

Unit 1: Living Rationally

Content Area: **Language Arts**
Course(s): **Generic Course**
Time Period: **Semester 1 & 2**
Length: **15 days**
Status: **Published**

Standards

ELA.L	Language
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.A	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.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.C	Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.D	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.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.C	Analyze how the meaning of a key term or terms develops or is refined over the course of a text.
ELA.R	Reading
ELA.RI.CR.11–12.1	Accurately cite a range of thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text.
ELA.RI.CI.11–12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of an informational text and analyze how they are developed and refined over the course of a text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex account or analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
ELA.RI.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of an author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop.
ELA.RI.TS.11–12.4	Evaluate the author's choices concerning structure and the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
ELA.RI.PP.11–12.5	Analyze an author's purpose in a text distinguishing what is directly stated in a text or through rhetoric, analyzing how style and content convey information and advance a point of view.
ELA.RI.MF.11–12.6	Synthesize complex information across multiple sources and formats to develop ideas, resolve conflicting information, or develop an interpretation that goes beyond explicit text information (e.g., express a personal point of view, new interpretation of the concept).
ELA.RI.AA.11–12.7	Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, and the premises, purposes, and arguments in these works.
ELA.RI.CT.11–12.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and scientific significance for their purposes, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history and

texts proposing scientific or technical advancements.

ELA.W

Writing

ELA.W.AW.11–12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

ELA.W.AW.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.

ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.B

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.C

Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.D

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.E

Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2

Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes) to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.A

Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.B

Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.C

Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.D

Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.E

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

ELA.W.IW.11–12.2.F

Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

ELA.W.WP.11–12.4

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

ELA.W.WR.11–12.5

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ELA.W.SE.11–12.6

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms

of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).

ELA.SL	Speaking and Listening
ELA.SL.PE.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.
ELA.SL.PE.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.
ELA.SL.PE.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.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
ELA.SL.PE.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.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.1	Review career goals and determine steps necessary for attainment.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.3	Identify transferable career skills and design alternate career plans.
TECH.8.1.12.D.1	Demonstrate appropriate application of copyright, fair use and/or Creative Commons to an original work.
TECH.8.1.12.E.CS2	Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
TECH.8.1.12.E.CS3	Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness for specific tasks.

Enduring Understandings

Rational discourse is a tool to audit and examine what we believe to be objective fact.

Although human beings instinctively tend to rely on their physical sensory interfaces for knowledge, these interfaces can be easily fooled, simulated, or misdirected.

Doubt is an essential, constructive tool used to test and prove the architectural durability of our core beliefs.

Modern technology including algorithms, virtual reality, deepfakes, Ai often acts as a contemporary "shadow wall," which ancient philosophical methods can help us comprehend and deconstruct.

Resources

Crash Course Philosophy: Episodes [1](#) ("What is Philosophy?"), [4](#) ("Leonardo DiCaprio & the Nature of

[Reality](#)”), [5 \(“Neo, Meet Rene -- Cartesian Skepticism”\)](#), [6 \(“Locke, Berkeley, & Empiricism”\)](#), and [7 \(“The Meaning of Knowledge”\)](#)

Philosophize This! Podcast: [Episode 28 \("Descartes Pt. 1- A Little Context"\)](#) and [Episode 36 \("John Locke Pt. 2 - The Blank Slate"\)](#)

BBC In Our Time Podcast: ["Scepticism"](#) and ["Empiricism"](#)

Excerpts from René Descartes' "Meditations on First Philosophy" (1641) and John Locke's "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (1689)

Plato's Republic (Book VII): "The Allegory of the Cave"

CommonLit readings

Essential Questions

What is rational discourse, how is it separate from emotional reaction, and why is it critically relevant in a digitally mediated society?

How can radical skepticism or systematic doubt expose an unshakeable foundation of truth that cannot be simulated or faked?

Knowledge and Skills

Philosophy is the study of active, rational activity which helps humans search for the meaning behind existence and knowledge.

An understanding of the critical role of philosophy in evaluating modern digital environments (algorithmic echo chambers, VR, and deepfakes).

Understand the Socratic method of cross-examination as an active, kinetic tool of critical reasoning and logical defense.

Understand the absolute importance of the "examined life" as a shield against social conditioning and unvetted consensus.

Understand the basic forms of deductive and inductive arguments and the strategic advantages of rational reasoning over pure emotional reactions.

Analyze how historical authors use, refine, and contest key epistemological and metaphysical terms (e.g., Skepticism, Solipsism, Empiricism, Rationalism) over the course of a text or debate.

Understand the core mechanics of Descartes' mind/body dualism, Radical Doubt, and John Locke's empiricist

alternative of the tabula rasa.

Transfer Goals

Students will independently be able to identify the three main branches of philosophy and apply that structural knowledge to evaluate complex issues in contemporary life, technology, and media (e.g., social media algorithms, online identity, deepfakes).

Students will independently be able to understand the mechanics of rational discourse and apply that understanding to solving metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical problems.

Students will independently be able to compare empirical knowledge to rational knowledge and apply that understanding to their own personal belief systems.

Assessment

Exhibition panel

Quizzes, tests, projects

Philosophy notebook

Modifications

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jTn1cFhRgM3667P67m3pGk1sD-XarWejIWAANIg/edit?usp=sharing>