

Grade 7 and 8 Reading:

September - This month we are focusing on vocabulary strategies, writing objective summaries, analyzing relationships and connections among texts, and developing central ideas in nonfiction short texts. Students will practice these literary elements throughout the year!

At the end of this month, students will be introduced to nonfiction signposts from Notice and Note. Signposts is a strategy used to help students stop at certain points in the text, think, and annotate. We will begin with adopting a questioning stance. Examples of these are below:



We will then move into signposts such as:

Contrasts and Contradictions (what is the contrast or contradiction and why does it matter?). The answer will help students see details that show them the main idea, compare and contrast, understand the author's purpose, infer, make generalizations, and notice cause and effect. Words that signal a contrast or a contradiction include, alternatively, however, nonetheless, otherwise, then again, although, different from, instead, on the other hand, then again, still, and yet.

Extreme or Absolute Language (why did the author use this language?). When a student is reading and notices the author using language that leaves no doubt, exaggerates, or pushes to the limit, he/she should stop and ask himself/herself, "Why did the author say it like that?" The answers will tell students something about the author's point of view and purpose. Or, students might realize the author is exaggerating to make readers think a certain way.

Numbers and Stats (why did the author use these numbers or amounts?). When students stop and ask themselves why the author used numbers or amounts in the text, the answers might help them reach a conclusion, make a comparison, see the details, infer, find facts, or recognize evidence.

Quoted Words (why was this person quoted or cited and what did it add?). The answer will help students think about the author's point of view, purpose, bias, or conclusions. Or these words will give a perspective, facts and opinions, or a generalization.

Word Gaps (do I know this word from someplace else? Does it seem like a technical talk for this topic? Can I find clues in the sentence to help me understand the word?). The answers will help students decide if they need to look the word up, or keep reading for more information.

These strategies will be implemented throughout the entire year. Adopting a questioning stance, signposts, and other strategies specific to nonfiction texts will lead to deeper understanding!

October - We will continue working with short texts through mid October (fiction and nonfiction) and then move into LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) which helps bring struggling readers to grade-level competency. We will work with this system through the end of the semester! Through this program, students will learn many literary strategies and skills including word work and vocabulary.

November -

Grade 8

We have completed the first marking period, and will begin doing small group work with the LLI system of learning with individualized levels. This work will include vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, building on the students' specific instructional reading level. We have had a taste of reader's theater and the students really seem to love it. There will be a sprinkling of reader's theater throughout the next marking period.

We are continuing to apply the 5 signposts while reading nonfiction texts. Students read, notice, and note to help make predictions, inferences, generalizations, and identify main ideas, and cause and effect relationships.

Grade 7

We have completed the first marking period, and will begin doing small group work with the LLI system of learning with individualized levels. This work will include vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, building on the students' specific instructional reading level. We have had a taste of reader's theater and the students really seem to love it. There will be a sprinkling of reader's theater throughout the next marking period.

Students will continue working through the REWARDS program to improve decoding multisyllabic words!

December -

Grade 8

For the next few months, we will be shifting our focus from nonfiction text, to fiction, strengthening our reading of literacy. Students will focus on elements of plot, citing text evidence, context clues and situational clues, types of foreshadowing, mood (and mood shifts), and analyzing dialogue using a specific, grade-level short story.

Grade 7

Students are working with the REWARDS program (5 units, 20 lessons total) and we should be completing the program in January! The lessons focus on pronunciation of vowel sounds, pronunciation of prefixes and suffixes, reading of multisyllabic words, spelling of multisyllabic words, fluency, and vocabulary.

For the next few months, we will be shifting our focus from nonfiction text, to fiction, strengthening our reading of literacy. Students will focus on elements of plot (plot pyramid), citing text evidence, similes and metaphors, context clues, analyzing characters' actions, analyzing dialogue, and comparing poem to short story with similar themes. .

February

Grade 7:

Students will research the risks and benefits of social media use. Through explicitly taught vocabulary, multiple texts on the topic, and student-led discussions, students will be able to analyze and distinguish different points of view, examine how events and ideas interact in a text, select sources from a curated list that are relevant to a focused topic, annotate a text for a specific purpose, and communicate a message through clear and persuasive visuals by the end of the unit.

Grade 8:

Students will be working on a unit about contact sports and whether or not they are worth the risk. Students will read and analyze multiple texts on the topic of contact sports and determine if playing these sports is more dangerous or more beneficial. By the end of the unit students will be able to Observe how authors draw **connections** and **distinctions between ideas**, identify authors' **point of view** and **purpose** within a text, establish an **audience** and utilize **evidence** to support their **claims**, and integrate **visuals** to present ideas **persuasively**. Students will be working with new vocabulary words daily.

March:

Grade 7

-Students will be working through an argumentative unit about school electives and which one is most important. The essential question students will focus on is: how do different electives motivate students and prepare them for the future?

-Unit Overview: Students have strong feelings about school, especially which classes they like the most. In this unit, students explore a hypothetical situation where their school is cutting all electives except for one. It is up to students to decide which one should be saved: computer science, cooking, or music. As students read engaging texts, watch videos, and participate in debates, they will build a balanced view on the topic and take a position in their argumentative presentation. Students will love learning how to argue effectively about this relevant topic. By the end of the unit, students should be able to use evidence from the unit's informational texts to argue for one elective they want to save.

-Focused Reading Skills: central idea and connections between ideas.

-Focused Writing Skills: argument writing, argument structure

-Focused Language Skills: grade level academic vocabulary

-abound, accountable, bolster, confer, custom, fundamental, improvise, outlet, overwhelm, pursue

Grade 8:

-Students will work through a drama unit for the next 5-6 weeks. Students will focus on the following essential question: what are the benefits and challenges of a jury system?

Unit Overview: This unit is centered around Reginald Rose's play *Twelve Angry Men*, an exploration of how a single juror can influence the outcome of a case. In this unit students examine how each of the jurors grapple with the responsibility of finding a defendant "guilty" or "not guilty". Students have the opportunity to read the play aloud as a class, while tracking the development of specific jurors as the drama unfolds. Students participate in Related Media Explorations that expose them to the jury deliberation process and the effects of a diverse jury on case outcomes. In addition, they read informational texts that provide knowledge building for major concepts in the play. As the unit culminates, students engage in a discussion about character development to inform their understanding of the benefits and challenges of a jury.

Focused Reading Skills: theme development, impact of dialogue, author's point of view, development of central idea

Focused Writing Skills: clarifying the relationships among ideas, using precise language

Vocabulary: entitled, evaluate, logical, provoke, speculation, unanimous, vigorous, coincidence, confirm, distort, diverge, precede, proposition, significant

APRIL

Grade 7 will continue working through our Electives unit. Students will read multiple articles about three different electives, cooking, arts, and computer science, as well as articles based on the value of students taking electives in school to build a strong argument about which elective to save.

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5	Reading Lesson 6
<p>"Arlington Heights Parents Oppose District 25's Plan To Cut Electives" By Karen Ann Cullotta <i>(News)</i></p>	<p>"Middle School Music And Theater Students Get Better Grades" by Tom Jacobs <i>(Informational)</i></p>	<p>"Reading, Writing And Roasting: Schools Bring Cooking Back Into The Classroom" by Allison Aubrey <i>(News)</i></p>	<p>"Coding – It's All Around Us" by Michael Signal <i>(Informational)</i></p>	<p>"The Value of Taking Electives" by Ashleigh Lutz <i>(Essay)</i></p>	<p>Choice Board: Two texts from a set of three</p>
<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>	<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>	<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>	<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>	<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>	<p>Students read to analyze central and supporting ideas in a text. [RI.7.2,3]</p>

Grade 8 will continue working through our drama unit, "Twelve Angry Men."

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section A: Act 1 (Pgs 5-12) by Reginald Rose (Drama)	"Presumption of Innocence" by New York Courts (Informational)	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section B: Act 1 (Pgs 13-24) by Reginald Rose (Drama)	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section C: Act 1 (Pgs 24-36) by Reginald Rose (Drama)	"What is Confirmation Bias?" by Shahram Heshmat (Informational)
In this lesson, students will analyze the significance of setting and how it contributes to conflict in the play. [RL8.3]	In this lesson, students will analyze how an author conveys a central idea and apply these to a fictional text. [RI8.2, RL8.3]	In this lesson, students will examine how a theme and its relationship to characters develop over the course of the text. [RL8.2]	In this lesson, students will interpret how characters develop differing points of view . [RL8.6]	In this lesson, students will analyze how an author develops a central idea and how this idea develops a theme in a fictional text. [RI8.3, RL8.2]

Reading Lesson 6	Reading Lesson 7	Reading Lesson 8	Reading Lesson 9
<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section D: Act 1 (Pgs 36-48) by Reginald Rose (Drama)	"False Memories and How They Form" by Kendra Cherry (Informational)	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section E: Act 2 (Pgs 49-63) by Reginald Rose (Drama)	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> Section F: Act 2 (Pgs 63-73) by Reginald Rose (Drama)
In this lesson, students will analyze how a character contributes to the development of a theme . [RL.8.2]	In this lesson, students will analyze how an author conveys a central idea and apply these to a fictional text. [RI8.2, RL8.3]	In this lesson, students will analyze how characters interact and how that interaction develops a theme . [RL.8.2, RL.8.6]	In this lesson, students will analyze how dialogue develops characterization . [RL.8.3]

MAY Grade 7:

We will close out the school year with reading *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick, applying and reviewing all of the reading strategies we have learned this year!

MAY Grade 8:

We will close out the school year with reading Bruiser by Neal Shusterman, applying and reviewing all of the reading strategies we have learned this year!