

Semester 1, Unit 1: Close Reading and Writing About One Text

Content Area: **Language Arts**
Course(s): **English 4A**
Time Period: **Semester 1**
Length: **1 - 2 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Standards

LA.L.11-12	Language
LA.L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.11-12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
LA.L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.11-12.2.A	Observe hyphenation conventions.
LA.L.11-12.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
LA.L.11-12.3.A	Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.
LA.L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.11-12.4.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.11-12.4.C	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
LA.L.11-12.4.D	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
LA.L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.11-12.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
LA.L.11-12.5.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
LA.L.11-12.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
LA.W.11-12	Writing
LA.W.11-12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
LA.W.11-12.1.A	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.W.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
LA.RI.11-12	Reading Informational Text
LA.RI.11-12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
LA.RI.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
LA.RI.11-12.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes and rhetorical features, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history.
LA.RI.11-12.10a	By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RL.11-12	Reading Literature
LA.RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
LA.RL.11-12.7	Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (e.g., Shakespeare and other authors.)
LA.SL.11-12	Speaking and Listening
LA.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LA.SL.11-12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.11-12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.11-12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

LA.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.11-12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
LA.SL.11-12.4	Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.SL.11-12.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
LA.SL.11-12.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
	Comprehension and Collaboration
	Conventions of Standard English
	Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
	Knowledge of Language

Enduring Understandings

The following enduring understandings, essential questions, and associated knowledge and skills focus on the texts listed below under "additional resources." When planning for this unit, teachers may focus instruction on these texts and/or other thematically related texts included in the anthology *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*, 15th ed. (Kirsznner and Mandell).

Students will understand the following:

Writing is a vehicle for active participation in society.

We have valuable and evolving ideas regarding family, race and culture, and language and we can engage in a larger exploration of these topics through reading, writing, and discussion with the classroom learning community.

We have the power to affect positive change in our lives by carefully and thoughtfully understanding ourselves and others.

Reading, writing, and thinking develop over time and require much practice.

Writers strengthen their work by responding to authentic, individualized feedback from peers and from the instructor.

Essential Questions

What is Standard English and where does it come from?

Why are there so many variations of English?

How does language affect perception of ourselves and others?

How do we write with a reader in mind? Whom do we envision when we write?

How does writing capture our intent, passion, rhythm of speech and nature of thoughts?

How can I engage complicated ideas from the assigned text(s) through close reading, exploratory writing, and discussion?

How can I develop a complex, original thesis to focus my writing?

How can I use transitions, topic sentences, and other structural signposts to maintain a progressive development of ideas throughout the paragraphs of my essay?

How can I use multiple forms of feedback from my peers and from my instructor to strengthen the overall quality of my writing in terms of focus, organization, development, quality of thought, and overall presentation?

How can I proofread and revise my writing to strengthen sentence precision and clarity?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will reflect on how they read and why they read.

Students will develop facility grappling with challenging texts.

Students will conduct close readings, and this kind of work with text requires engaged textual analysis that can help build independent and original claims.

Students will do some of the basic things that well-practiced readers of complex texts always do, such as reading with a pen or pencil in hand and making comments in

the margins or on post-it notes.

Students should attend to how parts of an essay speak to one another, contradict one another, or complicate one another.

Students will differentiate between the Englishes they participate in and encounter.

Students will examine what opportunities their Englishes present.

Students will examine any limitations their Englishes present.

Students will examine how language relates to access to power and opportunity.

Students will consider how language can be used as a roadblock, isolating power and limiting opportunity.

Students will consider how to view language as a pathway to an enlightened, equitable, and inclusive society.

Students will engage complicated ideas from the assigned text(s) through close reading, exploratory writing, and discussion.

Students will formulate complex, original thesis sentences to focus their writing.

Students will establish and maintain a progressive development of ideas throughout the paragraphs of their essay by using transitions, topic sentences, and other structural signposts.

Students will provide and receive feedback focused on improving the overall quality of their writing through revision.

Students will develop techniques for making sentence-level revisions that strengthen the overall precision and clarity of their writing.

(adapted from: Rutgers Almanac 2016)

Additional Resources

"Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan

Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide, 15th ed. (Kirszner and Mandell)

Transfer Goals

Students will be able to analyze the nature of Englishes and apply that understanding to other texts and to their own lives.

Students will be able to understand Tan's use of language and rhetorical conventions and apply that understanding to "What's in a Name?" by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and other works.

Students will be able to write an essay that conveys their close reading of a single text.