathered?
6. Can students apply a writing process effectively?
7. Can students use the four modes of writing (description, narration, exposition, persuasion) to respond to texts and real-life experiences?

Unit 2 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
04b.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including consumer materials (ELA-1-M3)
04c.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including public documents (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
08b.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including nonfiction (e.g., workplace documents, editorials) (ELA-6-M3)
09a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M2)
09c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including interpreting stated or implied main ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
11.	Use technical information and other available resources (e.g., Web sites, interviews) to solve problems (ELA-7-M2)
12.	Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose (ELA-7-M3)
13.	Analyze an author's viewpoint by assessing appropriateness of evidence and persuasive techniques (e.g., appeal to authority, social disapproval) (ELA-7-M3)
14a.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including identifying cause-effect relationships (ELA-7-M4)
14b.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
14c.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
14d.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including generating a theory or hypothesis (ELA-7-M4)
14e.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including skimming/scanning (ELA-7-M4)
14f.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including distinguishing facts from opinions and probability (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)
17e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
20b.	Use the various modes to write compositions, including problem/solution essays (ELA-2-M6)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds, (ELA-3-M3)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M3)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M3)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell-check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
28.	Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)
29.	Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)
32.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
37.	Compare, contrast, and evaluate information found in a wide variety of text/electronic media, (e.g., microprint, public speeches, art form) (ELA-4-M5)
38b.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed-upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)
39a.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices) (ELA-5-M1)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
39b.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic storage devices (e.g., CD-ROMs, diskettes, software, drives) (ELA-5-M1)
39c.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)
39d.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic information (e.g., Web resources including online sources and remote sites) (ELA-5-M1)
40a.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias) (ELA-5-M2)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)
40c.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)
41.	Explain the usefulness and accuracy of sources by determining their validity (e.g., authority, accuracy, objectivity, publication date, coverage) (ELA-5-M2)
42a.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including surveying (ELA-5-M3)
42b.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including interviewing (ELA-5-M3)
42c.	Gather and select information using data-gathering strategies/tools, including paraphrasing (ELA-5-M3)
43a.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including visual representations of data/information (ELA-5-M3)
43b.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including graphic organizers (e.g., outlines, timelines, charts, webs) (ELA-5-M3)
43c.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including works cited lists and/or bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)
44.	Use word processing and/or other technology to draft, revise, and publish a variety of works, including documented research reports with bibliographies (ELA-5-M4)
45a.	Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable use policy, including integrating quotations and citations (ELA-5-M5)
45b.	Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable use policy, including using endnotes (ELA-5-M5)
45c.	Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable use policy, including creating bibliographies and/or works cited lists (ELA-5-M5)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
46.	Interpret information from a variety of graphic organizers including timelines, charts, schedules, tables, diagrams, and maps in grade-appropriate sources (ELA-5-M6)

Sample Activities

The notations **[R]** for Reading and **[E]** for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 05, **08b**, **10**, **14b**, **14c**, **16**) **[R]**

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, reading response notebook or handouts, Reading Response Log SSR BLM, Book Talk Checklist BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students (and teachers) are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the Reading Response Log SSR BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection of the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a *learning log*. When time permits, students will discuss and compare their learning log entries. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Students may respond through quarterly book talks. A book talk is a short, informal oral presentation given after completing one of the SSR books. It is neither a book report nor summary; its purpose is for students to recommend good books to classmates. Students will state personal opinions and support those opinions as they discuss the book. See Book Talk Checklist BLM. See <http://www.nancykeane.com> for more information on using book talks in the classroom.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g., writing prompts, response logs, journals, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR

guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>.

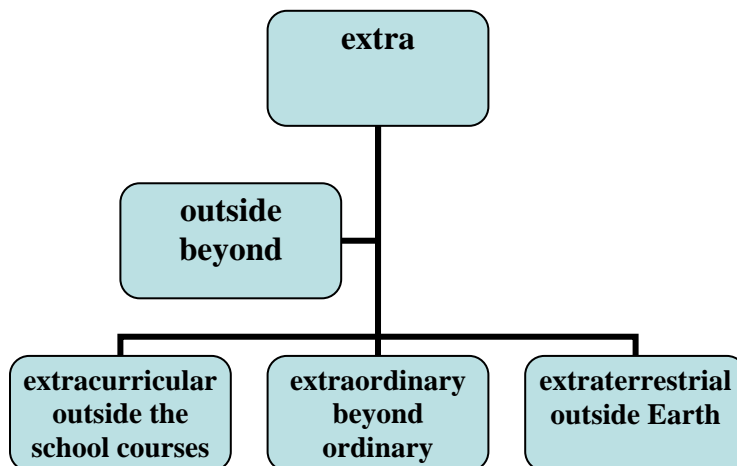
Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 26, 27) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include *vocabulary self-awareness chart* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Frayer model, concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

Students may create a vocabulary tree *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words containing the root/prefix and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: PREFIXES, ROOTS, & SUFFIXES



Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an online student dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. *Graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19, [E])

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template, whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this nonfiction unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order, selecting an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). In teaching students writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at: http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm.

A series of nonfiction writing lessons may be found at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/lessonplans/nfictindex.htm>.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide the students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors). Target skills should be identified (e.g., varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). The students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with the mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols, recording the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart

Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook. Fun lessons for grammar instruction may be found at:

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson334.shtml and http://www.internet4classrooms.com/lang_mid.htm.

The teacher should hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of paying attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and should daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

Activity 5: Informational Nonfiction Overview (GLEs: 05, 08b, 10, 12) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, nonfiction text examples, student anthology, Nonfiction Examples BLM

For this unit, the focus is expository text. Expository text gives information or explains facts and concepts; its purpose may be to inform, explain, or persuade. Reading expository text requires that students closely examine the text’s vocabulary, features, and structures if the material is to be comprehended and retained. Students must comprehend 75% of the ideas/concepts and 90% of the vocabulary of a content area/informational text to read it on an instructional level. Working with the science or social studies teacher will allow relevant materials to be selected for the class examples.

The teacher will review, show examples, and discuss the defining characteristics of literary/personal nonfiction (e.g., autobiographies, biographies, personal memoirs, essays, diaries, letters) and informational nonfiction (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, historical/workplace documents, scientific/technical writing, encyclopedia entries, handbooks, manuals, recipes). Students will discuss how to read informational nonfiction differently from literary/personal nonfiction.

Using the Nonfiction Examples BLM, the teacher will present a mini-lesson to review the defining characteristics of informational nonfiction (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, historical/workplace documents, scientific/technical writing, encyclopedia entries, handbooks, manuals, recipes, textbooks, internet articles). For student practice, the teacher should have examples of these various types of nonfiction so that students working in groups can read and identify the type of nonfiction and determine the author’s purpose for each example. Students will record notes in *learning logs*. The teacher should allow time for students to share their responses and discuss their entries with a partner or the whole class.

Sample Nonfiction *Learning Log*:

NONFICTION TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	AUTHOR'S PURPOSE
news article “Rebuilding the Levees”	short uses 5 w’s & how approach	to inform
interview “General Russell Honore”	word for word account personal experience	to inform to entertain

Activity 6: Text Features and Text Structures (GLEs: 05, 08b, 09a, 09b, 09c, 09d, 09e, 10, 12) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, chart paper, nonfiction examples, student anthology, Text Features BLM, Nonfiction Text Structure BLM, DR-TA BLM

In contrast to literary/personal nonfiction, which is usually writing with few illustrations, informational or expository text has many features. Some common nonfiction features are the table of contents, glossary, index, headings and subheadings, pronunciations in parentheses, text boxes and sidebars, photographs and illustrations, captions and labels, quotes, boldfaced words, and graphics (charts, diagrams, maps, tables, etc.). These text features provide additional information to help students comprehend and retain the content. Using the Nonfiction Text Features BLM, the teacher will review and show examples of these text features. Examples may be found in the science, math, or social studies textbooks. The teacher may choose to use a modified *DR-TA* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to acquaint students with the textbook. Using the *Table of Contents DR-TA* (McIntosh & Bear, 1993), students look at the table of contents, and then think about what they already know and predict what they think will be covered in the chapter. Students will determine where they might look for background information. This modified *DR-TA* can be done individually or in groups.

Sample Questions for Table of Contents *DR-TA*

1. For each chapter, read the title and say to yourself or write what you think will be presented.
2. Read the subheadings for each chapter. Ask yourself these questions about each subheading: (use words, phrases, or sentences to answer these questions)
 - What do I know I know about this topic?
 - What do I think I know?
 - What do I predict to find out in this chapter?
 - If I don't know anything about the topic, where could I go to find out?

In conjunction with this lesson, the teacher will review the parts and functions of a book (title page, copyright page, table of contents page, chapter headings and subheadings, appendix, glossary, index). Knowing and using book parts and functions is a critical component of the Using Information Resources portion of the LEAP test. Students will practice by comparing two selections using the Text Features BLM.

For remediation and review, students may create a personal nonfiction features booklet. Refer to this website:

<http://www.u46teachers.org/mosaic/tools/Nonfiction%20Conventions%20Notebook.doc>

Knowing the organizational structure of expository text will greatly increase students' comprehension of the relationship of ideas. Expository text has a specific text structure. However, authors may use several of these text structures while writing a piece. The teacher will review and show examples of the most common text structures that characterize nonfiction (description or listing, sequence or time order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, etc.), the most common signal words for each type, and questions students can ask themselves to aid in understanding. The teacher will distribute the Nonfiction Text Structures BLM for reference. Students will then classify teacher-selected examples according to text structure used. Some examples may be found in the student anthology, content area textbooks, newspapers, or trade magazines (e.g., SCOPE, READ, Time for Kids, Ranger Rick, Junior Scholastic, Science World, Scholastic MATH).

Using the *Directed Reading-Thinking Activity* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) as students read complex text reinforces the necessity of knowing text features and structures. *DR-TA* is a whole class instructional approach that invites students to make predictions, and then check their predictions during and after the reading. *DR-TA* provides a frame for self-monitoring because the teacher should pause throughout the reading to ask students questions. The *DR-TA* process involves these steps:

- The teacher first activates and builds background knowledge for the content to be read. For example, using the Louisiana History textbook article on “The Acadians’ Migration to Louisiana,” the teacher can initiate a discussion about the Acadians by first brainstorming what students know about Cajuns. This may take the form of a discussion in which the teacher elicits information the students may already have, including personal experience, prior to reading. The teacher also directs students’ attention to title, subheadings, and other textual and format clues within the text presented. Students’ ideas and information should be recorded on the board or chart paper.
- Next, students are encouraged to make predictions about the text content. The teacher can ask questions, such as “What do you expect the main idea of ‘The Acadians’ Migration to Louisiana’ will be?” From the title, what do you expect the author to say about the Acadians’ migration?” Students may be asked to write their predictions, so as to preserve a record of them as they read the actual text.
- The teacher then guides students through a section of text, stopping at predetermined places to ask students to check and revise their predictions. This is a crucial step in *DR-TA* instruction. When a stopping point is reached, the teacher asks students to reread the predictions they wrote and change them, if necessary, in light of new evidence that has influenced their thinking. Their new prediction and relevant evidence should be written down as well. This cycle get repeated several times throughout the course of the reading. There are numerous opportunities for the teacher to model his/her predictions, revisions, and evidence. The teacher can also prod students’ growing understanding of the text with questions, such as “What do you know so far about how and why the Acadians came to Louisiana from this reading?”, “What evidence do you have to support what you know about the Acadian migration?”, and “What do you expect to read next about the Acadians in Louisiana?”

- Once the reading is completed, students’ predictions can be used as discussion tools. When students write and revise predictions throughout the reading, they have a great deal to say about the text. Teachers can ask, “What did you expect to learn about the Acadian migration before we began reading?”, and “What did you actually learn about the Acadian migration?”
- Once students have grasped the process, they should be guided to employ the *DR-TA* process on their own when reading. A blank *DR-TA* form is provided in the BLMs.

As students continue to read and respond, the class will discuss and then list in journals/notebooks/learning logs, the elements of nonfiction (e.g., main idea, cause/effect, fact/opinion, problem/solution, author’s purpose/viewpoint, chronological order, persuasive techniques). If needed, the teacher should present mini-lessons and have students practice these important skills in context.

Activity 7: Reading and Responding to Informational Nonfiction (GLEs: 05, 08b, 10, 12, 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d, 14e) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, nonfiction examples, student anthology, GIST BLM

Students will read, respond to, and analyze teacher–assigned grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills. Reading and responding to content area and informational nonfiction provide background for students to acquire research skills. The teacher will present mini-lessons on various comprehension strategies –*DR-TA* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) and *GIST* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) or study skill strategies such as SQRRR as needed.

By using the *GIST* strategy, students will summarize and paraphrase teacher-selected excerpts for class practice. *GISTing* is an excellent strategy for helping students paraphrase and summarize essential information. The teacher will display the fundamental characteristics of *GIST* or a summary by placing these statements on the board, overhead projector, or chart paper:

- *GIST* is shorter than the original text.
- *GIST* is a paraphrase of the author’s words and descriptions.
- *GIST* focuses on the main points or events.

Students are required to limit the gist of a paragraph to a set number of words. Individual sentences from a paragraph are presented one at a time while students create a gist that must contain only the predetermined number of words. By limiting the total number of words students can use, this approach to summarizing forces them to think about only the most important information in a paragraph, which is the essence of comprehension. Students should share their *GISTs* for comment and critique.

Sample *GIST*: “A New Suit of Armor” Times Picayune No.231, September 9, 2007, p1.

“In the next four years, the Army Corps of Engineers expects to undertake one of the largest engineering projects in the nation’s history, raising existing levees, replacing temporary flood gates and building new structures in eastern New Orleans.”

Write a summary of the first sentence using only 15 words.

Within four years, the Corps of Engineers will improve the levee system in eastern New Orleans.

An excellent lesson on *GIST* (*GIST: A Summarizing Strategy for Use in Any Content Area*) may be accessed at

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=290.

A copy of the *GIST* template for summarizing newspaper articles is available in the BLMs.

After teacher-modeled lesson, students will read various informational and expository selections and may apply other notetaking strategies (e.g., SQ3R, 5 W’s organizer, web, summary notes, outlining) to identify the main idea and supportive details.

Using the district-adopted anthology selections as assigned by the teacher, students will continue to read and respond to literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions focusing on content area/informational nonfiction.

As a nonfiction book response, students may create a fact poster. As a group or individual project, students will select ten fascinating or interesting facts from the book read. On large sheet of construction paper, students will create a colorful illustration that relates to the book’s topic or subject. Then, students will write the ten facts around the illustration. Students’ projects will be displayed.

Activity 8: Selecting a Topic for I-Search (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 10, 11, 18a, 18b, 18d, 38b, 41) [E]

Materials list: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; KWL chart; computer with Internet access (if available); I-Search Template copies (available online)

Writing a brief I-Search paper allows students to make real-life connections to text and acquire research skills as they search for information on a topic of personal interest. Background information for an I-Search Curriculum Unit may be accessed at <http://www.literacymatters.org/content/isearch/intro.htm>. Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on what an I-Search Paper is, students will discuss what makes an I-Search unit different from other research units (It tells the story of a student’s search for information on a topic of personal interest rather than just retelling facts written by

others. It also involves the interview of an acknowledged expert in the chosen topic area). Students will review the differences between primary and secondary sources. Students will generate a list of topics in which they are interested by looking for ideas in their journals, conversations with friends, reading, watching television, and daydreaming (what if). Students will formulate questions (e.g., What college should I attend? How do I start a small business? What place would I like to visit? What kind of car would I like to own? What television/cd player is the best buy? Where do my ancestors come from? How can I learn to fly fish? How can I learn to scuba dive? etc.), making sure the question is in first person “I.” Students can use a *KWL graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., What do I know? What do I want to learn? What have I learned?) to formulate questions to guide research. In a writer’s notebook, journal, or two-pocket folder specifically for this project, students will record the selection process they have followed and create a time frame for project or paper completion. Students should have this notebook/journal/folder with them while working on the I-Search Paper to keep track of their search.

Students can locate I-Search templates at www.delta.edu/sgrobins/I-search.html or www.pipeline.com/~rgibson/isearch2.htm to use while researching. Model I-Search papers may be accessed at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/k/a/kak398/ispaper.htm> and <http://go.hrw.com/eolang/pdfs/ch9-6.pdf>.

Students will use modified *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., What is My Question? Why Am I Interested? Where Am I Likely to Find Information? What Kind of Information Do I Think I Will Need?) for peer group discussion meetings. Students will discuss their topic ideas and receive informal feedback in their peer-editing groups. Students will keep track of information via the notes pages.

Sample *split-page notetaking*: I-Search Paper

What is My Question?	How and why do hurricanes form?
Why am I Interested?	Hurricanes greatly affect the area where I live.
Where am I Likely to Find Information?	Internet search; contact weather center
What Kind of Information Do I Think I Will Need?	Scientific background; yearly data

Activity 9: Gathering Information (GLEs: 05, 08b, 10, 11, 39a, 39c, 39d, 42a, 42b, 42c, 46) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access

Students will use the Internet (e.g., www.Galenet.galegroup.com/) and/or library to search for available information on a selected topic. Students may also use alternative strategies to gather information (e.g., friendly conversations; interviews; surveys; activities; or written sources provided by companies, government agencies, and political,

cultural, or scientific organizations). Students may write business letters to the appropriate organizations, asking for materials. In the I-search journal/notebook/learning log students will record the search process (e.g., library visits, bibliographic information on book marked websites/web pages, books or articles skimmed/scanned, brief notes on search information). Students will write about problems encountered in locating or using information. Students will continue to jot down interesting information and observations as the search progresses. Students will explain whether or not resources were helpful (e.g., a minimum of three sources would be sufficient as the main part of the paper will be relating the narrative of their investigation rather than retelling of facts about the topic). Students will update their *KWL* chart and continue to record notes and search progress in their writer’s journal/notebook/learning log.

As an interview is an integral part of the project, students will review the components of good interviewing. Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) the names of at least three individuals whom they could contact (e.g., either in person, via phone, or email) about their chosen topic. In peer groups, students will relate how they became interested in the topic and seek help with tips, names, addresses, and telephone numbers of experts. Students will then fill out an interview graphic organizer (i.e., chart of questions to be asked) in their writer’s notebook/journal for planning and conducting their interviews. Students will create a list of interview questions appropriate for the topic and submit these to the teacher for approval. An I-Search Interview script is available at <http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/I-Search%20Interview%20Script.pdf>.

Teacher Note: Interviewees may be official experts, friends, family, or anyone who knows a lot about the topic. The experts can also refer students to books, magazines, journals, documents, etc. that might be useful as research tools.

Students will review and practice appropriate manners for interviewing people. Then, students will conduct the actual interviews and record responses in a writer’s notebook/journal/learning logs.

Activity 10: Drafting the I-Search Report (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 17c, 18c, 18e, 18f, 19, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 43c, 44) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access

Students will review with teacher the parts of an I-Search Paper. Students will structure the paper according to these components: What I Knew and Why I Investigated This Topic; My Search Process; What I Learned (or Didn’t Learn) and What It Means to Me; and a Works Cited Page with at least three sources plus a personal interview. Students will document sources (e.g., books, magazines, encyclopedias, interviews, websites/pages, consumer materials, public documents), using MLA format.

Teacher Note: For easier revision, the draft should be double-spaced, front side of the paper only.

Applying a writing process, students will write the first draft, using active voice verbs, actual dialogue where appropriate, and vivid descriptions. Students will read aloud their own work in peer editing groups. Students will use an analytic rubric specific to the I-Search Investigation to peer evaluate their papers. Students should then evaluate the comments and self-assess their papers. Students will then decide what final revisions are needed, e.g., varying sentence structure through the use of complex sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses used as modifiers and correctly used parts of speech (e.g., infinitives, participles, gerunds, degrees of adjectives, adverbs). Students will produce a final copy, word-processed if possible. Before actual publishing, students will self/peer assess for errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling, using print or electronic sources. Students will use a proofreading chart to check for their own errors. Students will then publish a final draft for scoring. An I-Search Rubric is available at <http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/I-Search%20Career%20Report%20Rubric.pdf>.

Activity 11: Publishing I-Search Reports (GLEs: 18e, 18g, 28, 29, 32) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access

Students' written work will be placed in a personal writing portfolio. Students will orally present a synopsis/brief overview of their reports to the class. A sample reflection sheet that can be developed into an oral presentation is available at <http://www2.edc.org/FSC/MIH/i-search.html>. The class will decide how to publish and share the I-Search reports with others. An oral presentation rubric is available at <http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Oral%20Presentation%20of%20Research%20Summary%20Rubric.pdf>.

Activity 12: Content Area/Informational Research (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 14d, 14e, 18a, 18b, 39d, 42c) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access

In lieu of an I-Search Paper, the teacher may assign a brief research report after consulting with the science or social studies teacher. A model lesson on research skills is available on the LDE website as part of the Teacher-to-Teacher lesson plans: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1988.pdf>. Students will review with their teacher the guidelines for a research report:

- presents factual information about an interesting topic
- states and develops a main idea
- brings together information from a variety of sources
- has a beginning, middle, and an end
- credits sources for ideas, quotations, and information presented.

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on focused versus broad topics, students will generate a broad list of topics of interest, on either a science or social studies topic. Students may skim content area books for items of interest. Students should check the table of contents, the introduction, picture captions, quotations, or other possible sources of quick information. Having selected a topic, students will narrow the topic and present it to the teacher for approval. After teacher modeling on the use of guiding questions, students will list five-seven possible questions for their research investigation (e.g., A 5-W's organizer is helpful). Students will submit a final, focused topic; title; and questions for teacher approval.

If computers are available, additional help with the research process may be accessed at <http://thinktank.4teachers.org/>. According to its free website, "ThinkTank is designed to help students develop a Research Organizer (a list of topics and subtopics) for reports and projects. Based on the subject assigned, the students can refine it by choosing from a variety of suggestions and by using a random subtopic generator. This helps students learn how to refine a subject so that it is more manageable for Internet research."

Activity 13: Locating Information/Evaluating Sources/Making Source Cards
(GLEs: 11, 13, 14d, 14e, 14f, 37, 40a, 40b, 40c, 41) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access; Knowledge Rating BLM

Using the topic/hypothesis generated previously, students will review with the teacher the research options for identifying possible print and nonprint sources of information (e.g., speeches, newspapers, books, magazines, almanacs, atlases, thesauruses, dictionaries, encyclopedias, CD-ROM encyclopedias, statistical abstracts, public documents, online databases, websites, media). Students may complete a knowledge rating chart or a modified *vocabulary self awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart concerning information contained in these resources. Because students bring a range of word understandings to the task of identifying sources of information, it is important to assess students' word knowledge before reading or other tasks involving text. This awareness is valuable for students because it highlights their understanding of what reference sources they know, as well as what they still need to learn to use. Reference resources are introduced at the beginning of the unit, and students complete a self-assessment of their knowledge of the words. The teacher identifies target reference resources for the lesson and provides students with a list of terms in a chart. See Knowledge Rating BLM. Each reference resource is rated according to the student's understanding, including the information contained, how it is organized, and when to use it. Students may add terms to the list as they research.

As the first step of the research involves simply identifying likely sources of information and recording the bibliographic information for each, students will evaluate sources through a library or Internet search, skimming and scanning to locate appropriate

information that can be integrated into the report. Students may use these guiding questions:

- Is the material current?
- Is the material factual or opinionated?
- Is the author qualified?
- What credentials does the author have?
- Is the author fair?

Students will then make source cards listing the bibliographic information. The source cards will later be used to compile a works cited list.

Activity 14: Taking Notes (GLEs: 09b, 39a, 39b, 39c, 39d, 43a, 43b, 43c) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; index cards; if available, computer with Internet access

After a teacher-modeled lesson on the use of note cards and how they connect to source cards, students will gather information from sources and make note cards listing one idea per card by paraphrasing and summarizing, both with and without questions. Via a teacher mini-lesson, students will review plagiarism and the importance of giving credit to authors. Students will learn how to credit quotations, citations, and endnotes. Students may use the website <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/reference.html> as a reference. Using MLA format, students will create a Works Cited page from the source cards. Students will write a thesis statement to guide the report. Students will organize note cards into headings/subheadings that will provide the basis for an outline (*Inspiration*[®] software can be used.). Students will create a visual representation (e.g., charts, graphs, photos, timelines, etc.) of data/information gathered.

Activity 15: Drafting/Publishing (GLEs: 15a, 15e, 17a, 17c, 18e, 18f, 18g, 23, 26, 27, 43c, 44, 45a, 45b, 45c) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access

Students will create a rough draft that includes the following:

- a well-developed beginning, middle, and end
- a focused central idea
- transitions and phrases that unify ideas
- points developed from the outline and note cards, with parenthetical citations inserted as needed
- a graphic organizer, where appropriate, that presents research information

Students will self or peer assess using an analytical rubric/framework checklist for their first drafts. Students will revise their reports, making sure the introduction is interesting, the report develops one unified idea, the facts are accurate, credit is given for borrowed

information (e.g., integrating quotations and citations, using endnotes), and the conclusion is satisfying.

Students will then complete an editing session for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling, using a variety of print or electronic resources. Students will revise the Works Cited page as needed. Students will publish a polished final draft, using available technology. Students' work may be assessed by using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Activity 16: Problem/Solution Essay (GLEs: 04b, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 17a, 17c, 17e, 20b) [E]

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; computer with Internet access (if available); LEAP Rubric BLM

Following a teacher-modeled think-aloud, using a nonfiction text with a problem/solution structure, students will read and respond to nonfiction text selections. Students will review the guidelines for a problem/solution essay:

- clearly states a problem
- explains why the problem is worth considering
- presents one or more solutions and shows how each would work
- presents the practical benefits of the solution(s)
- ends with a strong conclusion

Students can generate ideas through interviews, newspaper stories, advice columns, magazine articles and essays, school happenings, conversation, opinion polls, or responses to fiction/nonfiction selections. Students may also free write about things that bother them and list how they could correct the situation or free write about previous problems they encountered and how they were solved.

After selecting a topic, students will use a three-column graphic organizer ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), or problem/solution diagram to record the problem, possible causes, and possible solutions, noting the relationship between the problem and possible solutions. Students will gather information through group discussions, library research, interviews, or letters asking for information. Students will use a pro/con chart to determine which solution is best. Students will select an organizational pattern (e.g., chronological, order-of-importance, point-by-point) that will best present the details of the problem.

Using a writing process, students will write a rough draft that introduces a problem, tells about the problem, offers a solution, and concludes with a restating and a call to action. Students will self/peer edit with a checklist (e.g., *LEAP Writer's Checklist*). Students will revise for word choice, voice, transitional words, and variety in sentence structure. Students will write a final copy, using available technology. Students will use a proofreading checklist for assessing errors in grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling.

Students will continue to write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics and prompts, as assigned.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students may be provided with a checklist of nonfiction elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students' completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition may be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative and evaluative questions for nonfiction selections read in a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students may complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the unit study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations, and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the unit. Students will be assessed by a teacher-created rubric designed for the format chosen available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
- Students will use information learned from research to complete journal entries and graphic organizers as assigned. Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via teacher-created checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students' progress in the research process (e.g., source cards/note cards/outlines) will be assessed via teacher-created timeline checklist, skills checklist, or teacher observations. Rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. Six Trait Rubric available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
- Students' writing products may be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist (<http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf>) or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.

- Students' writing products will be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writing Rubric for final drafts. <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students may be assessed via teacher observations, skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activities 8 through 10: I-Search: Students will write an I-Search report. Students will apply a writing process to produce a polished final draft that includes:
 - an introduction that uses a hook (e.g., attention grabber) and explains the reasons for interest in the chosen topic
 - a body that explains the story of the search, refers to facts learned in at least three print/nonprint sources and a personal interview, and is organized logically
 - a conclusion that summarizes what was learned and tells future plans
 - a Works Cited page, using MLA format
 - word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - voice (e.g., interweaves the factual information with personal reflection in first person narrative form)
 - transitional words effectively used to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and legibility.

An I-Search Rubric is available at:

<http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/I-Search%20Career%20Report%20Rubric.pdf>.

- Activity 11: *I-Search* Summary: Students will present an oral synopsis of the I-Search research summary. The presentation evaluation should be based on the following:
 - Student's movements seem fluid and help the audience visualize
 - Student holds the attention of the audience with use of direct eye contact
 - Student's delivery shows a natural pace and meets apportioned time (neither too quick nor too slow)
 - Student displays relaxed, self-confident nature, with no mistakes
 - Student uses fluid speech and inflection
 - Student's presentation appears to be well-rehearsed.

An I-Search Oral Presentation Rubric is available at:

<http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Writing%20Instruction%20and%20Assessment/Oral%20Presentation%20of%20Research%20Summary%20Rubric.pdf>.

- Activities 12 through 15: Informational Reports: Students will write an informational report that will incorporate accurate and researched details presented in a variety of forms. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft to be evaluated with the following criteria:
 - The report is both accurate and clear
 - The writing begins with an interesting or provocative introduction that contains a clear and concise thesis statement
 - The body fully explores the topic and presents information in a sensible order
 - The report contains facts and quotations, expressed in the writer’s words with complete and correct documentation from a variety of sources
 - The body supports and develops the writer’s thesis and exhibits unity and coherence
 - The report includes a complete and correct bibliography or source list
 - The report contains at least one visual representation of data/information
 - The report uses precise word choice appropriate to the audience
 - The report contains few or no errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, or spelling.

Students’ work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at: <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

- Activity 16: Problem/Solution Essay: Students will write a well-organized essay that proposes a solution to a problem. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that includes:
 - an introduction that clearly states the problem
 - a body that fully explains why the problem is worth considering, gives one or more realistic solutions to the problem, and gives the practical details or benefits of the solution(s)
 - a conclusion that effectively ends the writing, without repetition, and contains a clincher statement
 - word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - transitional words effectively used to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - varied sentence structure and patterns
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, and legibility.

A problem-solution rubric is available at: <http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/writing%20craft%20&%20genre%20instruction%20files/Problem-Solution%20Essay%20Rubric.pdf>.

Teacher Resources

- Beers, Kylene. *When Kids Can't Read--What Teachers Can Do: A Guide for Teachers 6-12*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003.
- Boyton, Alice and Wiley Blevins. *Teaching Students to Read Nonfiction*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003.
- Culham, Ruth. *6+1 Traits of Writing*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003.
- Fisher, Douglas, William G. Brozo, Nancy Frey, and Gay Ivey. *50 Content Area Strategies for Adolescent Literacy*. Upper Saddle River: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Freeman, Marcia. *Listen to This: Developing an Ear for Expository*. Gainesville, Florida: Maupin House, 1997.
- Macrorie, Ken. *The I-Search Paper*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1988.
- McCarthy, Tara. *Teaching Genre: Grades 4-8*. New York: Scholastic, 1996
- Portalupi, Joann and Ralph Fletcher. *Nonfiction Craft Lessons*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse, 2001.
- Robb, Laura. *Nonfiction Writing*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2004.
- Robb, Laura. *Teaching Reading in Middle School*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2000.
- Robb, Laura. *Teaching Reading in Social Studies, Science, Math*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003.

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 3: Laughing Out Loud—Humorous Fiction/Essays

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading and responding to humorous essays, humorous fiction, comic strips, and political cartoons. The characteristics of humor are defined, and a comparison/contrast of narrative elements is included. Writing humorous anecdotes and humorous persuasive essays provides an opportunity for student application of a writing process. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Humor allows one to see the fallacies of human nature in a nonthreatening manner. The essence of humor is surprise. Humor techniques also include exaggeration and understatement. Humor may often be culture based. What is funny to one may not be funny to another. Through reading, discussions, assignments, and activities, students will make real-life connections to humor across cultures.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the techniques of humor: exaggeration, understatement, and surprise?
2. Can students distinguish types of irony: verbal, situational, and dramatic?
3. Can students draw inference from context clues in humor?
4. Can students relate humor to personal experiences?
5. Can students develop a personal anecdote and apply the standard rules of usage and sentence formation?

Unit 3 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, such as use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02a.	Interpret story elements, including stated and implied themes (ELA-1-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
02b.	Interpret story elements, including development of character types (e.g., flat, round, dynamic, static) (ELA-1-M2)
02c.	Interpret story elements, including effectiveness of plot sequence and/or subplots (ELA-1-M2)
02d.	Interpret story elements, including the relationship of conflicts and multiple conflicts (e.g., man vs. man, nature, society, self) to plot (ELA-1-M2)
02e.	Interpret story elements, including difference in third-person limited and omniscient points of view (ELA-1-M2)
02f.	Interpret story elements, including how a theme is developed (ELA-1-M2)
03a.	Interpret literary devices, including allusions (ELA-1-M2)
03b.	Interpret literary devices, including understatement (meiosis) (ELA-1-M2)
03c.	Interpret literary devices, including how word choice and images appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone (ELA-1-M2)
03d.	Interpret literary devices, including the use of foreshadowing and flashback to direct plot development (ELA-1-M2)
03e.	Interpret literary devices, including the effects of hyperbole and symbolism
04b.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including consumer materials (ELA-1-M3)
04c.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including public documents (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
06.	Analyze universal themes found in a variety of world and multicultural texts in oral and written responses (ELA-6-M1)
07.	Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, character, theme) in multiple genres (ELA-6-M2)
08b.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify the significance of various genres, including nonfiction (e.g., workplace documents, editorials) (ELA-6-M3)
08c.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify the significance of various genres, including poetry (e.g., lyric, narrative) (ELA-6-M3)
08d.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify the significance of various genres, including drama (e.g., plays) (ELA-6-M3)
09a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including interpreting stated or implied main ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (see ELA-1-M2)
09f.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09g.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
12.	Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose (ELA-7-M3)
13.	Analyze an author's viewpoint by assessing appropriateness of evidence and persuasive techniques (e.g., appeal to authority, social disapproval) (ELA-7-M3)
14b	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
17b	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)
17d	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
20c.	Use the various modes to write compositions, including essays defending a stated position (ELA-2-M4)
21.	Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including understatements and allusions (ELA-2-M5)
22a.	Write for a wide variety of purposes, including persuasive letters that include appropriate wording and tone and that state an opinion (ELA-2-M6)
22b.	Write for a wide variety of purposes, including evaluations of advertisements, political cartoons, and speeches (ELA-M6)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds (ELA-3-M3)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M4)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M4)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell-check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g. read, question, write a response form groups, from detailed oral instructions) (ELA-4-M2)
32.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
34.	Determine the credibility of the speaker (e.g., hidden agenda, slanted or biased materials) (ELA-4-M4)
35.	Deliver grade-appropriate persuasive presentations (ELA-4-M4)
36.	Summarize a speaker's purpose and point of view (ELA-4-M4)
37.	Compare, contrast, and evaluate information found in a wide variety of text/electronic media, (e.g., microprint, public speeches, art form) (ELA-4-M5)
39c.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)
40c	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)

Sample Activities

The notations **[R]** for Reading and **[E]** for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 05, 08b, 10, 14b, 14c, 16) [R]

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, Reading Response notebook or handouts, Reading Response Log SSR BLM, Book Talk Checklist BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students (and teachers) are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the Reading Response Log SSR BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection on the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a *learning log*.

Sample Reading Response Learning Log:

Reading Response Learning Log				Name	
Title & Author	Genre	Date	Pages Read B-E	Response to Reading: (e.g., This reminds me of ___; I liked the part when ___; I wonder why ___;)	Teacher or Guardian Signature
Out of the Dust- Karen Hesse	Historical fiction	8/24	1-4	This reminds me of my friend Sally. Her dad always wanted a boy. So he treated her that way. I wonder if this is what the story is about.	lmb

See http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/instruction_and_assessment.htm for downloadable reading logs. When time permits, students will discuss and compare their learning log entries. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Students may respond through quarterly book talks. A book talk is a short, informal oral presentation given after completing one of the SSR books. It is neither a book report nor summary; its purpose is for students to recommend good books to classmates. Students will state personal opinions and support those opinions as they discuss the book. See Book Talk Checklist BLM. See <http://www.nancykeane.com> for more information on using book talks in the classroom.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g. writing prompts, response logs, journals, book talks, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>.

Activity 2: Vocabulary —Puns and Connotative/Denotative Words (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 39c, 40b) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers; index cards; plastic sandwich bags; art supplies; dictionaries; thesauruses; computer with internet access, if available

Humor relies on puns and connotative/denotative words. The teacher will present a mini-

lesson on using and interpreting denotative/connotative word meanings, emphasizing the appropriateness for the intended audience. The teacher will also discuss with the class the “shades of meaning” of words (e.g. skinny, bony, thin, slender, etc.). To improve comprehension, students need to understand how terms relate to one another. Through library research or internet search of bookmarked grade appropriate websites (e.g., <http://www.punoftheday.com>), students will generate a list of puns they consider humorous. Students will classify these as homographic or homophonic puns. Students will review connotative and denotative meanings of words. Students will create a personal vocabulary list of puns and connotative/denotative word encountered in the humorous selections.

Students may use a three-column graphic organizer to visualize the differences in connotation and denotation of words. Students should add to the chart as they read the selections.

Sample Connotation and Denotation Organizer:

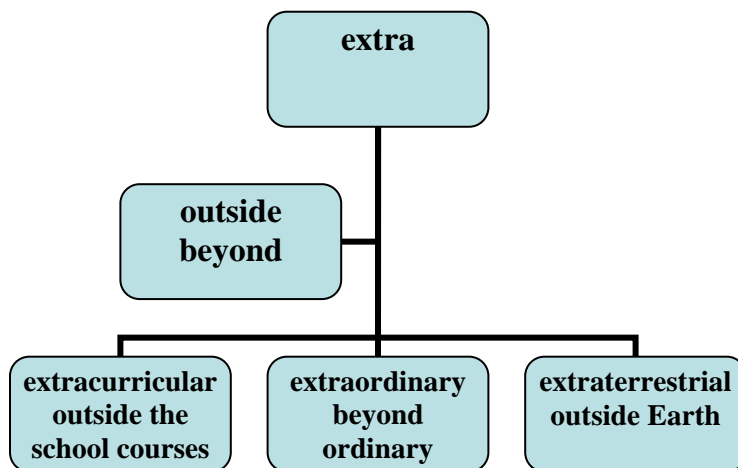
vocabulary word	denotation (dictionary)	connotation (emotional meaning)
rat	small animal	someone who tells
snake	reptile	evil person

Students may draw illustrations of two favorite puns. Students’ work may be displayed on class board.

Students will use knowledge of structural analysis (e.g., roots and word parts) and vocabulary strategies (e.g., word diagrams, Frayer model) to extend vocabulary acquisition in selections read. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart, *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

Students may create a vocabulary tree graphic organizer wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words containing the root/prefix as they can and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: PREFIXES, ROOTS, & SUFFIXES



Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an on-line dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. Additional connotation and denotation practice is at <http://www.grammarandmore.com/product/hoab/denotation.pdf>. *Graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs:, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19, [E])

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template (download info in activity), whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this humorous fiction unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order with an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or learning log. In teaching students writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at: http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm. Models of student writing can be accessed at <http://thewritesource.com/>.

The teacher should also review the traits for effective writing. The following Internet sites have the traits and definitions of effective writing:

<http://www.north-scott.k12.la.us/writetraits/writetraits.html#top> and

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/pdfDocs/sixtraitsummary.pdf>.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide the students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors). Target skills should be identified (e.g., varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). The students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with the mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Students should continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols; students should continue to record the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart. See the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM.

Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook. Fun lessons for grammar instruction may be found at:

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson334.shtml and

http://www.internet4classrooms.com/lang_mid.htm.

Students should also continue a daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related), writing sentences as correctly as they can while the teacher gives positive feedback, walking around the room and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher encourages him/her to search further and then returns to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students continue to correct their papers by using proofreading symbols and also by recording the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart, allowing the teacher to see which errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister's *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990).

Mini-lessons on the use of varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences, phrases, and clauses used correctly as modifiers, using superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, infinitives, participles, and gerunds, should continue as part of the unit. Students should continue to spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly.

Activity 5: Humor Me (GLEs: 02a, 02b, 02c, 02d, 02e, 03c) [R]

Materials List: journals, copies of “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” humorous story examples, story maps/charts, Story Map/Character Map BLMs

Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) the names of various comedians that they know. In journals/learning logs students will write brief descriptions of these comedians and state what makes these comics funny. As a whole class, students will discuss why they think people or things are funny.

As an introduction to humor and to teach students to construct meaning during reading, the teacher will read aloud a humorous short story, such as Mark Twain’s “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” Downloadable copies are available at <http://www.classicshorts.com/stories/frog.html>. To ensure students are learning to take responsibility for constructing meaning from text, the teacher will demonstrate how they can use the strategy of *Questioning the Author* –QtA ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) while reading aloud “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” The teacher will write on chart paper the types of questions that one expects students to ask (See chart below) as they read and/or listen to humorous short stories. Other questions can be added with the help of students as they learn the QtA process. As a section of text is read, the teacher will model for students the question-asking and –answering process using the questions below or related ones. Students need to be taught that they can, and should, ask questions of authors as they read. Students may work in pairs to engage in the QtA process together as the teacher moves around the room to monitor and clarify. The teacher will continue to model for and elicit from students these types of questions until they begin to QtA in a routine way as they read on their own and listen to text read to them. The teacher should encourage students to use this approach to meaning making with all texts whether fiction or nonfiction. Students’ answers are not evaluated in this strategy because QtA’s purpose is to engage the reader with the text, not to assess accuracy.

Sample *Questioning the Author* Prompts: “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”

Goal	Query
Initiate discussion	What is Mark Twain trying to say about Simon Wheeler?
Focus on author’s message	What is Twain’s message about humor in our lives?
	What is Twain talking about when he has the narrator say “I asked Simon Wheeler to tell him about Jim Smiley?”
Link information	
	That’s what Twain has the narrator say, but what does it mean? Why did Twain want the narrator to know about Jim Smiley?

<p>Identify difficulties with the way the author has presented information or ideas</p> <p>Encourage students to refer to the text because they have misinterpreted, or to help them recognize that they have made an inference</p>	<p>How does this new information connect with what Twain’s narrator already told us? What are some of the comic elements of the story of Jim Smiley? What information has Twain added here that connects or fits with comic situations?</p> <p>Does it make sense why Twain never had the narrator interrupt Wheeler’s story? Did Twain explain the differences in character and cultural background between the narrator and Simon Wheeler clearly? Why or why not? What do we need to figure out or find out?</p> <p>Did Twain tell us how Simon Wheeler’s story about Jim Smiley counteracts the ridiculousness of the narrator’s story about Simon Wheeler? Did Twain give us the answer to this ridiculousness? What do you think is Twain’s theme in this story?</p>
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*Source: *50 Content Area Strategies for Adolescent Literacy* by Douglas Fisher, William Brozo, Nancy Frey, and Gay Ivey

An extension lesson on Mark Twain’s “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” may be accessed at http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=327. At the end of this lesson, students will be able to analyze the use of literary conventions and devices to develop character and point of view in the short story, discuss the purposes and significance of literary humor, and examine Mark Twain's storytelling style in relation to that of other American humorists.

Then students will read and listen to a variety of teacher-selected short humorous stories, poems, and essays. Students will complete story charts or story maps to determine the literary elements (theme, characters, plot, conflict, point of view, mood/tone) of selections read. A variety of story maps/charts are available in the BLMS. The teacher should decide which story map or character chart to use depending upon which literary element is the focus of the selection read.

Students will bring in examples of cartoons or comic strips that they consider funny and create a class board. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview cartoons/comic strips before students post them.

Students will create a personal humor folder containing stories, poems, essays, cartoons, jokes, riddles, or word play that they find humorous. As a whole class, students will

discuss what it is that makes readers laugh as they read. Students will respond in journals/learning logs to the following prompt: What do we mean when we say someone has a sense of humor?

Activity 6: Elements and Techniques of Humor (GLEs: 03a, 03b, 03c, 03d, 03e, 08d, 09b, 09d, 09e, 09f, 09g, 16) [R]

Materials List: journals, humorous story examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, Story Map/Character Map BLMs

The teacher will present a mini-lesson on irony (e.g., verbal, situational or dramatic, and exaggeration or understatement), giving examples from selections. The teacher will also discuss an author’s use of mood/tone, flashback/foreshadowing in writing humor. As the teacher reads a portion of a humorous story, student will use the think-pair-share strategy to discuss the story’s outcome. (Think-pair-share strategy: Pose a topic/question. Give think time. Ask students to pair with an assigned partner to discuss ideas. Have students share their ideas with whole class.) Students will write journal entries stating their predictions, using text support to make inferences or draw conclusions. Students will share responses orally.

Students will read short plays or scenarios (selected by teacher), focusing on humor. A variety of story maps/charts are available in the BLMS. The teacher should decide which story map or character chart to use depending upon which literary element is the focus of the selection read.

Students will summarize their readings in journals/learning logs. Students will find, record, and classify examples of literary devices including irony (e.g., verbal, situational or dramatic), exaggeration (i.e., hyperbole), understatement, and allusions, as they read other selections. Students may complete a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart to record their examples. The teacher should not give students definitions or examples at this stage. Students will rate their understanding of each technique with either a “+” (understand well), a “√” (limited understanding or unsure), or a “—” (don’t know). Over the course of the unit readings and exposure to other information, students are to return to the chart and add new information to it.

Sample *Vocabulary Self-Awareness* Chart for Humor Techniques:

Technique	+	√	--	Example	Definition
verbal irony					
situational irony					
dramatic irony					
exaggeration					
understatement					
allusion					

In journals/learning logs students will develop a paragraph with logical organization, focusing on one example and telling why they liked it.

Activity 7: Reading and Responding to Humor (GLEs: 02a, 02b, 02c, 02d, 02e, 02f, 06, 07, 08c) [R]

Materials List: journals, humorous story examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, websites, Character Map, Story Map/ Character Map BLMs

The teacher will discuss with the class how humor is evident in many genres of literature. We find humor in jokes, tall tales, in many folktales, poetry, science fiction, fantasies, and even mysteries. Humorous stories revolve around a conflict, but depict the funny side of the problem. To heighten interest in humorous fiction, the teacher will review humorous folktales. Many folktales from different cultures are available at <http://www.storybug.net/pdf/cultures.pdf>.

Fractured Fairy tales are perfect for anyone who has ever enjoyed fairy tales: <http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/fft.html>.

An extensive folktale unit for middle grades can be accessed at <http://www.dpsk12.org/programs/almaproject/pdf/EveryoneHasaTale.pdf>

The teacher will present a mini-lesson on indirect and direct methods of characterization that authors use to develop character types, such as round, flat, dynamic, or static giving examples from selections.

To introduce a humorous fiction selection, the teacher may use the *opinionnaire or anticipation guide* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) strategy. *Opinionnaires* promote deep and meaningful understandings by activating and building relevant prior knowledge and building interest in and motivation to read more. *Opinionnaires/anticipation guides* also promote self-examination, value students' points of view, and provide a vehicle for influencing others with their ideas. *Opinionnaires/anticipation guides* are developed by generating statements about a topic that force students to take positions and defend them. The emphasis is on students' points of view and not the "correctness" of their opinions. *Opinionnaires/anticipation guides* are usually written as a series of statements to which students can agree or disagree. They can focus on the prior knowledge that a student brings to the text. They help set a purpose for reading. The teacher may create an anticipation guide for assigned selections.

Sample *Anticipation Guide* for Shirley Jackson's *Charles*:

Directions: After each statement, write SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree). Then in the space provided, briefly explain the reasons for your opinions.

1. Young children always tell the truth _____

Your reasons:

2. Young children have imaginary playmates. _____

Your reasons:

In small groups, students will choose selections from the district-adopted anthology or a class-generated list of humorous stories, essays, and poems to read. Students will discuss through literal, interpretative, and evaluative responses. Students will construct/complete *graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., story map, character trait map, plot summary chart) that address character types, conflicts, points of view, and themes. A variety of story maps/charts are available in the BLMS. The teacher should decide which story map or character chart to use depending upon which literary element is the focus of the selection read.

Students will chart where they find examples of irony in the stories. Students will share their findings during a class discussion. Using a scale of one through five (with five being the highest rating), students will rate a story's humor, analyze why they rated each one respectively, and share their findings with the group.

Students may choose a scene to be performed as a creative enactment (e.g., pantomime, skit, or monologue) that emphasizes the irony of the selection.

An annotated list of humorous fiction for teens may be located at the Evanston Public Library site: <http://www.epl.org/library/bibliographies/ya-humorous.html>.

Activity 8: Viewing Humor (GLEs: 10, 40c) [R]

Materials List: journals, humorous video examples, graphic organizers, student anthology, websites

Students will watch an appropriate television situation comedy (e.g. *The Cosby Show*, *I Love Lucy*). The website <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/3267/lucy.html> provides a listing of acceptable episodes. Students will use a Venn diagram, T-chart, or Y-chart or similar *graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to compare/contrast the sitcom's story line with what would happen in real life. Students will develop a paragraph explaining how the television characters exaggerated the problem instead of realistically solving the problem and then present alternative solutions to the problem. Students may rewrite the episode to show what happens if the problem does not work out.

Activity 9: Writing a Humorous Anecdote (GLEs: 15d, 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 18a, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 21, 23, 24a, 25b, 25c) [E]

Materials List: journals, writing materials, models of humorous anecdotes/memoirs,

Working with the teacher, the student will review the humorous anecdote's guidelines (i.e. brief, entertains readers, often about real people, often uses dialogue, makes a point, or reveals a personality trait) or personal memoir by showing models of effectively written humorous anecdotes/personal memoirs. Students will prewrite by using sources of inspiration (e.g., journal, family and friends, photos, biographies) for *brainstorming* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), possible topics for anecdotes. Students will draft an anecdote that begins with a narrative hook/lead/attention grabber, uses appropriate elaboration, uses word choice appropriate to the audience, and reveals the writer's voice. Students will demonstrate their ability to use properly literary devices (e.g., types of irony, exaggerations, understatements, allusions), adverbs, comparative and superlative adjectives (following a teacher mini-lesson, if needed), and varied sentence structure, as well as demonstrate appropriate command of grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling. Students will use self/peer-evaluation to edit, revise, and produce a final draft, using available technology. Students will receive feedback through a teacher-created rubric.

Humorous fiction writing worksheets may be downloaded at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/reproducibles/profbooks/writinghumorousfiction.pdf> (Writing Humorous Fiction: Planning a Setting).

Students can participate, if computers with Internet access are available, in a simple online project by writing a mixed up Fairy Tale using the chart available at <http://www.ed.uri.edu/unitweb/lgoudailler/project.htm>.

Activity 10: Sharing Humorous Anecdotes (GLE: 30) [E]

Materials List: student work examples

Following the teacher's instructions, the class will decide as a whole group how they would like to share their humorous anecdotes (e.g., reading aloud, class book, skit, bulletin board). After discussion, students will share work in the manner chosen.

Activity 11: Comics in the Classroom (GLEs: 02a, 02e, 09a, 09b, 09c, 09d) [R]

Materials List: comics/comic strip examples, journals, chart paper

Students will explore a variety of comic strips. Comic strips force readers to infer and use their imaginations. As comics are multidimensional (i.e., combining both words and images), they can be used to teach many concepts (e.g., character development, theme, point of view, dialogue, transitions, sequence, conclusions). In journals, students will

brainstorm ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) the names of various comic books or comic strips that they know, and they will write a description about them. The teacher will distribute class-appropriate examples of comic books or strips. In small groups, students will discuss and record on chart papers the similarities and differences, noting the various layouts and designs. Then, the teacher will distribute copies of comic strips with the words deleted in a portion of the strip and have students fill in what dialogue they think will complete the comic strip. Finally, as a group, students will read a poem or short story and create a comic strip summarizing its message. Students may be provided feedback through a class-created rubric.

Additional teacher resource material may be accessed at <http://comicsintheclassroom.net/> and http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=188.

Activity 12: Political Cartoons in the Classroom (GLEs: 03a, 03c, 03e, 08b, 09c, 09e, 09g, 12, 19, 22b) [R]

Materials List: political/editorial cartoon examples, graphic organizers, journals

The teacher will provide the class with examples of political/editorial cartoons. The teacher will facilitate a class discussion by modeling the interpretation of a cartoon to introduce the concepts of literary devices such as allusion, symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and caricature in an editorial/political cartoon. Students will locate and bring to class various political/editorial cartoons. In groups, students will complete a cartoon-analysis worksheet that addresses what is seen in the cartoon, what the words, if any, mean, what message is implied, how effective the author is in achieving his/her purpose as a response. Students will discuss symbols, humor, and exaggeration in explaining the message/main idea of the cartoon. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of the author/illustrator's purpose by writing a reflective paragraph in their journal/learning log applying standard rules of grammar, mechanics, and usage.

Worksheets and activities to help teachers incorporate editorial cartoons into class lessons are available at

http://712educators.about.com/od/editorialcartoonwksheets/Editorial_Cartoon_Worksheets_and_Activities.htm Cartoons in the Classroom.

http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr210.shtml Use Editorial Cartoons to Teach About Elections Past and Present

http://www.newsday.com/about/custom/nie/ny-nie_cartoons,0,58934.story Using Editorial Cartoons in the Classroom

http://www.ucsus.org/assets/documents/scientific_integrity/science-idol-lesson.pdf Tips on Incorporating Cartoons into Your Lesson Plan

<http://www.landmarkcases.org/miranda/cartoon.html> Political Cartoon Analysis Chart

www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/docs/midlsoc/gr8/pdf/p350.pdf Political Cartoon Analysis Chart

Activity 13: Persuasive Essay/Speech (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 12, 13, 20c, 22a, 22b, 24a, 24b, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40b) [E]

Materials List: website search engines, copy of persuasive picture books (*Glasses, Who Needs Them* or *Earrings*)

The teacher will discuss with the class how humor can effect change. Many columnists use humor to persuade others to accept a new viewpoint. Often they take a serious problem and exaggerate it, causing others to question the problem and seek change. Political and editorial cartoonists employ this technique very effectively. Students will explore this use of persuasive humor by conducting an Internet search to locate appropriate humorous essays/articles, or the teacher may provide the class with examples. The teacher may read aloud a humorous persuasive picture book (e.g., *Glasses, Who Needs Them* or *Earrings*) to illustrate the use of humor in persuasion. Following a class discussion of humor as a persuasive technique, the teacher will introduce a model for writing serious or humorous persuasive essays/letters. Students will recognize that whether a serious or humorous tone is taken, the structure remains the same. After students have had practice in writing a basic persuasive essay, the teacher may challenge students to develop a humorous approach to persuasion as evidenced in previous readings.

Then, the teacher will facilitate a class discussion on how persuasive writing (e.g., serious or humorous) can take many forms, including speeches, newspaper editorials, billboards, and advertisements (e.g., print and nonprint). Students will read, view, and respond to persuasive essays and speeches (e.g., “The Trouble With Television”; “I Have a Dream”; “This We Know”; “Parents, Not Cash, Can Enrich a School”; “The Future Doesn’t Belong to the Fainthearted”; “Ain’t I a Woman”; Andy Rooney’s commentaries). Students will identify the elements of persuasive essays/speeches/letters (e.g., clear purpose, an appeal to reason and to the emotions). Students will determine the credibility of the writer/speaker through class discussion, and then will write a paragraph summarizing and evaluating the speaker’s purpose and point of view in the given essay/speech/letter.

As a class, students will discuss the importance of taking a stand in writing good persuasion. This stand may be developed from a humorous or serious viewpoint. In journals, students will brainstorm lists of topics about which they feel strongly. After a teacher-modeled lesson on writing a good thesis statement that states a clear opinion or position on an issue, students will practice writing position/opinion thesis statements, using the topic list generated.

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on the differences between fact and opinion, students will practice identifying details as fact or opinion, noting opinion words, such as

should, ought, must, etc. Students will read editorials and circle the opinion words used, then discuss with the class.

After a teacher mini-lesson focusing on the need for using specific and precise words and details in writing persuasion, students will practice by rewriting a short, nonspecific paragraph replacing vague details with more vivid and precise words. Students will share and discuss with a peer-evaluation group. In journals/notebooks, students will create a list of denotative/connotative (e.g., shades of meaning) words that demonstrate a precise use of words. Students will check a thesaurus, as needed.

Students will review the basic components of a persuasive essay/speech (i.e., states a narrowly focused opinion; offers facts, statistics, examples, reasons for support; presents information logically; uses transitions; and concludes with a call to action). As the teacher reads aloud a humorous persuasive picture book (e.g., *Earrings*), students will analyze the author's viewpoint and identify the types of persuasive appeals they hear: emotional appeal, shared beliefs, facts/statistics, expert opinions, anecdotes, quotations, etc.

Students will select a topic from previous journaling and draft a thesis statement. Using a persuasive writing graphic organizer, students will focus their planning by identifying their purpose, targeted audience, tone, and three reasons for their stated position. Students will choose an appropriate organizational plan (e.g., chronological, spatial, order of importance) for their argument and arrange their reasons with evidence to support each accordingly.

Students will write a rough draft of an essay or letter that includes an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement, a body (e.g., each paragraph beginning with a topic sentence that clearly states the reason being presented and contains supporting evidence, such as facts, statistics, examples, quotations, and anecdotes that back up and elaborate the reason), and a concluding paragraph that restates the position and has a call to action. Students will use a writer's checklist to self/peer evaluate. Students will make revisions in sentence variety and complexity, use of transitional words, and use of loaded words. Students will produce a final copy, word-processed if possible. Using electronic tools or a proofreading checklist, students will proofread their papers for errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. Students will produce a polished final draft for scoring with an analytical rubric or LEAP 21 Writing Rubric.

As many of the techniques used in writing a persuasive essay also apply in delivering a persuasive speech, students may develop their essays as speeches. Students will discuss methods of persuasion used in giving a speech (e.g., dramatic pause, hand gestures, volume, and tone of voice). Students will rework their essays as speeches and present them to the class. The class will be asked to summarize the speaker's purpose and point of view.

Students will continue to use the persuasive mode to develop grade-appropriate compositions (e.g., advice columns, editorials, letters of recommendation, campaign

speeches, proposals, commercials). Students will note that in some instances humorous persuasion may be more effective than serious persuasion.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of vocabulary terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products. Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students will complete journal entries and graphic organizers as assigned. Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the humorous fiction study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the humorous writing unit. Students will be assessed by a rubric created for the format chosen.
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative and evaluative questions in a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
- Students' writing products may be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist* (<http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf>) or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
- Students' writing products will be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writing Rubric* for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students may be assessed via teacher observations, teacher-created skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.
- Students' oral performances will be assessed with a speech rubric that includes enunciation, diction, pronunciation, etc. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activities 5- 8, 11: Students will write journal responses as assigned. A journal rubric should include these criteria:
 - Includes several supporting details from the text
 - Makes personal connections and/or connections to other texts
 - Follows directions carefully
 - Makes inferences using story details
- Activity 9: Students will write a humorous anecdote. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that should include the following:
 - Introduction
 - The introduction has an effective hook (i.e., attention grabber).
 - The essay contains sufficient background information, including setting and revelation of character.
 - Body (Essay as a whole)
 - The essay focuses on one humorous incident in the author’s life.
 - The events of the story are arranged in chronological order.
 - The essay uses at least one technique to achieve humor.
 - The essay uses dialogue to advance the plot and to reveal character.
 - The essay reveals the author’s thoughts and feelings throughout.
 - Transitions of time, place, and events are used effectively to connect ideas.
 - Conclusion
 - The conclusion reveals the overall meaning of the event, the lesson learned, or the insight gained from the experience for the author.
 - The essay is relatively free of mistakes in spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics.
- Activity 12: In response to political/editorial cartoons, students will complete an analysis chart based on the following:
 - Visual
 - List the objects you see in the cartoon.
 - Which of the objects on your list are symbols?
 - What do you think each symbol means?
 - Words (Not all cartoons have words.)
 - Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.
 - Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.
 - Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

- Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?
- Response
 - Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.
 - Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.
 - Explain the message of the cartoon.
 - Explain how effective you think the author/illustrator was in achieving his/her purpose.
 - What special interest groups agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?
- Activity 13: Students will write a well-organized persuasive essay/speech/letter/editorial that effectively argues for or against something. This may be written in a serious or humorous tone. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that includes:
 - adherence to all the rules for the format chosen
 - an introduction that begins with an attention grabber and contains a clear and concise statement of opinion
 - a body that fully provides support (clearly and sensibly organized) for the opinion statement by means of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, reasons, expert opinions) and logic
 - a conclusion that effectively ends the writing, with a call to action or a final thought
 - arguments that are tailored to a particular audience
 - a committed, reasonable tone
 - word choice that is powerfully expressive and appropriate for the audience
 - transitional words effectively used to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - varied sentence structure and patterns
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, and legibility

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 4: Mystery—Elementary, My Dear Watson

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

The unit focuses on reading, writing, and responding to the mystery genre. Mysteries require students to sort out plots, employ logistics, make predictions, and analyze characters. Comparing and contrasting specific mystery elements allow students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and encourages student expression and response to the text. As mysteries follow the narrative structure, fiction elements are defined and analyzed. Creating and presenting an original mystery provides an opportunity for student application of a writing process. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Mystery is a subgenre of realistic fiction. Mystery relies on suspense and complications to engage the reader. A well-written mystery provides order by tying up loose ends, explaining everything, and punishing evil. Students will recognize that suspense is the key to good mystery writing. Students will examine conflicts and the impact of major characters and minor characters, which are driven by conflicts, which, in turn, drive the mystery. Students will use the defining characteristics/elements to develop narrative compositions.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the defining characteristics/elements of the mystery genre?
2. Can students read, comprehend, and solve mysteries?
3. Can students analyze a literary narrative, particularly for plot and character?
4. Can students relate mystery to personal experience?
5. Can students develop narrative compositions following standard English structure and usage?
6. Can students use effective listening and speaking behaviors/skills when presenting original stories?

Unit 4 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02a.	Interpret story elements, including stated and implied themes (ELA-1-M2)
02b.	Interpret story elements, including development of character types (ELA-1-M2)
02c.	Interpret story elements, including effectiveness of plot sequence and/or subplots (ELA-1-M2)
02d.	Interpret story elements, including the relationship of conflicts and multiple conflicts (e.g., man vs. man, nature, society, self) to plot (ELA-1-M2)
02e.	Interpret story elements, including difference in third-person limited and omniscient points of view (ELA-1-M2)
03a.	Interpret literary devices, including allusions (ELA-1-M2)
03b.	Interpret literary devices, including understatement (meiosis) (ELA-1-M2)
03c.	Interpret literary devices, including how word choice and images appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone (ELA-1-M2)
03d.	Interpret literary devices, including the use of foreshadowing and flashback to direct plot development (ELA-1-M2)
04b.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including consumer materials (ELA-1-M3)
04c.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including public documents (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
08a.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including fiction (e.g., mystery, novel) (ELA-6-M3)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09f.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09g.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
11.	Use technical information and other available resources (e.g., Web sites, interviews) to solve problems (ELA-7-M2)
12.	Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose (ELA-7-M3)
14a.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including identifying cause-effect relationships (ELA-7-M4)
14b.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
14d.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including generating a theory or hypothesis, (ELA-7-M4)
14f.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including distinguishing facts from opinions and probability (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
17d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (ELA-2-M2)
17e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
20a.	Use the various modes to write compositions, including short stories developed with literary devices (ELA-2-M4)
21.	Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including understatements and allusions (ELA-2-M5)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds, (ELA-3-M3)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M4)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M4)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
28.	Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)
29.	Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g., read, question, write a response, form groups) from detailed oral instructions (ELA-4-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
32.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
33.	Organize oral presentations with a thesis, an introduction, a body/middle developed with relevant details, and a conclusion (ELA-4-M3)
38a.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including explaining the effectiveness and dynamics of group process (ELA-4-M6)
38b.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)
38c.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)
39a.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices) (ELA-5-M1)
39b.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic storage devices (e.g., CD-ROMS, diskettes, software, drives) (ELA-5-M1)
39c.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)
39d.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic information (e.g., Web resources including online sources and remote sites) (ELA-5-M1)
40a.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias) (ELA-5-M2)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)
40c.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)
43a.	Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including visual representations of data/information (ELA-5-M3)

Sample Activities

The notations **[R]** for Reading and **[E]** for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. ***Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.***

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 05, 08a, 10, 14b, 14c, 16) [R]

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, reading response notebook or handouts, SSR Log BLM, Book Talk Checklist BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students and teachers are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the SSR Log BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection of the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a learning log. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Students may respond through quarterly book talks. A book talk is a short, informal oral presentation given after completing one of the SSR books. It is neither a book report nor a summary; its purpose is for students to recommend good books to classmates. Students will state personal opinions and support those opinions as they discuss the book (See Book Talk Checklist BLM). See <http://www.nancykeane.com> for more information on using book talks in the classroom.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g. writing prompts, response logs, journals, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>.

Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 26, 27) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include the *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart, *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Frayer model, concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

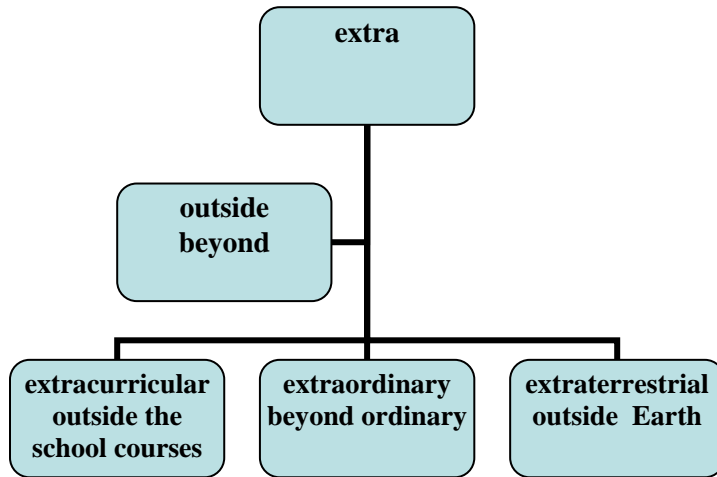
Students may create a three-column chart to record denotations and connotations encountered while reading, emphasizing shades of meaning and/or slanted words or phrases.

Sample Three-column Chart for Denotative and Connotative Word Meaning

Word/Phrase	Denotation (dictionary meaning)	Connotation (feeling or attitude linked with a word)
cool	It is a cool day. moderately cold	Joe is cool person. Joe is an excellent person. (positive)
conventional	traditional	old-fashioned (negative)

Students may create a vocabulary tree *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words as they can containing the root/prefix and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: PREFIXES, ROOTS, & SUFFIXES



Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an on-line student dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. *Graphic organizers* are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19, [E])

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template (download information in activity), whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this fiction unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order, selecting an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). In teaching students writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at: http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm.

Models of student writing can be accessed at <http://thewritesource.com/>.

The teacher should also review the traits for effective writing. The following Internet sites discuss the traits and definitions of effective writing:

<http://www.north-scott.k12.ia.us/writetraits/writetraits.html#top>

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/pdfDocs/sixtraitssummary.pdf>.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide the students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors). Target skills should be identified (e.g., varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). The students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with the mechanics. Students should continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols, recording the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart (Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM).

Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook. Fun lessons for grammar instruction may be found at

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson334.shtml and http://www.internet4classrooms.com/lang_mid.htm.

Activity 5: Mystery Words (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 26, 27, 39c, 39d, 40a) [R]

Materials List: mystery examples, overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), computer with Internet access

Following a teacher-facilitated introduction to the mystery genre (i.e., fiction in which clues are used to solve a puzzling event) and hearing a short mystery (e.g., *Two Minute Mysteries*) read aloud, the students will discuss the mystery genre and its defining characteristics (e.g., clues, important details, and suspense). In *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) the students will list examples of mysteries they have read or seen recently. The class will discuss the mystery examples given by students. In journals, students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) words that they think relate to the mystery genre. The class will discuss their journaling; the teacher will record responses via overhead transparency, chart paper, chalkboard or computer/projector.

Students will use a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) *chart* or *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., graphic organizer listing word, part or speech, roots and word parts, meaning, synonyms, antonyms, sentence, illustration) to define vocabulary specific to the mystery genre. To use the chart appropriately, students should return to it often to monitor their evolving understanding of key vocabulary. Ideally, all checks and minuses should become pluses over time. Students will also develop vocabulary through the use of the connotative and denotative meanings of words applicable to the mystery genre. Students will use a variety of resources to spell words correctly. Vocabulary could include *alibi, clue, crime, deduction, detective, flashback, forensics, foreshadowing, hunch, investigation, motive, mystery, plot, red herring, setting, sleuth, suspect, suspense, victim, and witness*.

Sample Mystery Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart:

Word	+	√	--	Example	Definition
alibi					
clue					
crime					
deduction					
detective					
flashback					
forensics					
foreshadowing					
hunch					

Students may access these websites:

<http://www.mysterynet.com/learn/lessonplans/vocab.worksheet.html>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/J002344/vocabulary.html>

<http://schooldiscovery.com/quizzes11/cmatzat/mystery.html> for additional vocabulary practice.

Mystery words will be added to a word wall as a reference throughout the unit. Students will continue to use the *vocabulary self-awareness* chart or *vocabulary cards* to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the mystery unit. Students will incorporate mystery words into writing products.

If time permits, as reinforcement after defining words students may create word searches, crossword puzzles (e.g., <http://www.puzzlemaker.com>; *Worksheet Magic*[®] software) or draw cartoons illustrating the words to share with classmates.

Activity 6: Mystery-Specific Idiomatic Expressions/Figurative Language (GLEs: 03c, 39c, 40a) [R]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), art supplies

Knowing an idiom's origins will help readers figure out the meanings. Students will review the meaning of idioms (i.e., a phrase or an expression that cannot be understood from the meaning of its individual words). Students *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) other idioms they have heard or used and discuss how these word choices and images add to the writer's meaning. As students discuss, the teacher will record on an overhead transparency, chart paper, chalkboard or computer/projector using *Inspiration* software. Students will be shown a sketch of a literal representation of an idiom. For example, the idiom *spilling the beans* can be drawn as a stick figure turning a can of beans upside down. The students will create their own drawings of idioms to share with the class or display.

In small groups, students will generate, through a library or Internet search, a list of expressions used in the mystery genre (e.g., *sly as a fox*; *barking up the wrong tree*) and research the origins. Students may also consult references sources (e.g., *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms*, *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists*, <http://readwritethink.org/materials/idioms/>). Students will add idioms encountered in mystery selections to a personal vocabulary list (e.g., notebook or journal).

Activity 7: Elements of the Mystery Genre (GLEs: 02b, 02c, 08a, 09f, 09g, 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d, 14f) [R]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, Detective Map/Chart BLMs, picture books

To introduce the mystery genre, the teacher may create an *opinionnaire or anticipation guide strategy* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). *Opinionnaires* promote deep and meaningful understandings by activating and building relevant prior knowledge and building interest in and motivation to read more. This strategy also promotes self-examination, values students' points of view, and provides a vehicle for influencing others with their ideas. *Opinionnaires/anticipation guides* are developed by generating statements about a topic that force students to take positions and defend them. The emphasis is on students' points of view and not the "correctness" of their opinions.

Opinionnaires/anticipation guides are usually written as a series of statements to which students can agree or disagree. They can focus on the prior knowledge that a student brings to the text. They help set a purpose for reading. The teacher may create an anticipation guide for assigned selections.

Sample *Anticipation Guide* for the Mystery genre:

Directions: After each statement, write SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree). Then, in the space provided, briefly explain the reasons for your opinions.

1. Good guys always win in the end. _____

Your reasons:

2. A mystery always involves a murder. _____

Your reasons:

3. A good detective is usually a good judge of character. _____

Your reasons:

4. A guilty conscience leads to a confession. _____

Your reasons:

5. Good mystery writers add distractions to confuse the reader. _____

Your reasons:

While listening to a short mystery read aloud (e.g., *Two Minute Mysteries*; <http://kids.mysterynet.com>), students will use a stop and write strategy to make

predictions about the mystery. Through class discussion, students should conclude that although each mystery is unique, the stories have common elements – clues, important details, and suspense – which differentiate them from other genres. Whodunit? How? Why? are universal questions in mystery stories; thus the mystery genre is excellent for teaching critical thinking skills (e.g., sequencing, identifying cause and effect, distinguishing fact and opinion, making inferences, drawing logical conclusions). Students will apply these skills as they read and solve mysteries.

To introduce how plot development is crucial in mysteries, the teacher will facilitate a review of story elements (e.g., character, setting, plot). Using a plot diagram, the teacher will ask the students to name the elements that make up a short story plot (e.g., introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, or resolution). The teacher will record the responses on the proper spot on the diagram. The teacher will lead a discussion on how the plot is the framework of a short story, then introduce and explain the plot elements (e.g., conflict, complications, climax, suspense, and resolution). To briefly review and illustrate these elements, the teacher may read aloud a fairy tale (e.g. *Three Little Pigs*; *Little Red Riding Hood*), stopping to discuss and give examples of each plot element from the text. Students will discuss how good plot development in mysteries keeps readers reading by making them curious about what will happen next.

Using a model of mystery web *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (characters, setting, clues, distractions, plot, conclusion), students in small groups will read and respond to mystery selections. For clarity, students may use a detective map or chart identifying the elements (e.g., sleuth, witnesses, suspects, alibis, sequence of events, clues, red herring, solution) or the Solving Mysteries Group Worksheet at <http://mysterynet.com> to keep track as they read a selection. Students will continue to read (aloud or silently) short mysteries and complete *graphic organizers* to share with the class. Several versions of graphic organizers that may be used are available as BLMs. Students will respond to literal, interpretive, and evaluative questions from the selections. If computers are available, students may also complete a web quest http://library.thinkquest.org/5109/you_are_the_detective.html.

Activity 8: Reading and Comparing Mystery Writers (GLEs: 03a, 03b, 03c, 03d, 08a, 09d, 09e, 09g, 11, 12, 40a, 40b, 40c, 43a) [R]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, 5”x8” index cards, computer with Internet access (if available)

The teacher will facilitate a discussion of famous mystery writers (e.g., Edgar Allan Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Joan Lowery Nixon, Alfred Hitchcock, Agatha Christie, Avi). Students will read excerpts from selected classic and contemporary mysteries, paying attention to the authors’ differing styles. Students will compare/contrast style and characteristics (word choice, sentence length, arrangement and complexity, use of figurative language, imagery, allusions, flashback/foreshadowing, understatement, symbolism) that authors use to build suspense. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of

the author’s purpose. Students will note these differences and list in journal/notebook or compare two authors using a Venn diagram.

Students may also use the three-column *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to compare two authors.

Sample three- column *graphic organizer* for notetaking for Mystery Writers

Style/characteristics: Does the writer use this technique? If so, give an example.	Author:	Author:
vivid word choice		
figurative language		
allusions		
flashback		
foreshadowing		
symbolism		
sentence length		

Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) how detective stories and horror stories are similar, yet different. The teacher will ask probing questions to guide students: To what emotion does a horror story appeal? Which is more scary, a horror or detective story? Students’ responses should lead to the difference as being “motive” and fear versus curiosity. Horror stories deal with mood and atmosphere rather than with characters and plot.

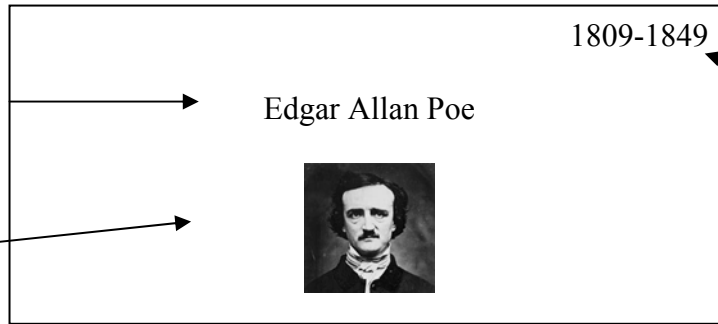
Students may research (via library resources or Internet) authors’ biographies and create simple biographical 5”x8” index cards using a modified vocabulary card (e.g., author, bio summary, books written, photo/drawing).

Sample: *Vocabulary Card* used as a BioCard

front of card

Author's Name

Photo or drawing



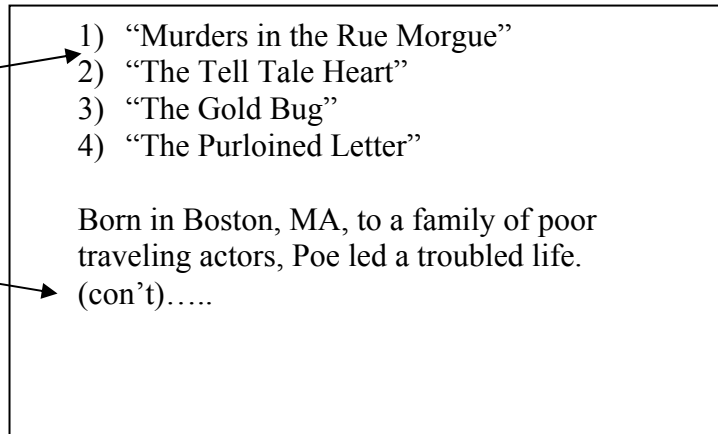
1809-1849

Life Span

back of card

Books/stories written

Bio Summary



- 1) "Murders in the Rue Morgue"
- 2) "The Tell Tale Heart"
- 3) "The Gold Bug"
- 4) "The Purloined Letter"

Born in Boston, MA, to a family of poor traveling actors, Poe led a troubled life.
(con't).....

Students may also create author trading cards. Students can use the Education World website, http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/techtorial/techtorial054.pdf, to access a techtorial "How to Make Trading Cards with Word" that can be adapted for author cards. Students' work will be displayed/shared with class.

In groups, students may create a short skit based on a mystery writer's life, act it out for the class, and have students guess which mystery writer is portrayed

After researching authors, students will write (in journals) about any mysteries they would like to read or have read or seen. In a whole-class setting, students will generate and display on chart paper a "favorite mysteries" list.

Activity 9: Mystery Webbing (GLEs: 30, 38a, 38c, 39a, 39b, 39c, 39d) [R]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available)

As an initiating activity, students may practice active listening strategies (reading aloud/playing a tape) by listening to an abridged version of the first mystery written, Edgar Allan Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" (e.g., *Classics Illustrated*; graphic

novels). This mystery is also available online for the teacher to read aloud as a *DR-TA* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to walk students through a process that will help students comprehend text, particularly mystery text, as students should be alert to the story's plot complications. Using *DR-TA*, the teacher will ask students what they already know about Edgar Allan Poe, the author. The teacher will discuss the title "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and cover of the graphic novel, if used. The teacher will elicit information regarding predictions about the story. Students' answers will be recorded on chart paper or board. Also for this short story, students should write statements of overall understanding in their *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) as the teacher reads. The teacher will then read aloud a section of the story, stopping at the point where the murders are discovered and asking students to make predictions about what happened (suspect? motive?) and to cite evidence (clues) for their predictions. The teacher will stop and write the events/clues discussed by the narrator in the story on chart paper or the board. The teacher will continue to read, stopping to have students discuss their predictions and cite evidence for a change in their predictions. The teacher will repeat this cycle several times as students consider the text and note when or if new clues are introduced. The teacher will ask key questions: What have you learned so far from the text? Can you support your summary with evidence from the text? What do you expect to read next? After the reading is completed, the teacher will use student predictions as a discussion tool. The teacher will ask students to reflect on their original predictions and track changes in their thinking and understanding as they confirmed or revised their predictions. The teacher will elicit responses and discuss whether the story ended as they had predicted. The teacher should emphasize to students that they should use this same process when they read on their own.

Students may complete a detective map, story web, police report, or other *graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) as a plot summary. As another beginning activity, students may view "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and respond via the suggested resource guide, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/hound/>.

Working in cooperative groups, students will read, analyze, and arrange mystery elements to determine how mysteries are created. Students may use the Internet to access bookmarked (e.g., grade appropriate) mystery Web sites and mystery magazines suitable for school use (e.g., <http://kids.mysterynet.com/>; <http://kidsloveamystery.com/>), and then select a short mystery for reading and responding. Students may also use print versions of mysteries (e.g., *Five Minute Mysteries*; *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*).

Students will then use a story-web worksheet as a response guide and compare/contrast the main characters from two different short mysteries by writing character sketches and creating illustrations of the characters. Finally, the students will summarize a mystery by creating a suspense storyboard that depicts the main events of the story. Students will share findings with the class by creating a mystery corner.

Activity 10: Reading and Responding to Mystery Novels (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 02a, 02b, 02c, 02d, 02e, 08a, 09d, 09e, 09f, 09g, 14a, 14b, 14c, 14f, 38a, 38b, 38c) [R]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, index cards, story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available)

The teacher will select several excerpts from a variety of mysteries stories (e.g., *Five Minute Mysteries*; *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*) and assign to groups of students. Students will use the *reciprocal teaching* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) strategy while working in their groups. *Reciprocal teaching* focuses on the four main comprehension processes of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting, something good readers do automatically while struggling readers may not even understand these processes are required. It also makes the students responsible for creating the meaning of a story, rather than relying on a teacher's summarization. While the steps of this strategy should be taught initially all at once, students need many exposures to all processes, so teachers must return to this strategy over and over, modeling steps repeatedly as needed and using a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to help student see their roles. Students should practice all four roles within the strategy.

The *reciprocal teaching* steps are:

- Students are placed in groups of four.
- Each member of the group is given a note card, identifying each person's unique role for the current assignment.
 - summarizer
 - questioner
 - clarifier
 - predictor
- Students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection, using note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the upcoming discussion.
- At the teacher-selected stopping point, the *Summarizer* will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
- The *Questioner* will then pose questions about the selection:
 - unclear parts
 - puzzling information
 - connections to previously learned concepts
 - motivations of actors or characters
 - other?
- The *Clarifier* addresses confusing parts and attempts to answer the questions that were just posed.
- The *Predictor* offers guesses about what the author will tell the group next or what the next events in the story will be.

- The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.

The group will meet and share the mystery stories they have read individually or as a group, focusing on the mystery elements of each selection and continuing to employ the *reciprocal teaching strategy*.

If time permits, the teacher may use an extended literature circle strategy using *reciprocal teaching* to teach this mystery unit. Students in literature circles (e.g., Harvey Daniels' *Literature Circles*, <http://www.literaturecircles.com>) will select a mystery novel to read from a class list. As literature circles are student-led with the teacher as a facilitator, students will participate in group discussion with agreed upon rules and assume a variety of roles (i.e., connector, questioner, vocabulary enricher, illustrator, literary luminary) in interpreting story elements (theme, characterization, plot relationships, point of view) and in developing vocabulary as they read. While reading the novel, students will create a casebook (e.g., *graphic organizer* to report and solve the mystery) or complete a police report concerning the crime in their reading-response journals. As students analyze the mysteries, they will use various reasoning skills including raising questions, cause/effect, inductive/deductive thinking, and fact/opinion. As they finish each chapter, students individually will write a summary in their reading-response journals and predict what they think will happen next. Then the group will discuss reasons or clues for their predictions, using the text for support. Students will complete a mystery story map and respond to literal, interpretive, and evaluative text questions. Upon completion of the novel, students individually will use the writing process to produce a rough draft of a book review. They will self/peer edit, revise, and publish a final copy. Reviews may be displayed on class board.

Activity 11: Creating a Mystery (GLEs: 02c, 14c, 18b, 19, 20a, 21) [E]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available), Characteristics of a Good Mystery BLM, Creating and Writing a Mystery BLM, Mystery Planning Sheet BLM

Observation and deduction are essential to creating a mystery. The teacher will demonstrate this skill by having a colleague enter the classroom. After talking with the colleague, the teacher will turn away, and the colleague will take something off the teacher's desk (Prepare ahead of time). After a few minutes, the class will be asked where the missing item is. When students respond that the visitor took it, they will then write a physical description of the visitor. Students will share their written descriptions with the class and discuss and note the variations in their observations.

Students will review with the teacher the elements that make a mystery successful (i.e., well-described characters, a strong setting, suspense, a fast-paced plot, convincing

dialogue, and clever clues). The teacher will present a mini-lesson on how descriptive details aid in writing mysteries by reading aloud from selected passages that illustrate this reinforcement of description. Students will also discuss how good mysteries often include understatements and allusions to challenge the reader's thinking. To begin creating a mystery, students will construct, in journals, a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) with the following headings: characters, settings, crimes, events, clues, possible distractions, and solution, or they may use the Mystery BLMs or a *Mystery Planning Guide*, http://pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/hound/tg_log.pdf. Mystery writing lessons may be accessed at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mystery/index.htm> or http://alex.state.al.us/lesson_view.php?id=7047.

Students will work with a partner to prewrite by *brainstorming* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) ideas for each heading to create the mystery elements needed for story writing and use the news story format (i.e., who, what, where, when, why, how) as a springboard to help generate ideas. If students are experiencing difficulty in generating ideas, the teacher may give them a listing of words and phrases which suggest ideas for a mystery story.

Activity 12: Writing a Mystery (GLEs: [17a](#), [17b](#), [17c](#), [17d](#), [17e](#), [18c](#), [18d](#), [18e](#), [18f](#), [18g](#), [20a](#), [23](#), [24a](#), [24b](#), [25b](#), [26](#), [27](#)) [E]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available), Peer Editing Checklist BLM

Students will prewrite by using the *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., chart) made when *brainstorming* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) and/or other prewriting activities to begin a first draft of a mystery that uses a hook/lead that engages the reader's interest, uses dialogue to advance the plot and reveal characters, has a problem/crime to be solved, shows particular character traits of the suspects, creates a mysterious mood and setting, has complications and two or more clues to build suspense. Students will self/peer edit with a partner using a checklist focusing on elements of mystery, use of dialogue, word choice, vocabulary that creates images and uses stylistic techniques, and voice. See the Peer Editing Checklist BLM. After conferencing with the teacher to receive feedback, students will use the Writer's Checklist to evaluate and revise the drafts for composing (e.g., ideas and organization) and audience awareness/style (e.g., voice, tone, word choice, variety of sentence structure). Students' revisions should include varied sentence structure and patterns, correct use of adjectives, and standard capitalization and punctuation. Students will proofread for fluency, usage, mechanics and spelling, and the use of print or electronic resources. Using available technology, students will produce a final copy. Students will share their work with the class.

Activity 13: Sharing Mysteries (GLEs: 28, 29, 30, 32, 33) [E]

Materials List: overhead projector and transparencies, chart paper, computer with projector, student writing notebooks (journals), mystery excerpts, story maps/plot charts, graphic organizers, computer with Internet access (if available)

Students will share their original mystery stories orally with the class by either reading aloud or creating a Reader's Theater script and presenting it to the class. Students will receive feedback through a rubric assessing oral performance based on enunciation, diction, pronunciation, and syntax. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Students' mysteries may be collected and produced as a class booklet. Students can further apply their learning by adapting a mystery story to a radio drama and presenting it to an audience. Students may develop a class rubric for the radio drama.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students may be provided with a checklist of mystery elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products. Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students will complete journal entries and graphic organizers as assigned. Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via a teacher-created checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students will read a mystery scenario and complete a brief constructed response/detective map identifying story elements/literary devices as an assessment.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the mystery study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the mystery

unit. Students will be assessed by a teacher-created rubric created for the format chosen.

- Students will give oral presentations, reviewing the mystery read in literature circles. Students will be assessed via an oral presentation rubric. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions in a teacher-created, selected/constructed response format.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
- Students' writing products may be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist* <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf> or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
- Students' writing products will be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writing Rubric* for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students' mysteries will be assessed via a teacher-created rubric that incorporates the elements and language of mystery. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
- Students may be assessed via teacher observations, skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 9: Mystery Webbing as a Group**
Students will work in cooperative groups to read, analyze, and arrange how mysteries are created. Performance will be assessed via a cooperative group rubric that indicates students:
 - actively engaged and focused on the activity
 - listened attentively to fellow group members
 - actively participated in group discussions
 - offered constructive criticism of ideas, decisions, and solutions presented
 - shared responsibility for the work
 - were courteous to fellow group members
 - completed tasks on time according to directions and specifications
- **Activity 10: Literature Circles Book Review**
Students will write a book review of the mystery novel read. Students' work will be displayed on a class board. A good book review should include the following dimensions:
 - Composing (ideas and organization)
 - introduction that hooks the reader

- identifies title and author
 - gives brief and accurate plot presentation
 - does not give away the ending
 - concludes with a recommendation and summary of reasons
 - Style/Audience Awareness (selection of vocabulary, sentence variety, tone and voice)
 - has carefully crafted, precise, exact, vivid word choice
 - has sentence variety
 - has tone that fits the intended audience and purpose
 - has lively and engaging voice
 - Conventions (fluency, usage, mechanics, spelling)
 - demonstrates control of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage
 - is legible
- Activity 12: Writing a Mystery-Peer Checklist

Students will write an original story that incorporates the elements of good mystery writing. Students will apply a writing process to produce a first draft that will be peer edited using the following checklist:

Peer Editing: Use this checklist as you read your partner’s story.

+ evident - not evident N needs improvement

 - The story has a clear beginning, middle, and end.
 - The beginning introduces a problem or crime to be solved.
 - The events are told in the right order.
 - The story builds to a climax that keeps readers interested.
 - The ending ties the pieces together and solves the mystery.
 - The solution is believable.
 - The setting adds to the feeling of the mystery.
 - The mystery has two or more clues to build suspense.
 - The characters are appropriate and seem real.
 - The characters are well-developed through dialogue, actions, and thoughts.
 - The dialogue sounds realistic.
 - The point of view remains the same throughout the story.
 - The story has elaboration with supporting detail.
 - The story uses stylistic techniques (figurative language, imagery).
 - There are no errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or capitalization.
 - Dialogue is punctuated and formatted correctly.
 - Varied sentence structure is used.
 - Activity 12: Writing a Mystery Rubric

Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft of an original mystery. A well-written mystery should include the following dimensions:

 - Composing (ideas and organization)
 - identifies title unity (e.g., no left-field ideas or images)

- a beginning that hooks the reader
- interesting conflict with complications
- a focus on one main incident in the basic plot of fiction with several complications
- a clear setting
- clearly-developed character revealed through descriptive attributes and action
- interesting dialogue that advances plot/reveals character
- a strong high point (climax) makes an impression on the reader
- satisfying ending that solves the problem/crime
- Style/Audience Awareness (e.g., selection of vocabulary, sentence variety, tone, and voice)
 - stylistic techniques (e.g., figurative language, imagery, comparisons, sensory details)
 - carefully crafted, precise text, vivid word choices, especially strong verbs
 - information selected for relevance and impact
 - point of view that remains the same throughout story
 - manipulates audience through suspense and dramatic tension
 - uses a variety of sentence structures
 - tone fits intended audience and purpose
 - voice is engaging
- Conventions (e.g., fluency, usage, mechanics, spelling)
 - has limited number of errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indentation and paragraphing
 - avoids shifts in verb tense
 - uses complete sentences
 - uses parts of speech and word forms correctly
 - is legible
- Activity 13: Oral Reading of Mystery

Students will share mysteries orally with the class. Performance will be assessed via an oral reading rubric that indicates student:

 - reads to the audience, not *at* them.
 - waits to receive audience’s attention.
 - reads slowly and clearly enough to be understood.
 - uses appropriate facial expressions.
 - varies speed and volume appropriately.
 - performs with enthusiasm.
 - performs without evident embarrassment.

Resources

Books

- Cassidy, Janet. *Teaching Genre – Mysteries*. New York: Scholastic, 2001.
- Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles*. York, ME: Stenhouse, 2002.
- Fry, Edward B. *The Reading Teacher’s Book of Lists*. Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993.
- Hoomes, Eleanor W. *Create-A-Sleuth*. Hawthorne, NJ: Educational Impressions, Inc., 1993.
- McCarthy, Tara. *Teaching Genre: Grades 4-8*. New York: Scholastic, 1996.
- Sobol, Donald J. *Two Minute Mysteries*. New York: Scholastic, 1967.
- Steffens, Judith B. *Mystery and Suspense*. Santa Barbara, CA: The Learning Works, Inc., 1983.
- Terban, Marvin. *Dictionary of Idioms*. New York: Scholastic, 1996.
- Weber, Ken. *Five Minute Mysteries*. Philadelphia, PA: Running Press Book Publishers, 1996.

Websites

- <http://www.cis.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1989/4/89.04.06.x.html>
- <http://www.lcet.doe.state.la.us/laintech/newpage210.htm>
- <http://library.thinkquest.org/J002344/vocabulary.html>
- <http://www.literaturecircles.com>
- <http://www.mysterynet.com>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/hound/>
- <http://puzzlemaker.com>
- http://pd.121.org/success/lessons/Lesson2/Lesson2b/MLAb3_L.htm
- <http://radiospirits.com>
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/idioms/>
- <http://schooldiscovery.com/quizzes11/cmatzat/mystery.html>
- <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mysterytguide.htm>

Suggested Mystery Novels for Literature Circles

- Aidler, David. *Cam Jansen* series
- Almond, David. *Skellig*
- Avi. *The Man Who Was Poe; Something Upstairs; Windcatcher; Wolf Rider*
- Christie, Agatha. *Then There Was None; Poirot* series
- Cooney, Caroline. *The Face on the Milk Carton; Fatality; Whatever Happened to Janie?*
- Dixon, Franklin. *The Hardy Boys* series
- Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* series
- Duncan, Lois. *Don’t Look Behind You; Gallow’s Hill; Stranger With My Face; The Third Eye*

- Ferguson, Alane. *Overkill, Poison, Show Me the Evidence*
- Glen, Mel. *Foreign Exchange; The Taking of Room 114; Who Killed Mr. Chippendale*
- Hamilton, Virginia. *The House of Dies Drear*
- Holt, Kimberly Wells. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*
- Konigsberg, E.L. *The Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankenwiler*
- McNamee, Graham. *Acceleration*
- Miller, Martin. *You Be The Jury* series
- Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Jade Green; Bernie Magruder and the Bats in the Belfry*
- Nixon, Joan Lowery. *The Dark and Deadly Pool; The Weekend Was Murder; The Name of The Game Was Murder; The Trap; A Deadly Game of Magic; Nobody Was There; Murdered, My Sweet*
- Raskin, Ellen. *The Westing Game*
- Snider, Zilpha Keatley. *The Egypt Game*
- Stout, Rex. *Too Many Cooks; Black Orchids*
- Vanade Velde, Vivian. *Never Trust a Dead Man*

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 5: Life Is a Poem—Poetry

Time Frame: Approximately five weeks



Unit Description

The unit focuses on reading and responding to classic and contemporary poetry, using a variety of strategies. The characteristics of lyric and narrative poetry are defined, and a study of poetic techniques and devices is included. Writing poetry provides an opportunity for student application of a writing process. Oral interpretations promote expression and fluency. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Poetry is a way of expressing one's innermost feelings. Poetry is meant to be read, heard, and enjoyed. Poets create images through language that stir one's imagination, making one see the world in new and unexpected ways. Students will identify, interpret, and analyze various poetry elements, forms, and devices. Students will develop well-supported responses to poetry and examine the meanings and effects of figurative language, literary elements, and sound devices in poetry. Students will use a writing process to develop original poetry.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students describe the defining characteristics of narrative and lyric poetry?
2. Can students identify and analyze poetry elements, forms, and devices?
3. Can students describe how the poet's and speaker's points of view affect the text?
4. Can students summarize and paraphrase a poem?
5. Can students relate poetry to personal experiences?
6. Can students effectively use a writing process to develop original poetry?
7. Can students fluently read poetry orally?
8. Can students express their responses to poetry in writing?

Unit 5 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02f.	Interpret story elements, including how a theme is developed (ELA-1-M2)
03a.	Interpret literary devices, including allusions (ELA-1-M1)
03c.	Interpret literary devices, including how word choice and images appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone (ELA-1-M2)
03e.	Interpret literary devices, including the effects of hyperbole and symbolism (ELA-1-M2)
04a.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including epics (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
06.	Analyze universal themes found in a variety of world and multicultural texts in oral and written responses (ELA-6-M1)
07.	Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, character, theme) in multiple genres (ELA-6-M2)
08c.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including poetry (e.g., lyric, narrative) (ELA-6-M3)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09g.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
12.	Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose (ELA-7-M3)
14b	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)
17d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topic that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)
17e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
21.	Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including understatements and allusions (ELA-2-M5)
22c.	Write for a wide variety of purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of grade-appropriate stories, poems, plays, and novels (ELA-2-M6)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds (ELA-3-M3)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M4)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M4)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell-check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
28.	Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)
29.	Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g., read, question, write a response, form groups) from detailed oral instructions (ELA-4-M2)
32.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
38c.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)

Sample Activities

The notations [R] for Reading and [E] for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04a, 05, 08c, 10, 14b, 14c, 16) **[R]**

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, reading response notebook or handouts, SSR Log BLM, Book Talk Checklist BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students and teachers are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the Reading Response Log SSR BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection of the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a learning log. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Students may respond through quarterly book talks. A book talk is a short, informal oral presentation given after completing one of the SSR books. It is neither a book report nor a summary; its purpose is for students to recommend good books to classmates. Students will state personal opinions and support those opinions as they discuss the book. See Book Talk Checklist BLM. See <http://www.nancykeane.com> for more information on using book talks in the classroom.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g. writing prompts, response logs, journals, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>

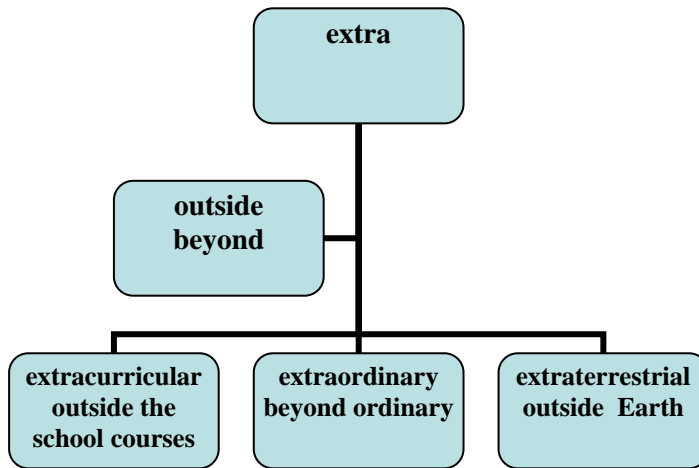
Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 17a, 17b, 17d, 26, 27) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart, *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Frayer model, concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

Students may create a vocabulary tree *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words as they can containing the root/prefix and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: PREFIXES, ROOTS, AND SUFFIXES



Students may create a three-column chart *graphic organizer* where a prefix or root word and its meaning are listed. Students should also include examples of the prefix or root.

Sample Three-column Prefix/Root Chart

Root	Meaning	Example
dict	say, speak	predict, dictionary, dictator, contradict, verdict
graph	write	autograph, biography, paragraph, telegraph, photograph
spec	observe, look	inspect, spectator, specify, spectacle

Students may create a three-column chart *graphic organizer* to record denotations and connotations encountered while reading, emphasizing shades of meaning and/or slanted words or phrases.

Sample Three-column Chart for Denotative and Connotative Word Meaning

Word/Phrase	Denotation (dictionary meaning)	Connotation (feeling or attitude linked with a word)
cool	It is a cool day. moderately cold	Joe is cool person. Joe is an excellent person. (positive)
conventional	traditional	old-fashioned (negative)

Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an on-line student dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. *Graphic organizers* are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Students will use vocabulary lists to focus on word choice and voice as they read, write, and respond to poetry.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19, [E])

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template (download information in activity), whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this nonfiction unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order, an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). In teaching students the writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at: http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors.). Target skills should be identified (e.g. varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). Students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with the mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols, and recording the types of errors they have made on a proofreading chart (See Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM).

Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook. Fun lessons for grammar instruction may be found at

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson334.shtml and http://www.internet4classrooms.com/lang_mid.htm.

The teacher should hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of paying attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and should daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

Activity 5: Narrative or Lyric Poetry? (GLEs: 04a, 07, 08c, 14c, 28, 30) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, chalkboard/chalk, overhead /infocus projector, transparencies/markers, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers, Poetry Terms BLM, Poetry Techniques BLM

As an introduction the teacher may use the Poetry Terms BLM and the Poetry Techniques BLM to review poetry terms and techniques with students. Following this teacher-facilitated discussion on prose/poetry, students will read and compare a short selection and a poem about a similar topic (e.g., textbook description of Paul Revere's ride with Longfellow's poem). Students will create a Venn diagram, chart, or *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) noting the similarities and differences between the two genres. Additional poetry selections may be accessed at <http://www.poets.org/index.php>, http://www.gale.cengage.com/free_resources/poets/, or <http://www.poetry4kids.com/index.php>.

Students will then identify the major characteristics of poetry in general and record them

in a notebook/journal learning log. After a teacher read-aloud of a narrative poem and a lyric poem, students will list the differences between the two. Students' responses will be recorded on the chalkboard, chart paper, or a transparency. Students will refer to the list of characteristics as they read poetry.

Students will read and respond to literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions from teacher-generated, cross-cultural selections of narrative and lyric poetry (e.g., <http://www.poets.org>; <http://www.onlinepoetryclassroom.org>). Students may also create a poster which identifies and shows examples of lyric and narrative poems.

Students will use a *graphic organizer/chart* to list characteristics and classify the poems as lyric (e.g., sonnet, hymn, ode, elegy, haiku, cinquain, etc.) or narrative (e.g., ballad, epic). For narrative poems, students will complete a story diagram. Students may also create a poster which identifies and shows examples of lyric and narrative poems.

To understand poetry elements and devices, students will construct a *word grid* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) with the terms -- Rhythm, Rhyme, Onomatopoeia, Imagery, Repetition/Refrain, Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Alliteration, Hyperbole, etc. -- to record poetry elements and devices used in the poems read in class. Students should be provided with a blank *word grid* that has many columns and rows. A class version of the *word grid* could be put on chart paper or projected from an overhead or computer. As critically related terms and defining information such as figurative language and/or literary devices are encountered in the poetry unit, students should write them into the grid. The teacher can also ask students to suggest key terms and features. Once the grid is complete, the teacher should quiz students by asking questions about the poetry selections as related to figurative language terms and/or literary devices. In this way, students will make a connection between the effort they put into completing and studying the grid, and the positive outcome on word knowledge quizzes. Several poem titles are written along the vertical dimension of the grid, and then students can add figurative language terms and/or literary devices in the spaces at the top of the grid moving left to right. Students may use plus and minus or yes and no for the response. The teacher can demonstrate for students how the grid can be used to study key poetry terminology based on critical, defining characteristics. Students can be asked to provide features of similarity and difference for pairs of terms. Students may also be asked to give examples of the defining characteristics. Students will use the table throughout the unit for a review of the styles of poets and for writing about various poems.

Sample *Word Grid*: Poetry Elements

POEM	rhythm	rhyme	repetition	refrain	simile	metaphor	personification	alliteration	hyperbole
<i>I'm Nobody</i> Dickinson	+	+	-						
<i>Harlem Night Song</i> Hughes	+	-	-						
<i>Old Man Sanchez</i>	+	+	+						

Students will practice fluency by reading aloud the poetry selections in small groups and by performing choral readings as a class.

Activity 6: Figuratively Speaking: Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole, or Idiom? (GLEs: 03c, 03e, 04a, 09d, 09e, 09g, 16) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers

Students will listen to a teacher read aloud (e.g., “The Base Stealer,” “Fame is a Bee,” “Oranges,” Birdfoot’s Grandpa,” “The Courage That My Mother Had,” “O Captain! My Captain!”, “Hold Fast to Dreams,” “Fog”). Students will respond in journals/learning logs, giving their personal interpretations of the poems (e.g., What this poem means to me.... This poem reminds me of.... I like the way the poet uses language such as.... I think the poet chose these words because...). Additional lessons on figurative language may be accessed at <http://42explore.com/figlang.htm>

In small groups, students will identify symbols, similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, or idioms in the narrative and lyric poetry previously read in class. Students will use a four-column chart *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to record the figurative language example and its meaning.

Sample Four-Column Chart for Figurative Language:

Figurative Language	Example from poem	Comparison	Meaning
simile	“I wandered lonely as a cloud”	person- cloud	speaker is isolated and drifting as a single cloud
metaphor	“Hope is the thing with feathers”	hope-bird	speaker makes hope come alive and fly
personification	“Summer grass aches and whispers”	grass-human	speaker gives grass human qualities

Once coverage of content has been completed, *professor know-it-all* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) can be used. The teacher begins by forming groups of three or four students. Students are then given the time to review the figurative language in poetry just covered. The teacher tells students that they will be called on randomly to come to the front of the classroom and provide “expert” answers to questions from their peers about the use of figurative language in poetry. Also the groups are asked to generate 3-5 questions about the poetry they might anticipate being asked and that they can ask other experts. Some questions such as *What is an example of a personification in the poem “Macavity: The Mystery Cat”?*; *What is being compared in the simile: “How public like a frog”?* or *What lines from the poem support the quilt as a symbol “My Mother Pieced Quilts”?* etc. might be asked. The teacher then calls a group to the front of the room and asks them to face the class, standing shoulder to shoulder. The *Professor-Know-it-alls* invite questions from the other groups and respond to their peers’ questions. Typically, students are asked to huddle after receiving a question, discuss briefly how to answer it, and then have the *Professor-Know-it-all* spokesperson give the answer. The other students should hold the know-it-alls accountable for their answers and ask follow-up or clarifying questions if necessary.

As a group, students may select and visually represent examples of literary devices such as symbols, similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, or idioms from the poems. Students’ work will be displayed on a poster for the class board. Students will continue to generate a list of figurative language they encounter in their poetry study. Students may find other examples of similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, or idioms in magazines, newspapers, or stories, or they may write their own examples and post these on the class board.

Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) comparisons they can use to describe parts of the body or physical characteristics by focusing on color, shape, texture (e.g., My hair feels like silk, My hair is like streaks of sunlight). Students will share their similes and metaphors with the class.

Students will practice writing personification examples by imagining that they are an object in the classroom (e.g., book, pencil, sharpener, desk, computer). Students,

individually or in small groups, will select an object of their choice and complete a *RAFT* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) writing assignment. This form of writing gives students the freedom to project themselves into unique roles, and it will help them to understand the concept of personification. *RAFT* writing is the kind of writing that when crafted appropriately should be creative *and* informative. Students will then write a logically organized *RAFT* using first person point of view and sensory images focusing on what they see, hear, smell, or feel from the object's viewpoint. Students may work in pairs to complete the *RAFT*. Once *RAFT*s are completed, students can share them with a partner or with the class.

R – Role (role of the writer—book)

A – Audience (to whom or what the *RAFT* is being written— student)

F – Form (the form the writing will take, as in letter, song, etc.—letter)

T – Topic (the subject focus of the writing—leaving the book in the locker daily)

Sample *RAFT*

Dear Student,

I know I am only a literature book, but why don't you give me a chance? Take me home with you. Open my pages, peruse my table of contents, check out my index, and get lost in my glossary. Through reading my pages, you can travel to unfamiliar places, experience life-enriching poetry, compare and contrast your world with long-ago worlds. I can help you identify and analyze figurative language. I can help you use the writing process to produce a poem. I can help you draw conclusions and make inferences. Those are only a few of the GLEs we can meet if we work together. Please don't ignore me. I hate being left in this dark, smelly locker everyday. I am getting claustrophobic from being confined in this dungeon with odoriferous gym clothing. My spine is breaking from the weight of the other books piled on top of me. I was written to be read. Please take me with you when you leave.

Sincerely,

Your Book

Activity 7: Free Verse or Structured Verse? (GLEs: 03c, 09g, 30, 40b) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on the use of rhyme, students will examine rhyme patterns, noting how rhyme helps to hold a poem together, adds musical quality to a poem and draws attention to important words and images. Students will select a short poem or a teacher approved appropriate song/rap lyric and write out the rhyme scheme. Students will create and/or respond to *Hinky Pinkys* –riddles or puzzles where the answers are two-word phrases that rhyme (e.g., cautious bird - wary canary).

In journals, students will list examples of rhythmic language they enjoy (e.g., appropriate, specific poems, songs, or rap). Students will discuss what they like about the way the

words sound. As a class, students will review and discuss the definition of *rhythm* in a teacher-facilitated lesson.

Students will use a Venn diagram/T-chart/Y-chart to compare and contrast the rhythm characteristics of a free-verse poem with a structured verse (e.g., meter) poem. Students will read and respond to teacher-selected free verse and structured-verse poems. Students will record personal preferences in journals/learning logs.

Students will identify sound devices (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia, refrain, repetition) in poetry read and add examples to the able previously created. Students will create their own alliterative lines by writing and illustrating their own names (e.g., *Anna ate an apple*). The class will share their works and publish a class booklet.

In groups, students will search the Internet for grade-appropriate tongue twisters (alliterative) and perform a recitation for the class. Students may draw an alphabet letter and write a tongue twister based on that letter.

Activity 8: Allusions and Symbolism (GLEs: 03a, 03e, 16, 19) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers

Students sometimes confuse allusions with symbols. Poets often refer to other things when writing. These references called allusions can be a person, a place, or an event from the arts, history, religion, mythology, politics, sports, or science. Allusions can make the meaning of poems much richer. A reader who is not familiar with the allusions used may miss the poem's intended meaning. A symbol is something that has meaning in itself and stands for something beyond itself as well. Symbolism can add depth of meaning or create a mood. Poets may use symbols to express complex ideas in a few words. For many poems, understanding the symbolism leads to comprehending the theme or message of the poem. Differentiating between these literary devices can enhance a student's understanding of poetry.

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on the use of allusions in poetry, students will find examples of allusions used in the poetry they have read and then research their meanings. Students will write a personal response as to how they feel the allusion added meaning to the poem. Students can also find examples in television programs to share with the class. For example, when a character says "way to go, Sherlock," he is referring to the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes.

Students will *brainstorm* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) a list of symbols they encounter every day. Students will choose a familiar symbol and write an expository paragraph that reveals what the symbol means. Students will give reasons or information to justify their conclusions, using textual support about the meaning of the symbol. Students will discuss how symbols add meaning to a writer's work. For example, the

words “setting sun” mean the day is ending; however in poetry these words could mean the end of something. Students will read and respond to a teacher-generated list of poems using symbols (e.g., “The Secret Heart,” “This Is My Rock,” “The Road Not Taken,” “My Mother Pieced Quilts”).

Activity 9: A Poem’s Meaning (GLEs: 03a, 03c, 03e, 06, 08c, 09d, 09g, 38c) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers

Often poems are puzzling. Students should be able to infer what the meaning is by examining the parts of the poem. In small groups, students will analyze a teacher-assigned poem. Students will look for clues to the poem’s meaning in the poet’s word choices and the unusual and important features of the poem (e.g., literary devices [imagery, mood/tone, hyperbole, symbolism], sound devices, word choice, theme, poet’s purpose) and give a personal response. Students will respond to teacher-selected/created literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions about selected poems. Students will use close reading and paraphrasing to find the meaning. Students will create a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to demonstrate understanding. Individually, students will then apply their knowledge to an unfamiliar poem.

Activity 10: Visualizing Poetry (GLEs: 03c, 06, 08c, 32) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers, art supplies

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion introducing how a poet’s word choice and use of imagery enhances a poem, students will listen to a teacher read aloud (e.g., “Daybreak in Alabama”; “Still I Rise”; “Mother to Son”; “Silver”; “Identity”; “Knoxville, Tennessee”; “Casey at the Bat”). Students will draw what they think the poem describes. On a copy of the poem, students will circle the words that helped to evoke images that they drew. Students will discuss how the circled words created images that appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone. Students will discuss how word choice can improve their personal writing.

Using a self-selected poem, students will create a collage that visually represents the feeling, universal theme, or meaning of the poem. Students will give a short oral presentation that explains their collage, focusing on volume and inflection. Students’ work will be displayed on class board.

Activity 11: Poetry: Comparison/Contrast Essay (GLEs: 02f, 06, 07, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 17a, 17c, 17e, 18a, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 19, 22c, 27) [E]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic

organizers

While reading poetry selections, students will notice and discuss the similarities and differences (e.g., LDE website: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1981.pdf>), students will review the basics of a comparison/contrast essay:

- explores similarities and differences between two or more related items
- states a clear purpose for the comparison
- reveals unexpected relationships between these items
- uses specific examples to support its points
- is organized clearly and consistently
- uses transitional words and phrases

In groups, students will select items that are similar enough (candy bars, chips, sneakers, television programs) for comparison, and then write a simple comparison/contrast composition that demonstrates the basics of comparing and contrasting. Students will create a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) or *Inspiration*[®] software (if available) as a prewrite. Students will group-write a paragraph demonstrating the format.

The teacher may assign a topic, or students may select a topic for writing a complex multiparagraph essay that evaluates two things or ideas (e.g., two poems by the same poet, two poems about the same subject, two poems that have the same form) from poetry selections. Students will narrow the focus of the comparison. Students will explore the similarities and differences on the topic and construct a *graphic organizer* (e.g., Venn diagram/T-chart) illustrating this. Using this information, students will write a first draft by writing a focus statement that names the subjects and sums up the similarities and differences. Students will decide on an organizational pattern. In the essay, students will discuss the ways the things or ideas are similar and the ways they are different. Students will write topic sentences that tell what each body paragraph will be about. Students will organize details with a list or outline. Students will begin writing, using a hook/lead, and giving examples and details for support. Students will use transitional words and phrases to make the similarities and differences clear and summarize the comparison in the conclusion. Students will self/peer edit using a writer's checklist. Students will revise using a variety of sentence structures, precise and accurate words, voice, and transitional words. Students will edit for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling, using print or nonprint sources. After writing, revising, and editing, students will produce a clean final copy, using available technology.

Students will receive feedback through the LEAP Writer's Checklist or LEAP 21 Writing Rubric. Students will complete a reflection and place both reflection and final copy in a portfolio. The class may decide to select a composition and give a multimedia presentation illustrating the composition.

Students will continue to write comparison/contrast essays as a response to literary texts, comparing/contrasting figurative language, characters, setting, and theme development.

Activity 12: Poetry: The Total Effect (GLEs: 06, 07, 09d, 09e, 09g, 12, 14c, 16, 22c, 23) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers, art supplies, Poetry Response BLM

Individually, students will select several (at least six) poems from anthologies, electronic sources or the Internet to create a personal reflection booklet. Students will copy/photocopy/print the poems and paste each on a separate sheet of paper. In a paragraph, students will state a reason for selecting each poem and give their interpretations of the poem. Students will note how the poet conveyed his/her meaning through language, sound, and structure and provide support from the text. See Poetry Response BLM. Reflections should include:

- What interests you about the poem?
- Does the poem connect to a personal experience you have had?

Students will apply the steps of a writing process to their analysis. The reflection paragraph should include a clear topic sentence that identifies the poem by title and author and states an overall response to the poem, a body that explores the response with textual support and a conclusion that gives personal insight. Students will add illustrations, pictures, or computer clip art to the page with the poem to extend their responses. Students will compile the pages with poems and paragraph reflections into a booklet that has a cover and a table of contents. Students will evaluate and revise for word choice and clear voice and sentence variety. Students will proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology. Students may choose to publish the booklet as a *PowerPoint*[®] presentation.

Activity 13: Writing Poetry (GLEs: 17a, 17d, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 21) [E]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, story maps/charts, student anthology, graphic organizers, Traditional Poetry Forms BLM, Invented Poetry Forms BLM

After discussing and reading various forms of narrative and lyric poetry (e.g., cinquain, haiku, diamante, ballad, concrete, contrast, definition, biopoem, found poem, list, name, phrase, etc.), students will create original poems based on the format chosen. Samples may be found in the Traditional Poetry Forms BLM and the Invented Poetry Forms BLM. Students may use the website <http://www.rhymezone.com/> for rhyming words. Students may access definitions and samples of poetry types at <http://www.shadowpoetry.com/resources/wip/types.html>; <http://engla.jppss.k12.la.us/Poetry%20page%20files/POETRY%20TERMINOLOGY%20-Traditional%20Poetry%20Forms.pdf>; <http://danadbrown91.googlepages.com/poetry.ppt>; and <http://www.poetryteachers.com/index.html>.

Students will apply a writing process, using self-evaluation and peer evaluation to edit

and revise for word choice, voice, use of figurative language, and imagery. Students will proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will produce a final draft using available technology. Students will share their poems with the class. Students' work may be collated into a class booklet for display.

Students' final drafts will be assessed via a teacher-created rubric that focuses on using precise and vivid word choices, imaginative sensory images, figurative language, sound effects, capitalization, and punctuation that enhance the conveyance of thoughts and images.

Activity 14: Poetry Alive (GLEs: 28, 29, 30, 32) [R]

Materials List: journals, poetry examples, student anthology

Students will select or the teacher may assign a short poem to memorize and recite for the class. Students will develop appropriate actions to accompany the recitation. Students will be provided feedback via an oral presentation rubric focusing on diction, enunciation, syntax, pronunciation, volume, and inflection.

The following websites may provide additional instruction:

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=28

http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/techlp/techlp018.shtml

<http://www.poetryteachers.com/poetclass/performpoetry.htm>

<http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/poetry.html>

<http://home.cogeco.ca/~rayser3/poetry.htm#intro>

http://www.msrogers.com/English2/poetry/30_days_of_poetry.htm#Poetry_Lesson_Chart

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of poetry/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students' completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition will be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format and use of vocabulary in writing products.
- Students will use information learned from poetry readings to complete journal entries and graphic organizers as assigned. Students will collect all

- journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via a checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric is available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
 - Students' writing products may be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist, <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf> or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
 - Students' writing products will be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writing Rubric for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
 - Students' poetry will be assessed via a teacher-created rubric that incorporates the elements and language of poetry. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
 - Students will complete a visual representation of figurative language examples as assigned. Students' work will be assessed using a teacher-created checklist for completion and accuracy.
 - Students will be assessed via teacher observations, skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.
 - Students will be provided feedback via an oral presentation rubric which can be found at the following web sites, or the teacher may create a rubric: http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson28/performrubric.pdf or http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson416/OralRubric.pdf.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 5: Narrative or Lyric Poetry?: Students will complete story diagrams/maps on selected narrative poetry. The story diagram/map will be evaluated for accuracy of content including:
 - characters and character traits
 - setting
 - plot sequence
 - climax
 - theme
 - point of view
- Activity 10: Visualizing Poetry: Students will demonstrate an understanding of a poem by creating a visualization/collage, which will be evaluated for accuracy of content based on the following:
 - Visualization is original and creative.
 - Visualization reflects the mood of the poem.
 - Visualization reflects the main idea of the poem and is thoughtfully executed.
 - Visualization includes all the important details.
 - Visualization may be realistic or abstract.
 - Visualization is attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.

- Activity 11: Poetry: Comparison/Contrast Essay: Students will write a well-organized expository essay that compares and contrasts things, ideas, or literary elements. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that includes:
 - an introduction that begins with an attention grabber and contains a clear thesis statement which reveals an overall and general relationship between the two related topics
 - a body that fully explores the similarities and differences and reveals unexpected relationships through specific examples and details and has a clear and consistent organizational pattern
 - a conclusion that effectively ends the writing without repetition and contains a clincher statement
 - word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - transitional words effectively used to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - varied sentence structure and patterns
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, or legibility

- Activity 12: Poetry: The Total Effect: Students will create a poetry reflection booklet that gives their interpretations of selected poems. The reflection booklet should include:
 - a clear topic sentence that identifies the poem by title and author and states an overall response to the work
 - a body that explores the overall response through expressing thoughts and feelings, by giving reasons, and by supporting points with examples from the work
 - a conclusion that leaves the reader with a question, a quotation, a fresh insight, or another memorable impression
 - word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, or legibility

- Activity 13: Writing Poetry: Students will create original poetry in a format of their choice. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that includes:
 - adherence to all the rules for the particular form chose
 - an expression of thoughts, feelings, and experiences to create an overall mood
 - details that appeal to the reader’s emotions, if appropriate
 - details that appeal to one or more of the five senses
 - examples of figurative language, if appropriate
 - examples of sound devices, if appropriate
 - carefully chosen precise, exact, and vivid word choices
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, or legibility

- Activity 14: Poetry Alive: Students will present a poetry recitation. The performance evaluation should be based on the following:
 - Student’s movements seem fluid and helps the audience visualize.

- Student holds the attention of the audience with use of direct eye contact.
- Student's delivery shows good use of drama and meets apportioned time (neither too quick nor too slow).
- Student displays relaxed, self-confident nature about self, with no mistakes.
- Student uses fluid speech and inflection.

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 6: That’s a Novel Idea—Novel

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, comprehending, interpreting, and analyzing a longer work of fiction through a variety of comprehension strategies and writing modes. Fiction elements of character, setting, plot/subplots, point of view, and theme are identified and analyzed; and a comparison/contrast of narrative elements is included. Writing text-supported responses provides an opportunity for student application of a writing process. Participation in ongoing literature groups allows for the development of social skills. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Due to its length, the novel allows for many characters, settings, and conflicts to be developed. Novels can promote learning about a different culture or historical period. Students will realize that a good novel can become more fascinating and more real than one’s actual surroundings and can also help generations understand the meaning of their times.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students use a variety of strategies to extend vocabulary?
2. Can students identify and explain various types of characters and how their interactions and conflicts affect the plot of the novel?
3. Can students explain how authors pace action and use subplots, parallel episodes, and climax?
4. Can students compare and contrast various points of view (first person, third person, or third-person omniscient) and explain how voice affects literary text?
5. Can students identify the theme of a novel and trace how the author develops the theme?
6. Can students identify and explain universal themes across different works by the same author and in the works of different authors?
7. Can students respond to novels by developing complex compositions, applying the standard rules of usage and sentence structure?

Unit 6 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, such as use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02a.	Interpret story elements, including stated and implied themes (ELA-1-M2)
02b.	Interpret story elements, including development of character types (e.g., flat, round, dynamic, static) (ELA-1-M2)
02c.	Interpret story elements, including effectiveness of plot sequence and/or subplots (ELA-1-M2)
02d.	Interpret story elements, including the relationship of conflicts and multiple conflicts (e.g., man vs. man, nature, society, self) to plot (ELA-1-M2)
02e.	Interpret story elements, including difference in third-person limited and omniscient (ELA-1-M2)
02f.	Interpret story elements, including how a theme is developed (ELA-1-M2)
03c.	Interpret literary devices, including how word choice and images appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone (ELA-1-M2)
03d.	Interpret literary devices, including the use of foreshadowing and flashback to direct plot development (ELA-1-M2)
03e.	Interpret literary devices, including the effects of hyperbole and symbolism (ELA-1-M2)
04a.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including epics (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
06.	Analyze universal themes found in a variety of world and multicultural texts in oral and written responses (ELA-6-M1)
08a.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including fiction (e.g., mystery, novel) (ELA-6-M3)
09a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing to examine and evaluate information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
09f.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09g.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
14a.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including identifying cause-effect relationships (ELA-7-M4)
14b.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
15d.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topic that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
22c.	Write for a wide variety of purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of grade-appropriate stories, poems, plays, and novels (ELA-2-M6)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds (ELA-3-M4)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M4)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M4)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g., read, question, write a response, form groups) from detailed oral instructions (ELA-4-M2)
31.	State oral directions/procedures for tasks (ELA-4-M2)
38b.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)
38c.	Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
39d.	Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic information (e.g., Web resources including online sources and remote sites) (ELA-5-M1)

Sample Activities

The notations [**R**] for Reading and [**E**] for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04a, 05, 08a 10, 14b, 14c, 16) [**R**]

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, reading response notebook or handouts, Reading Response Log for SSR BLM, Literary Forms/Genres BLM, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students and teachers are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students will list genre read according to the Literary Forms/Genres BLM. Students may respond through a reading response learning log to write a short reflection of the reading using the Reading Response Log for SSR BLM and the Reading Response Prompts BLM. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Student response also may be through a variety of other strategies (e.g., writing prompts, response logs, journals, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>.

Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 17a, 17b, 17d, 26, 27) [R]

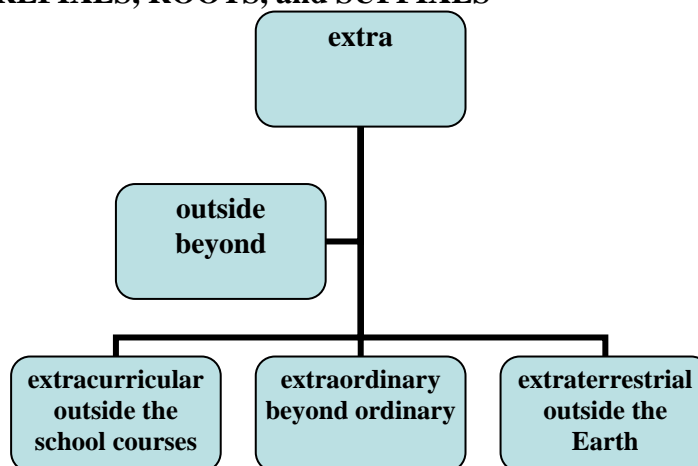
Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses, Literary Forms/Genres BLM, Literary Elements BLM, Literary Devices BLM

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of the connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart, *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Frayer model, concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

The teacher may also use the word wall strategy. A word wall is a set of related words displayed in large letters on a wall or other display area in the classroom. Word walls are a tool to use, not just for display or for the classroom décor. Word walls are designed to promote students' language learning; they provide ongoing support for varied language learners, as well as enhance learning through practical use. Using the word wall as a reference to highlight vocabulary is easily integrated into daily literacy activities. There is no one right way to build or use a word wall. What to build, what key words to add, and when to add them will depend on the instructional needs of the students. For the novel study, a word wall could display the literary forms/genres, elements, and devices used. The Literary Forms/Genres BLM, Literary Elements BLM, and Literary Devices BLM may be used as a reference tool.

Students may create a vocabulary tree *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words as they can containing the root/prefix and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: PREFIXES, ROOTS, and SUFFIXES



Students may create a three-column chart *graphic organizer* wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are listed. Students should also include examples of the prefix or root.

Sample three-column chart Prefix/Root Chart:

Root	Meaning	Example
dict	say, speak	predict, dictionary, dictator, contradict, verdict
graph	write	autograph, biography, paragraph, telegraph, photograph
spec	observe, look	inspect, spectator, specify, spectacle

Students may create a three-column chart *graphic organizer* to record denotations and connotations encountered while reading, emphasizing shades of meaning and/or slanted words or phrases.

Sample three-column Chart for Denotative and Connotative Word Meaning:

Word/Phrase	Denotation (dictionary meaning)	Connotation (feeling or attitude linked with a word)
cool	It is a cool day. moderately cold	Joe is cool person. Joe is an excellent person. (positive)
conventional	traditional	old-fashioned (negative)

Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an on-line student dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. *Graphic organizers* are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Students will use vocabulary lists to focus on word choice and voice as they read, write, and respond to a novel study.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19)[E]

Materials List: writing examples, Writing Piece with Target Skills Template (downloading information found in activity), whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk, learning logs

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this nonfiction unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order, selecting an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). In teaching students the writing craft, the teacher should first show them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A Writing Piece with Target Skills Template can be found at:

http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide the students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors). Target skills should be identified (e.g., varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, and spelling). The students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook.

The teacher should hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of paying attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and should daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

Activity 5: Class Novel (GLEs: 02a, 02b, 02c, 02d, 02e, 02f, 06, 09d, 09f, 09g, 10, 14a) [R]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novel, Literary Elements BLM, Literary Devices BLM

Students will review the elements of fiction—characters, setting, plot, point of view, and theme. Students may use the Literary Elements BLM and Literary Devices BLM for reference. The teacher will select a grade-appropriate novel with a universal theme that appeals to the class's interests. The teacher will develop an *anticipation guide* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) that identifies the major ideas or concepts in the text and determine ways these concepts might support or challenge students' beliefs. The teacher will create

three to six statements that support or challenge these beliefs and ask students to agree or disagree with the statements. Students will complete this *anticipation guide* prior to the reading of the class novel.

Here is a sample anticipation guide for Natalie Babbitt’s *Tuck Everlasting*: Read each statement, and then check whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

Agree	Disagree	
		It would be marvelous to live forever.
		You should never do something that your parents have forbidden.
		Secrets are important to protect at all costs.

Students will read or listen to a novel (e.g., www.recordedbooks.com) as a whole class via directed-reading format. As the novel is read, students will stop at various points as directed by the teacher for class discussion. In journals, students will predict what they think will happen next or quick-write a response to what was read. A quick-write is an opportunity to write for a minute or two about a topic or respond to a question; it is not a retelling of the story. The prompt may also be an open-ended statement for students to complete. Students should share responses orally, explaining what details in the text caused them to make a particular prediction. The students and teacher will continue reading to confirm, eliminate, or revise their predictions. After reading the novel, students will revisit the anticipation guide to identify misconceptions and reaffirm what they have learned. The class will discuss the theme as it was developed in the novel. Students will respond to and interpret literary elements (e.g., character, setting, plot, theme, point of view) as directed by the teacher. Students may access websites for Cyberguides aligned with the selected novel. Novel study may also be done through the use of the study guide technique or Socratic seminar: students identify, ask questions, and discuss important passages with the class and share their reasons for their notes.

Students may respond through *SPAWN* prompts to reflect on their reading. *SPAWN* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) is an acronym that stands for five categories of writing options (*Special Powers, Problem Solving, Alternatives Viewpoints, What If?, and Next*). Using these categories, the teacher can create numerous thought-provoking and meaningful prompts. The teacher does not have to address all five categories at once or address the categories in a specific order.

Sample *SPAWN* prompts

As an example, the following prompts might be developed for a study of S. E. Hinton’s *The Outsiders*.

S - Special Powers

The fire and rescue changed Johnny’s life forever. When Ponyboy writes “I blinked myself—Johnny wasn’t behaving at all like his old self...He wasn’t scared either. That was the only time I can think of when I saw him without that defeated, suspicious look in his eyes. He looked like he was having the time of his life.” If you had the power to change a past event in your life, which event would you change and why?

P - Problem Solving

What does the novel tell us about the importance of judging a person as an individual rather than a member of a group? Why do we judge others by their friends? What does the novel tell us about the effects of stereotyping people?

A - Alternative Viewpoints

Dally tells Ponyboy “You’d better wise up, Pony...you get tough like me and you don’t get hurt. You look out for yourself and nothin’ can touch you.” What would this novel have been like if it were told from Dally’s point of view?

W - What If?

What if Ponyboy had the opportunity to speak with Johnny after reading Johnny’s letter, how

would Ponyboy react to Johnny’s statement that “Their lives are worth more than mine”?

What might Ponyboy have said?

N-Next

Had Johnny survived the fire, how do you think his life might have changed? What might have happened next in the novel? Would there be any change in the other characters?

Also, the teacher may have students write learning log entries to prompts (or ask questions) that connect an aspect of the story to prior knowledge or real-life experiences or related text (e.g., as an initiation/motivational activity, a check-for-understanding activity during reading and discussion, or a summative activity/assessment).

Activity 6: Literature Circles (GLEs: 08a, 10, 14b, 22c, 30, 31, 38b, 38c, 39d) [R]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels

In lieu of a whole-class novel, the teacher may organize Literature Circles as this allows more choice for students. In either case, Activities 7 - 11 should occur as the novel(s) are read since the development of fiction elements is essential in a novel study.

Following a teacher-facilitated mini-lesson on universal themes in literature, students will research via the library or Internet to compile a list of novels with the same universal themes. Students will create a class chart that lists novels by themes. Students will select a theme of interest and be grouped according to this interest.

Literature circles can be formed with each group reading and responding to a different novel. Students may use role sheets (e.g., connector, questioner, vocabulary enricher, illustrator, literary luminary) to facilitate the organization of the group (<http://www.literaturecircles.com>). A literature circle packet with roles and questions is available at

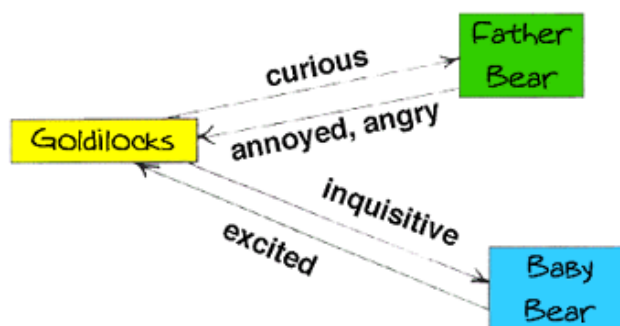
<http://www.dubois.cps.k12.il.us/PDFs/litcirclepacket.pdf>. Students will read at home and prepare for discussion during literature circle time. Students will respond to interpretive questions in writing as directed by the teacher. Upon completion of the novel, the group may present an oral review for the class. Students may be assessed via a teacher-created rubric on class participation and preparation, reading log entries, and reading folders.

Activity 7: Character Analysis (GLEs: 02b, 08a, 16, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels, Characterization BLM, Character Trait Map BLM, Sociogram BLM

Whether the whole-class or literature-circle format is used, students will discuss and describe the characters introduced and create character profile charts to trace the development of characters, noting the type (e.g., flat, round, dynamic, static) and making predictions about what caused the change. Students may use the Characterization BLM or the Character Trait Map BLM to respond to character development. Students will assume the role of a character and write a journal entry or present an autobiographical sketch from that character's viewpoint. Using the Sociogram BLM, students may create a sociogram poster to show the interaction of the characters. A literary sociogram is a graphic organizer that represents the relationships among characters in a literary text. It helps students to think more deeply about the literary texts they read or view. Students will discuss the interactions of the characters, using the sociogram as a visual.

Sample sociogram for *Goldilocks*



2002 Department of Education, Tasmania

Writing Compare/Contrast Essays: Using a writing process and applying the standard rules of usage (including appropriate use of infinitives, participles, gerunds, adjectives, adverbs and sentence structure and patterns), students will develop comparison/contrast compositions on selected characters. Students will self/peer edit, using a writer's checklist, make necessary revisions, and proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology.

Students will select a novel character and respond in journals to the following prompts: *Does this character remind you of someone you know? How would the character react to a real-life situation?* Students will write a paragraph comparing/contrasting the character to a real-life person.

Activity 8: Setting Analysis (GLEs: 03c, 09g, 10, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 17b, 19) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels, Setting BLM

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on how setting is developed (e.g., through an author’s use of word choice and images that appeal to the senses and suggest mood and tone), students will describe the setting at the beginning of the novel and create a chart that shows when and if the setting changes. Students will create visual representations illustrating the setting for class display. Students will write a reflection paragraph (i.e., topic sentence, relevant elaboration, conclusion) noting how the setting influences the characters and then will make predictions about how the plot would change if the setting changed. Students may use the Setting BLM to explain how changing the setting may affect the plot. Students will review how the story’s setting will help establish the mood. The teacher will explain important elements in split-page note taking to sequence main ideas and details when reading biographical works. Using *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), students will analyze the novel’s setting and also note when the setting changes.

Sample *split-page notetaking*:

Novel: <i>The Cay</i> –Theodore Taylor	
<i>When?</i>	during WWII
<i>Where?</i>	islands in the Caribbean Sea
<i>QUOTE</i>	MY THOUGHTS
"Like silent, hungry sharks that swim in the darkness of the sea, the German Submarines arrived in the middle of the night"	This tells me the war is all around and no one is safe—not even the small islands away from Europe. The mood is fearful—war is coming.
<u>Timothy</u> ...this outrageous humbug island	I wonder what he means by humbug—is that a good thing?? I think the island must be beautiful.

Students will identify descriptive quotes about the setting. Students may also respond to the following questions: How does this description make you feel? What do you think of the mood that’s being created? Have you ever found yourself in this situation or setting? Students will describe how the author’s style can elicit an emotional response from the reader. Students will discuss their responses in groups or as a whole class; students will discuss authors’ styles, using support from respective novels read.

Writing a Setting Description: Students will write a setting description that is real or imaginary, uses sensory details, and sets a mood. Students will use models from novels read

in reading class. Students will self/peer edit using a writer’s checklist, make necessary revisions, and proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology.

Activity 9: Plot Analysis (GLEs: 02c, 02d, 03d, 03e, 16, 19, 22c, 38c) [R]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels, Story Map BLM, Plot Diagram BLM, Identifying Types of Conflict BLM, Somebody Wanted But So BLM

Following a teacher mini-lesson on plot development focusing on conflict, students will use graphic organizers (e.g., storyboards, plot diagrams, flow charts) that show a selected novel’s structure (exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution). Students may use the Story Map BLM or Plot Diagram BLM to respond to a novel. Students will respond to journal/notebook prompts regarding the effectiveness of plot sequence and details. As a class, or in literature circles, students will discuss their responses, paying particular attention to the relationship of conflict and multiple conflicts (e.g., man vs. man, nature, society, self) within the plot. Students may complete the conflict *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). See the Identifying Types of Conflict BLM. Students will identify and record in their journals or writers’ notebooks how or if symbolism, foreshadowing, and flashback were employed to direct plot development. Students will write a short paragraph describing the effectiveness of these techniques on the plot’s advancement. Students will discuss their responses in groups.

Students may use the Somebody Wanted But So technique to briefly summarize the plot. *Somebody* is the main character. *Wanted* is the goal or thing the character wants. *But* describes the problem or conflict the character has in obtaining the goal. *So* describes the outcome of the struggle. Students may use the Somebody Wanted But So BLM.

Sample SWBS: *Hatchet* – Gary Paulsen

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal)	But (problem)	So (solution)
Brian	food and shelter after the plane crashed in Canada—he had no way to start a fire and no food	He was a city boy and had no wilderness training	After much trial and error, Brian uses the hatchet that his mother gave him to generate sparks, which fall into a pile of kindling. He blows gently and starts a fire

Activity 10: Point of View Analysis (GLEs: 02e, 09d, 16, 22c) [R]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels

Following a teacher-facilitated review on the use of pronouns in determining point of view, students will respond to a teacher-prepared paragraph that presents the same narrative told in first person and third person by circling the pronouns and discussing the differences. Then, the teacher will present a mini-lesson on third-person limited and third-person omniscient points of view. Students will review the novels read and chart the point of view for selected novels. Students will discuss the advantages and effectiveness of using third-person limited vs. third-person omniscient, supporting their opinions with details from the novels. Students will respond to a teacher-prepared paragraph that uses the third-person limited point of view by rewriting it in third-person omniscient point of view. Students will discuss how the plot would change as a result of the point of view change. Students will write reflections in notebooks/journals analyzing the effectiveness of the change in plot development.

Activity 11: Theme Development (GLEs: 02a, 02c, 02f, 06, 09a, 09b, 09e, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 22c) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels

Students will use graphic organizers or summary notes to record details from each chapter that illustrates the theme and give examples that show what the characters do or say that relates to the theme. Students will share and compare notes and then compile a list of supportive details. After discussion, the group will come up with a statement that identifies the theme.

Writing a Response to Literature Essay: Using a writing process, students will develop a response to literature composition (i.e., an overall structure that has a central idea, an organizational pattern, transitional words and phrases for unity) that supports their choice of the theme with statements from the text. Students will analyze how the author developed this theme as the plot progressed, citing examples from the text. Students will self/peer edit using a writer's checklist, make necessary revisions, and publish a final copy, using available technology.

Activity 12: After the Novel (GLEs: 08a, 09a, 09b, 09d, 09g, 18a, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 19) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate novels

Students will respond in various forms as requested by the teacher (e.g., formal assessment, book reviews, book talks, projects, illustrations, dramatizations, multimedia presentations). Students will view a video based on the selected novel, if available, and complete a Venn diagram *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Double Bubble Map, or a T-

chart comparing/contrasting the print with the nonprint version. The website <http://www.unitedstreaming> is a good resource for videos/clips. In journals, students will write a personal reflection regarding which novel or video they liked better.

Writing a Critical Review: Students will think of two novels, movies, or a novel and movie that are similar in some way. Students will write a brief critical review of them. Using a writing process, students will develop a composition that includes their positive or negative opinions, supported by facts, details, or examples. As a model, students may use the newspaper's movie review critic's writing. Students will self/peer edit using a writer's checklist, make necessary revisions, and proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of fiction elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students' completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition will be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via a teacher-created checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students may complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the novel study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the novel unit. Students may be assessed by a rubric created for the format chosen. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.
- Students will be provided feedback via an oral presentation rubric, which can be found at the following web sites, or a teacher may create a rubric: http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson28/performrubric.pdf or http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson416/OralRubric.pdf.
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions in a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.

- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric is available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
- Students' writing products may be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist* <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf> or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
- Students' writing products will be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writing Rubric* for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students will be assessed via teacher observations, skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 7: Students will write a well-organized expository essay that compares and contrasts literary elements. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that includes:
 - an introduction that begins with an attention grabber and contains a clear thesis statement which reveals an overall and general relationship between the two related topics
 - a body that fully explores the similarities and differences and reveals unexpected relationships through specific examples and details and has a clear and consistent organizational pattern
 - a conclusion that effectively ends the writing without repetition and contains a clincher statement
 - word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - transitional words effectively used to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - varied sentence structure and patterns
 - few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, or legibility
- Activity 9: Students will trace plot development by creating a graphic organizer (e.g., storyboard, plot diagram, flow chart) which will be evaluated for accuracy of content, including:
 - exposition
 - inciting action
 - rising incident
 - climax/turning point
 - falling action
 - resolution
 - point of view
 - theme
- Activity 11: Students will explore theme development by writing an analysis of the novel. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft that should:
 - identify the author and title and give a brief summary of the novel
 - show why the writer found the novel interesting

- focus on the development of the novel’s theme in a step-by-step analysis
- present evidence from the text, including details, examples, quotations, or other evidence to support the theme
- summarize the response
- use word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
- use transitional words effectively to connect ideas and paragraphs
- have varied sentence structure and patterns
- have few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, or legibility

Grade 8
English Language Arts
Unit 7: All the World's a Stage—Drama

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

The unit focuses on reading, comprehending, interpreting, and analyzing drama by applying a variety of strategies. Drama elements (character, setting, plot, point of view, and theme) and techniques (acts, scenes, dialogue, and stage directions) are identified and analyzed. Dramatic readings and scenes will be performed. Writing and presenting a Reader's Theater script provide an opportunity for student application of a writing process. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Dramas are literary works composed in verse or prose, usually for theatrical performance, where conflicts and emotions are expressed through dialogue and action. A good drama has interesting characters, who connect with one another in a variety of ways. The action of the drama is told through dialogue and stage directions. Students will identify and define the elements of drama and evaluate a play's effectiveness through analysis of its elements. Students will analyze characters and their relationships. In addition, students will understand the tasks involved in producing and staging a play and will summarize and evaluate a dramatic presentation. Students will also respond to drama orally and in written forms.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the elements of drama?
2. Can students analyze techniques authors use to describe characters, including the narrator?
3. Can students identify and explain the point of view of the narrator or other characters, as expressed in the characters' thoughts, words, or actions?
4. Can students identify a universal theme expressed in a play and relate it to personal experience?
5. Can students summarize a dramatic presentation?
6. Can students evaluate a dramatic presentation?
7. Can students write a scripted version of a narrative text?

Unit 7 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
01a.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, such as use of connotative and denotative meanings (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies, including use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts (ELA-1-M1)
02b.	Interpret story elements, including the development of character types (e.g., flat, round, dynamic, static) (ELA-1-M2)
04a.	Draw conclusions and make inferences in print and nonprint responses about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts, including epics (ELA-1-M3)
05.	Interpret ideas and information in a variety of texts (e.g., scientific reports, technical guidelines, business memos) and make connections to real-life situations and other texts (ELA-1-M4)
06.	Analyze universal themes found in a variety of world and multicultural texts in oral and written responses (ELA-6-M1)
07.	Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, character, theme) in multiple genres (ELA-6-M2)
08d.	Use knowledge of the distinctive characteristics to classify and explain the significance of various genres, including drama (e.g., plays) (ELA-6-M3)
09d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas within and across texts (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
09g.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
10.	Explain the relationship between life experiences and texts to generate solutions to problems (ELA-7-M2)
14b.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including raising questions (ELA-7-M4)
14c.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including reasoning inductively and deductively (ELA-7-M4)
14e.	Analyze grade-appropriate print and nonprint texts using various reasoning skills, including skimming/scanning (ELA-7-M4)
15a.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with a clearly stated focus or central idea (ELA-2-M1)
15b.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with important ideas or events stated in a selected order (ELA-2-M1)
15c.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
15d.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
15e.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
15f.	Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details) (ELA-2-M1)
16.	Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences (ELA-2-M1)
17a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)
17b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
17c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)
17d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topic that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)
17e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
18a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
18b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
18c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)
18d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher) (ELA-2-M3)
18e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and the use of various tools (e.g., <i>LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist</i> , rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
18f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
18g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
19.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
22c.	Write for a wide variety purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of grade-appropriate stories, poems, plays, and novels (ELA-2-M6)
23.	Use standard English capitalization and punctuation consistently (ELA-3-M2)
24a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures and patterns, including complex sentences (ELA-3-M3)
24b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including phrases and clauses used correctly as modifiers (ELA-3-M3)
25a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including infinitives, participles, and gerunds (ELA-3-M4)
25b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives (ELA-3-M4)
25c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including adverbs (ELA-3-M4)
26.	Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)
27.	Use a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings (ELA-3-M5)
28.	Adjust diction and enunciation to suit purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)
29.	Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)
30.	Follow procedures (e.g., read, question, write a response, form groups) from detailed oral instructions (ELA-4-M2)
32.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
40a.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias) (ELA-5-M2)
40b.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)
40c.	Locate and integrate information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)

Sample Activities

The notations [R] for Reading and [E] for English (writing) are used to indicate the focus and intent of each activity. It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them. *Please note that Bulletin 741 currently states that the minimum required number of minutes of English Language Arts instruction per week for Grade 8 is 550 minutes for schools with a six-period day and 500 minutes for schools with a 7-period day.*

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 04a, 05, 10, 14b, 14c, 16) [R]

Materials List: reading material covering a wide range of topics and readability levels, books/materials stored in the classroom itself and a constant flow of new books and reading material, reading response notebook or handouts, Reading Response Log BLM

Regardless of the genre being addressed in each unit, students should read silently daily. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) occurs when students and teachers are reading texts at their independent reading level for an uninterrupted period of time. Students select their own books or reading materials which require neither testing for comprehension nor book reports. Students will keep a reading log of materials read. Students may use the Reading Response Log BLM. Students may respond through a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to write a short reflection of the reading. A marble composition notebook or teacher-created handout may be used as a learning log. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55.

Student response may also be through a variety of other strategies (e.g. writing prompts, response logs, journals, or, if available, Reading Counts/Accelerated Reader). SSR guidelines for class use may be found at http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr038.shtml or <http://www.dowlingcentral.com/MrsD/area/literature/ssr.html>.

Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing): (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 26, 27) [R]

Materials List: graphic organizers, index cards, plastic sandwich bags, dictionaries, thesauruses, Drama Terms BLM

Students will develop vocabulary through the use of connotative and denotative meanings of words and the use of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary to define words specific to selections read. These may include a *vocabulary self-awareness chart* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), Frayer model, concept definition map, linear array, or word maps.

The teacher may also use the *Word Wall strategy*. A *Word Wall* is a set of related words

displayed in large letters on a wall or other display area in the classroom. Word Walls are a tool to use, not just for display or for the classroom décor. Word Walls are designed to promote students’ language learning; they provide ongoing support for varied language learners as well as enhancing learning through practical use. Using the *Word Wall* as a reference to highlight vocabulary that is related to a unit of instruction is a real world strategy and it is easily integrated into daily literacy activities. As there is no one right way to build or use a *Word Wall*, what to build, what key words to add, and when to add them will depend on the instructional needs of the students. For the drama study, a Word Wall could display the drama forms, terms, and devices used. See Drama Terms BLM.

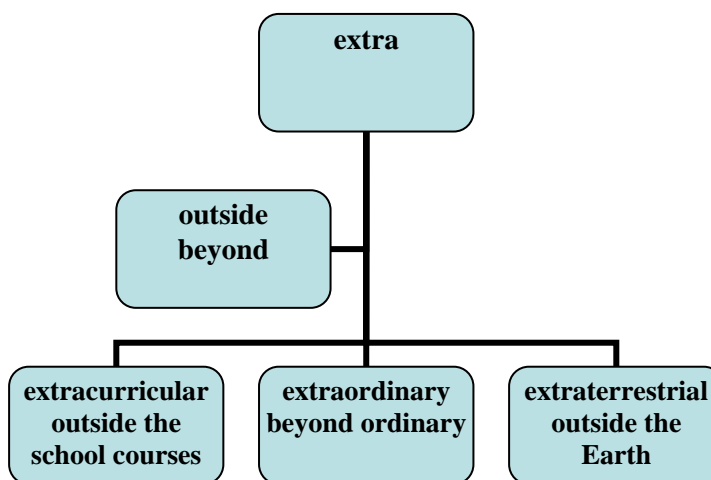
Students may create a three-column chart to record denotations and connotations encountered while reading, emphasizing shades of meaning and/or slanted words or phrases.

Sample Three-column Chart for Denotative and Connotative Word Meaning:

cool	It is a cool day. moderately cold	Joe is cool person. Joe is an excellent person. (positive)
conventional	traditional	old-fashioned (negative)

Students may create a vocabulary tree *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) wherein a prefix or root word and its meaning are displayed. Students then write as many words containing the root/prefix as they can and find sentence examples as they read.

Sample Vocabulary Tree: **PREFIXES, ROOTS, and SUFFIXES**



Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes. Students will incorporate connotative and denotative word meanings into their writing products. If computers are available, students can access <http://www.wordcentral.com/> for an on-line student dictionary that uses a daily buzzword to build vocabulary. *Graphic organizers* are available at <http://www.region15.org/curriculum/graphicorg.html>.

Activity 3: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 16, 19, [E])

Materials List: writing examples, *Writing Piece with Target Skills Template*, whiteboard or overhead projector and transparency pen or chalkboard and chalk

Since writing is a process done in recursive stages, it is important that students receive instruction in the writing craft through mini-lessons on target skills in descriptive and expository writing. For this unit, target skills should include writing compositions focusing on a central idea with important ideas or events stated in a selected order, selecting an organizational pattern (comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic, using elaboration techniques (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details), and using transitions to unify ideas and points. Students should keep a writer's notebook or *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). In teaching students writing craft, the teacher should first show how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. A *Writing Piece with Target Skills Template* can be found at: http://engla.jpss.k12.la.us/writing_craft_and_genre_instruction%20page.htm.

Activity 4: Grammar/Usage Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 24a, 24b, 25a, 25b, 25c, 26, 27) [E]

Materials List: writing samples

The teacher may use the daily oral language strategy with target skills (The teacher will provide students with a sentence or a group of sentences in need of editing to give students consistent practice correcting grammatical errors). Target skills should be identified (e.g., varied sentence structure and patterns, phrases and clauses, infinitives, participles, gerunds, superlative and comparative degrees of adjectives, adverbs, spelling). The students may also discuss the common errors in student writing samples. Through the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with mechanics. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students' reading and writing. Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook.

Activity 5: What Is Drama? (GLE: 08d) [R] [E]

Materials List: drama samples, Drama Questions BLM

Drama is a work of literature that is meant to be performed by actors for an audience. Like a novel or short story, a drama has literary elements such as characters, setting, plot, and theme. However, in a drama, the characters' dialogue and actions tell the story. Drama includes live stage performances as well as television, radio, and movie productions. The action in any dramatic work (play, movie, or television) usually centers on "Who wants what?"

As an introduction to the genre, students will discuss plays or musicals they may have seen or participated in on stage. Students may respond to the Drama Questions BLM orally to facilitate the discussion. Students will discuss how their experience was different from watching a movie or television program. Students may, through a journal entry, write a short reflection on their experience. Students may describe how it felt to be a member of the audience or a member of the cast. Students will note that drama is written to be performed and comes in a variety of media, such as movies and television shows.

If possible, the teacher may arrange for students to attend a live theater performance, so that students can experience and discuss the differences between live and recorded performances.

Activity 6: Elements of Drama (GLEs: 06, 07, 08d) [R]

Materials List: grade-appropriate drama selections, Vocabulary Self-awareness Chart BLM, Drama Terms BLM

In groups, students will read and compare the prose version of a short story or novel excerpt with a scripted version (e.g., *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Outsiders*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *Let Me Hear You Whisper*, *Nothing but the Truth*, etc.). Students will use a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) (e.g., Venn diagram, T-chart, Y-chart, Double Bubble Map) to chart similarities and differences. Students will use a *vocabulary self-awareness* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) chart to assess their prior knowledge of drama terms. See Drama Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart BLM. Over the course of the readings and exposure to other sources throughout the unit, students should be told to return often to the chart and add new information to it. The goal is to replace all the check marks and minus signs with plus signs. Because students continually revisit their vocabulary charts to revise their entries, they have multiple opportunities to practice and extend their growing understanding of key terms in the drama unit. Students may use the Drama Terms BLM as a reference tool. Students will continue to identify and define the elements of a drama (e.g., playwright, acts and scenes, a cast of characters, dialogue/monologue, the plot, crisis, climax, the setting, the stage directions, props, and the theme).

An expanded glossary of drama terms is available at http://contemporarylit.about.com/od/literaryterms/Literary_Terms.htm

Activity 7: The Importance of Dialogue (GLEs: 07, 09d, 14e, 17a, 17c, 28, 32) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate drama scenarios, Said Is Dead BLM, I Said It Again BLM

Using teacher-prepared scenario cards (index cards listing a situation that two characters will act out), students will perform improvisational skits. Some scenarios may include traffic police and speeder, coach and player, waitress and diner, teacher and misbehaving student, bank teller and bank robber, two girls discussing a movie, doctor and patient, customer and cashier, etc. This scenario goal is to help student writers see how dialogue advances the plot and reveals characters through what is said.

After the improv, students will discuss the importance of dialogue, a crisis, and stage directions in a drama. Students will discuss and note that the critical question in assessing a drama is “Who wants what?”

Writing Dialogue: Dialogue shows, rather than tells, what is going on within a character and between characters. Dialogue can convey action in fewer words than in narrative writing. The main goal of dialogue is to reveal characters’ personalities and to advance the plot. The teacher will present a mini-lesson on dialogue’s conventions—quotation marks, commas, and capitalization. As these are complex, the conventions should not be taught all at once, but rather in a progression. The teacher may use picture books or various newspaper columnists’ writings to illustrate the use of dialogue. Dialogue mini-lessons may be accessed at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=117 and http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=116.

Students should be taught that *said* can often be replaced when the author wants to show that there is a definite reason for dialogue to be spoken in a particular voice. The teacher will discuss with students that the replacement of *said* may be unnecessary and undesirable. Students may do a “replace said” activity similar to Said Is Dead BLM. For reference, a list of choices is available—I Said It Again BLM.

In pairs, students will brainstorm and write a scenario/vignette with at least four lines of dialogue correctly using the dialogue conventions. Students will perform for the class.

Activity 8: Reader’s Theater (GLEs: 07, 09d, 14e, 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 17e, 28, 32, 40a, 40b, 40c) [R] [E]

Materials List: grade-appropriate drama selections, Reader’s Theater scripts

Students as a group may skim/scan anthologies, search the library, the Internet, or classroom magazines for short one-act plays to read as a class. Scholastic magazines—READ, SCOPE, ACTION—are a good source for plays that can be read in a class period. The teacher may also use Reader’s Theater. Reader’s Theater allows for reluctant oral readers to participate as it requires less dialogue.

According to the *Timeless Teacher Stuff* website, “Reader’s Theater is an activity in which students, while reading directly from scripts, are able to tell a story in a most entertaining form, without props, costumes, or sets. This is a *reading* activity, and students are not asked to memorize their lines. They are, however, encouraged to ‘ham it up’ and use intonation and gestures appropriate to their characters and their characters’ words.”

To practice reading with fluency, students should continue to read and perform in the Reader’s Theater format. To introduce RT to students, a basic lesson plan is available at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=172. Reader’s Theater scripts are available free at <http://www.aaronshp.com/rt/index.html> and <http://www.timelessteacherstuff.com/>

Writing a Script: The teacher will write a collaborative Reader’s Theater script so students can observe how to compose one:

- The Reader’s Theater script has one or more narrators and the characters are from a selected passage.
- The passage is rich in dialogue that presents a problem and/or conflict.
- The narrator’s part offer background information, setting, and plot.
- Characters’ exact words are written in the form of a play.
- Stage directions offer suggestions for how the characters speak.

Students will select a fable/folktale to be rewritten as a Reader’s Theater script, applying the characteristics of drama (e.g., stage directions, dialogue). Students should indicate the setting and use the correct dramatic form including speech tags and stage directions. Students may create a poster advertising their performance and display it for the class. Then, students will perform their scripted version of the fable/folktale selected. RT Scripting Sheets are available free at <http://www.aaronshp.com/rt/sheets.html>.

Activity 9: Reading a Play (GLEs: 08d, 09e, 09g, 28, 29, 30, 32) [R] [E]

Materials List: District-adopted anthology, teacher-selected plays, Word Splash BLM, WWII Background BLM, Background for the Play “Anne Frank” BLM, overhead/infocus projector, transparency, chart paper/blackboard, markers/chalk

As a class, students will read or listen to a longer drama (e.g., *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Let Me Hear You Whisper*, *The Hitchhiker*). The teacher may decide to assign parts and have the students orally read the play selected. In journals or notebooks, students may create a scene-by-scene summary chart (part of play, setting, key events) to keep track of the play’s plot and conflict.

In groups, students may select a scene to rehearse and perform for the class. As they prepare the scene, students should consider these questions:

- How many characters appear in this scene?
- What props will be needed?
- What sound effects will be heard, and how will they be produced?

Students will respond to teacher-selected/created literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions about the drama. Students may also create storyboards, timelines, story maps, collages, maps, or models as a response to the play as directed by the teacher.

The Diary of Anne Frank is a drama selection in most eighth grade anthologies. Reading the play allows the combining of nonfiction with drama. One initiating activity could be the *Word Splash strategy* wherein students are given a list of five to 15 words, numbers, or phrases from the informational text they are going to read. The teacher should select words that will provide cues for students or that may need clarification. The teacher will display the words via overhead or infocus projector or prepare copies for the students. Working in pairs or groups, the students will read through the list, and speculate and discuss how the terms might relate to the given topic. Then as a whole, students should make and record predictions on chart paper or chalkboard/whiteboard. After their predictions are discussed, students will read the informational text and discuss/correct any misconceptions. Students may restate what they have by writing a summary in a reading response log. See *Word Splash BLM*, *WWII Background BLM*, and *Background for the Play "Anne Frank" BLM* for a sample lesson giving background information for *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

As another initiating activity, the teacher may create *SQLP* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) by first looking over the material to be read (e.g., *The Diary of Anne Frank*) and then generating a statement that would cause students to wonder, challenge, and question (e.g., Anne Frank: "I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart," or "Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands"). The teacher may write the statement on the board, project it on the overhead or from a computer, put it on a handout, or even state it orally for students to record in their journals/notebooks. Using the think-pair-share strategy, the students turn to a partner and think of one good question they have about the upcoming play based on the statement. As students respond, the teacher will write their questions on the chart paper or board. Students should listen carefully for the answers to their questions while reading the text. As content is covered, the teacher should stop periodically and have students discuss with their partners which questions could be answered, then ask for volunteers to share. The teacher will mark questions that are answered. The class should continue this process until the play is completed. The teacher should go back to the list of questions to check which ones may still need to be answered.

If *The Diary of Anne Frank* is being read in class, the teacher may decide to have copies of the book available, so the students may compare the diary entries to the play's versions. These websites may be useful in studying Anne Frank's diary: <http://www.annefrank.org/> ; <http://teacher.scholastic.com/frank/diary.htm>; and http://www.annefrank.com/1_life.htm.

Writing a Diary Entry: A diary is a daily written record of events, experiences, and/or observations. Usually diaries are not written for publication, as was the case with Anne Frank.

In Anne's diary, entries contain the date and sometimes time and place. They are told chronologically in the first person point of view and reflect the writer's thoughts and feelings about the events, experiences, or observations. Students may develop diary entries on

selected characters from a drama, or students may choose an event from their own lives and write a diary entry. Students should apply a writing process as they develop their diary entries. Students should apply the features (date, time/place, chronological order, first person point of view, and writer's thoughts and feelings) of diary/journal writing. Students will self/peer edit using a writer's checklist, make necessary revisions, and proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology. Students' work may be shared with the class.

These websites may be useful in teaching the writing of diary entries:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Keep-a-Diary-and-Stick-to-It>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/drum/drumsg2.html>

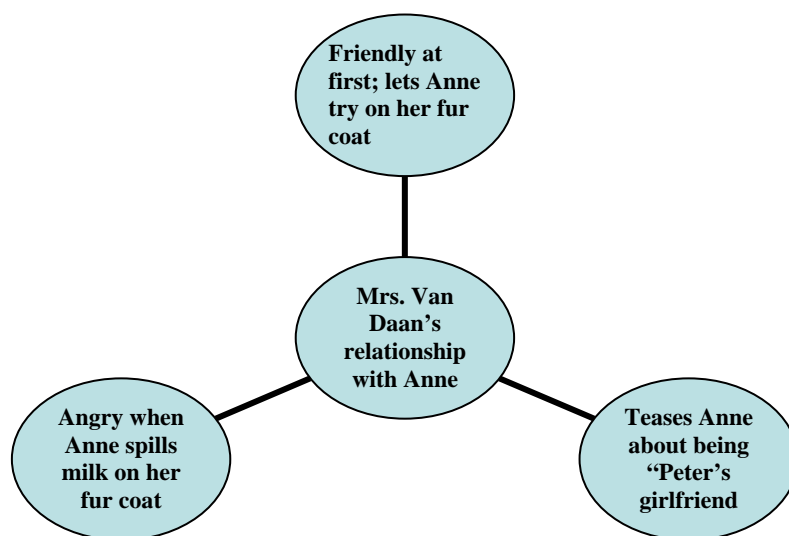
http://www.writingfix.com/Chapter_Book_Prompts/SkinImIn3.htm

Activity 10: Analyzing Characters (GLEs: 02b, 07, 09d, 09e, 09g, 16, 18a, 18b, 19, 22c) [R]

Materials List: District-adopted anthology, teacher-selected plays

During the reading of the play, students will choose two characters who interact with each other during one of the dramas they have read or viewed. Students will reread the scenes in which the two characters talk with each other or about each other and make notes about what the scene or dialogue reveals about each character's attitude toward the other. For each of the two characters, students may create a cluster diagram that analyzes the character's relationship with the other character and show how this affects the drama as a whole.

Sample cluster diagram: *The Diary of Anne Frank*



Students will address this character development and write a text-supported paragraph describing how or if the characters' relationships change during the play. Student responses should include a brief summary, an explanation of feelings and thoughts about the characters, an analysis of why the characters' actions make one feel or think that, and examples from the text for support.

Students may create a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) in the form of a modified compare/contrast matrix to aid in discovering the shared and unique qualities of the characters in the drama. The teacher should label rows to meet lesson objectives. Students should insert information during the reading of text.

Sample compare/contrast matrix:

Attributes	Character #1	Character#2	Character#3
Physical appearance			
Personality Traits			
Motivation What does he/she want?			
Result What does the character do to attain the goal?			

After reading and completing the matrix chart, students will engage in a think-pair-share activity (complete matrix, discuss/revise with partner, and share responses). As a whole class, students will discuss responses and cite specific examples from the story as support for each assertion.

Activity 11: Writing a Character Analysis (GLEs: 02b, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g) [E]

Materials List: District-adopted anthology, teacher-selected plays, Character Profile Chart BLM

During the reading of the play, students will select a character to analyze. Students will complete a character profile chart *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) on the selected character (e.g., appearance, actions, words, thoughts, other characters' responses, playwright's direct comments through stage directions). Students may use the Character Profile Chart BLM to record details from the play that supports their observations. After completing the profile chart, students will decide which aspect of the character to analyze.

Students will write a composition that identifies the character (e.g., believable, round, flat, dynamic, static) and includes a sentence that introduces the essay's main idea, focusing on the character, not the plot. Students will cite scenes, incidents, or lines from the dramas to support their statements and write a conclusion summarizing their characterization.

Students will prewrite, using their character profile charts for brainstorming ideas to develop a multiparagraph essay that analyzes the feelings and attitudes of the character. Students will write a draft that begins with an expository hook/lead, uses appropriate elaboration, word choice appropriate to the audience and purpose, and reveals the writer's voice. Students will demonstrate their ability to use adverbs, comparative and superlative adjectives, and varied sentence structure as well as the appropriate command of grammar, usage, mechanics and spelling. Students will use self/peer evaluation to edit for grammar, mechanics, usage, and

spelling. Students will revise the composition and produce a final product, using available technology.

**Activity 12: Be the Critic (GLEs: 06, 07, 18a, 18b, 18c, 18d, 18e, 18f, 18g, 19, 22c) [R]
[E]**

Materials List: District-adopted anthology, teacher-selected plays, grade-appropriate video/DVD, Venn Diagram BLM

As a class, students will watch a video/DVD of a drama they have read (e.g., *The Diary of Anne Frank*). In groups, students will compare the video and the play version. The group reporter will record findings on a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), such as a comparison/contrast chart, Venn diagram, t-chart, or Double Bubble Map. Groups will share comments with other groups. As a class, students will discuss the effectiveness of print vs. nonprint. In journals, students will write an opinion with support focusing on which medium they preferred.

Writing a Critical Review: Students may write a movie review. The review should include the title, theme statement, a brief plot summary, and reasons the reviewer liked or disliked the movie. Students will self/peer edit using a writer's checklist, make necessary revisions, and proofread for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. Students will publish a final copy, using available technology. Students' work may be shared with the class.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of drama elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students' completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition will be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will collect all journal entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via a teacher-created checklist for completion and/or response to topic.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge learned about the genre at the end of the drama study. These may include projects, illustrations, posters, dramatizations, *PowerPoint*[®] presentations, multimedia presentations

and/or other technology to demonstrate mastery of the drama unit. Students will be assessed by a rubric created for the format chosen. Students' work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

- Students will give oral presentations, dramatizing a scene from a selected play. Students will be provided feedback via an oral presentation rubric which can be found at the following web sites, or a teacher may create a rubric: http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson28/performrubric.pdf or http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson416/OralRubric.pdf.
- Students will be formally assessed via literal, interpretative, and evaluative questions in a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. A Six Trait Rubric available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf.
- Students' writing products may be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist*: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/2071.pdf> or www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/3743.pdf for self/peer evaluation.
- Students' writing products will be assessed using the *LEAP 21 Writing Rubric* for final drafts: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf>.
- Students will be assessed via teacher observations, skills checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual progress in reading strategies and writing skills.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 7: Students will write and perform a Reader's Theater script. Assessment will be based on the following:
 - Students correctly interpreted the scene and added insights about the text through their acting.
 - Students interpreted the story creatively and with depth.
 - Students followed the sequence of the story, were enthusiastic about performing, and demonstrated group effort.
 - Students were well-prepared and delivered the script in an understandable manner.
 - Students' skit was clear, concise, and well-articulated.
 - Students used inflection in reading/acting.
 - Students' volume of voices was used appropriately.
- Activity 9: Students will write a response to reading paragraph that will be evaluated with the *LEAP 21 Reading Response* rubric germane to the topic. The general scoring rubric has the following description:
 - Student's response demonstrates in-depth understanding of the relevant content and/or procedures.
 - Student completes all important components of the task and communicates ideas effectively.
 - Where appropriate, student offers insightful interpretations and/or

- extensions.
- Where appropriate, student chooses more sophisticated and/or efficient procedures.
- Activity 11: Students will write an essay analyzing a character in a play. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft. A good character analysis:
 - identifies the character, the work, and the playwright
 - includes a thesis statement that sums up the main idea
 - supports the thesis statement with specific details from the text
 - is clearly organized
 - concludes by summarizing or restating the main idea
 - uses word choice that is consistently precise, vivid, or expressive
 - uses transitional words effectively to connect ideas and paragraphs
 - has varied sentence structure and pattern
 - has few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, and legibility
- Activity 12: Students will view and review a movie based on a play read. A good review begins with a clear thesis that identifies the work by title and author and states an overall evaluation of the work. In addition, the review
 - has a body that provides specific reasons for the evaluation
 - is supported with details and examples from the work
 - has a conclusion that leaves the reader with a memorable final point or a strong impression of the writer's evaluation
 - focuses on the negative or positive worth of the work
 - establishes, explains, and adheres to the same criteria for evaluation throughout
 - uses a tone appropriate to the evaluation
 - has few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, or legibility