

8th Grade Reading & Writing Expository / Informational Text Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Intro to the unit & genre; author's purpose (inform, explain, describe); transition words/phrases; writing activities

Week 2

Snapshot: Active & passive voice; using infinitive, participle, and gerund phrases to create & maintain parallel structure in writing

Week 3

Snapshot: Deductive vs. inductive reasoning; annotation & close reading with written responses & analysis; online mini-research assignment of expository texts (7 Wonders of the World)

Week 4

Snapshot: Cause & effect in expository writing; objective summarizing, using embedded quotes effectively for support and extension in writing

Week 5

Snapshot: Compare & Contrast text structure in expository writing; objective summary; more practice in using embedded quotes correctly

Week 6

Snapshot: Students learn about finding and using credible online resources for research purposes; how to cite sources (in-text and in a Works Cited or bibliography page); how to use embedded quotes with commentary; paraphrasing & summarizing; putting together a research paper

Week 7

Snapshot: Revising & editing skills, peer presentations, expository essay comparisons vs. narrative essay writing (don't confuse one with the other!)

Week 8

Snapshot: Real-world application of expository writing: job descriptions requiring expository writing skills; resumes and cover letters; mini-research related to future career choices

Week 9

Snapshot: End of the unit; review activities & lessons; two versions of the unit test; follow-up enrichment/extension lessons



8th Grade Reading & Writing Argument / Persuasive Text Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Role-play for persuasion analysis / how to annotate for close reading / introduction to new academic domain-specific terms for the unit ahead

Week 2

Snapshot: Brain mapping / deeper analysis of claims & arguments in texts using current events and social events in modern times / quotes for analysis

Week 3

Snapshot: Analyzing emotional vs. logical appeals / evaluating facts used in an argument / writing prompts / comparing persuasive texts

Week 4

Snapshot: Analyzing film vs. text versions of persuasive speeches / close reading & discussion activities / begin speech writing

Week 5

Snapshot: Speech analysis from last week, revising & editing, peer review/feedback, luck & happiness articles, writing prompt

Week 6

Snapshot: Song lyrics used with analysis of articles; review of persuasive/argumentative elements with task cards; responding to thematically linked quotes (persuasive writing); Ted Talk argument!

Week 7

Snapshot: Analyzing opposing viewpoints on the same topic; using quotes from text evidence for support; punctuation; peer revising & editing of writing assignment

Week 8

Snapshot: Students will look at persuasive text in different forms this week including political-style cartoons and print advertisements. The week ends with students creating their own persuasive cartoon and writing a persuasive reflection paper to accompany it.

Week 9

Snapshot: Famous speeches to help review unit concepts, two versions of a test review, unit test combination of multiple choice and short answer responses



8th Grade Reading & Writing Narrative Text Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Introduction to the unit / close reading & annotating practice / short literature reading passages with practice in using text evidence

Week 2

Snapshot: Theme vs. topic / direct & indirect characterization / using dialogue / narrative writing assignment / peer editing

Week 3

Snapshot: Words in context / creating a setting / punctuation: ellipses, etc. / writing assignments

Week 4

Snapshot: Figurative language / stretching sentences / close reading & annotations of narrative texts used as model texts for writing

Week 5

Snapshot: Reading & writing a narrative poem (videos, close reading, all reading assignments provided) with reading responses for writing

Week 6

Snapshot: Commonly confused words / peer editing / narrative poetry

Week 7

Snapshot: Student writing rubrics and publishing opportunities / brainstorming and writing of a narrative essay / peer editing & reviewing

Week 8

Snapshot: Student writing rubrics and publishing opportunities / brainstorming and writing of a narrative essay / peer editing & reviewing (continued from last week)

Week 9

Snapshot: Review games and activities / unit test / closing lessons for the end of the unit



8th Grade Reading & Writing Descriptive Text Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: We're focusing on the structure and format of the lovely "ode" poem! Students will read and write odes along with reviewing figurative language and other elements specific to the study of poetry!

Week 2

Snapshot: We're focusing on the structure and format of the lovely "sonnet" poem! Students will read sonnets and even write one! Plus, we'll review figurative language and other elements specific to the study of poetry! ... And don't worry! We're not getting super-technical with the sonnets. We'll leave that complicated stuff for the high school teachers

Week 3

Snapshot: Students will read classic poems about life, death, and changing seasons (metaphorical). These kinds of poems are accessible even for struggling learners with the TP-CASTT poetry analysis system as well as the hands-on, tangible strategies embedded throughout the week in small, easy-to-learn ways. (TP-CASTT = Title, Paraphrase, Connotation, Attitude, Shift, Title (again) and Theme).

Week 4

Snapshot: Students will focus their poetry analysis on ballads. Close reading and analyzing techniques are embedded throughout the week along with read-alouds, relevant videos, and mini-lessons using text evidence and figurative language devices to make sense of poetry. Students will also use the DIDLS strategy to analyze poetry this week. DIDLS: Diction, Imagery, Details, Language, and Syntax

Week 5

Snapshot: Students continue their descriptive reading & writing unit with the study of epic poetry. We keep it fun and light with accessible poems like "Casey at the Bat" and ways to hear it and to see the video adaptation for comparison and analysis. The SOAPStone technique is used to help students understand more about how certain literary elements work together to create meaning. SOAPStone = Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, and tone.

Week 6

Snapshot: This is the end of the poetry section of the descriptive reading & writing unit. The next two weeks will move from poetry into short stories and elements of fiction. For this last week, students will use their skills with poetry analysis to analyze song lyrics and to complete close reading activities around those.

Week 7



Snapshot: Students continue their descriptive reading & writing unit by transitioning from poetry to elements of short stories. This time, students will read one short story and complete engaging mini-lesson activities centered around the plot, characterization, and conflicts in that short story. Students will also complete small group and independent creative writing assignments related to the short story.

Week 8

Snapshot: This week has students reviewing all kinds of elements of literature and literary devices through Gwendolyn Brook's short story "Home". Activities include plot, theme, mood, figurative language, various opportunities for using text evidence effectively, and, of course, writing activities!

Week 9

Snapshot: Students complete their descriptive reading & writing unit with closing activities which will include reviewing poetry and short story elements, two versions of a unit test, etc.

