Unit 4 Reading: Nonfiction Research Across Texts

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 2**
Length: **3-4 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will read challenging informational texts in a range of subjects. Informational text can be seen as a type of nonfiction. Informational text conveys facts about the natural or social world; crafted by an expert in the field to an audience of lay people; includes specialized features such as headings and technical jargon. Students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspective while acquiring needed skills and strategies.

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. In this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers.

Revision Date: July 2023

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

Information Literacy: This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing print and digital library resources.

LA.RI.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
LA.RI.7.2	Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RI.7.3	Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

LA.RI.7.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
LA.RI.7.5	Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
LA.RI.7.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
LA.RI.7.7	Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
LA.RI.7.8	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.
LA.RI.7.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.
LA.RI.7.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.L.7.4.C	Consult 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 or its part of speech.

Essential Questions

- How can I draw upon all that I have learned about informational reading to discern arguments within texts, follow those arguments across texts, gather evidence for both sides, and come to a considered position on the topic?
- How can I read and re read critically to notice not only what argument is presented, but also how the author presents that argument and what techniques the author uses to get readers to follow his thinking?
- How can reading nonfiction help develop a deeper understanding of an issue? How do readers learn to weigh and evaluate evidence, compare perspectives, and analyze arguments?
- How does comparing and contrasting help evaluate multiple perspectives on a topic? How do readers understand the nuances within a broader argument?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- Analyzing evidence and choosing a stance
- Annotating text
- Argument talk protocol
- Comparing and contrasting to evaluate multiple perspective on a topic
- Discerning arguments within texts
- Discussion Strategies
- Effectively debating issues
- Examining author's craft and techniques
- Examining informational texts

- Following arguments across texts
- Gaining a nuanced understanding of the underlying issues within an argument
- Gathering and analyzing relevant evidence
- Note-taking skills
- Reading with an unbiased lens
- Research skills
- The difference between reliable and unreliable sources
- Varied types of evidence

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by benchmark assessments. Follow up diagnostic assessments may be used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress:

Formative Assessments

- Responses to Essential Questions
- Whole group mini-lessons ○ Review of literary devices/elements ○ Review connections ○ Identify social issue topics ○ Locate pivotal moments ○ Determine possible themes
- Model "Ways to Write About Reading"
- Teacher-generated "writing about reading" options
- Model argument talk protocol
- Model note-taking strategies ○ Annotating ○ Boxes and bullets ○ T-charts ○ Webs ○ Graphic organizer
- Model reading strategies: ○ Determining main idea ○ Deciphering relevant/irrelevant ○ Evaluate evidence ○ Reading with an unbiased lens
- Peer conferences/Partner Reading Time
- Large and Small-Group Discussion
- Whole group mini-lessons (model reading strategies)
- Accountable Talk
- Turn and talks
- Reading Responses on Post-its/Stop and Jots
- Reading Responses in Journals/Notebooks
- Quick-Writes about Reading
- Interactive Read Aloud Reading responses, written and oral (Thinkaloud and Close Reading)

- Exit tickets or Do Nows
- Engagement Observations
- Reading Logs and Reading Surveys
- Envision and prediction post-it notes/Board
- Monitor Stamina, Volume, and Fluency through rubrics
- Text and Video analysis
- Read increasingly complex text by monitoring student self-selection of leveled text
- Small Group Strategy Reading group work
- Knowledge of domain-specific vocabulary
- Grade-Level Engagement Rubric for Verbal and Non-Verbal Participation

Summative Assessments including Alternative Assessments:

- Reading Notebooks using grade-level text questions
- Running Records
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: Reading learning progressions
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: rubrics with student samples
- Vocabulary/Word Study Assessments
- Presentations
- Performance- and project-based learning
- Personalized, student-designed assessments

Benchmark Assessments

- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, grades 3-8, Levels L-Z, Heinemann
- Complete Comprehension, Independent Reading Assessment, fiction, Jennifer Serravallo, Heinemann
- iReady Screener and Diagnostic Assessment
- Benchmark Grade-Level Reading and Writing Assessments aligned with New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)

Learning Plan

The Middle School Language Arts/Literacy program encompasses reading literature and informational text, speaking and listening and enhancing language skills (spelling, grammar, and vocabulary). The understandings and skills of each strand of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards are not isolated, but integrated, interactive, and embedded in all subject areas across the curriculum. Teachers may engage in two whole-class, closely-studied community readings per year, not to exceed four weeks each.

Reading instruction is literature-based and follows a balanced literacy approach through a number of strategies and techniques in Reading Workshop. These include read-alouds/alongs, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, and partnership or book club discussions. Reading Workshop provides students with the necessary tools to communicate orally, read and

comprehend print, and write with clarity and purpose for a variety of audiences. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader. Students will select from authentic literature at their independent and instructional reading levels.

Lessons should follow the mini-lesson format:

- Teaching point(s) for each lesson
- Connection: Connects new learning to previous learning/lessons
- Teach/Modeling: Uses 'think alouds' when modeling what you expect students to do
- Guided Practice/Active Engagement: Guides students through practice of the teaching point
- Link to Independent Practice: Helps writers understand the purpose for the writing they are about to do and the skills/craft they will be practicing/applying independently as good writers
- Independent Writing/Student Conferences: Provides time for students to do independent writing while teacher confers with individual students, works with small groups, or writing clubs*.
- Closure/Sharing: Pull students back together and recognize the work they have done relating to the teaching point. (See end of section for closure ideas.)

This class establishes a "staircase" of increasing complexity in what students must be able to read so that all students are ready for the demands of high school-level reading. Additionally this unit requires the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing are able to gain more from whatever they read. Students will read a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature and gain a greater appreciation of the various literary genres through a careful study of plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme. Genres may include but not limited to the following; novels, short stories, print and electronic articles, picture books, songs/lyrics, media clips, drama, poetry, folk tales, and fables.

Students will read challenging informational texts in a range of subjects. Informational text can be seen as a type of nonfiction. Informational text conveys facts about the natural or social world; crafted by an expert in the field to an audience of lay people; includes specialized features such as headings and technical jargon. Students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspective while acquiring needed skills and strategies.

Please refer to the Middle School ELA, Grade 7 Folder for specific lessons and materials for Word Study.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

- Academic terms may include the following: analyze, synthesize, reflection, motivation, traits, characteristics, metacognitive, inference, visualize, envision, determine, compare/contrast.
- Acronyms or Ways to remember different types of evidence used to support thesis
- Argument Key Terms (if applicable)
- Creating word walls and anchor charts as well as embedding word work in mini and strategy lessons

will be emphasized. Students will self-identify words in independent reading.

- Literary elements may include the following: character, plot, setting, problem/solution/resolution, secondary characters, protagonist/antagonist, external/internal conflict, point of view (first person, third person), narrator, scene, theme, central idea, genre, drama, narrative, stanza
- Poetry terms may include the following: figurative language: simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, theme
- Vocabulary strategies such as using context clues; identifying prefixes, roots, suffixes; analyzing syntax including grammatical structures and parts of speech, creating word walls, to name a few.
- Vocabulary Words will be culled from mentor texts and independent reading.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

Please reference the materials in this Middle School ELA, grade 7 folder under "reading."

- Anchor Texts in Unit 4 Overview (TCRWP Unit Binder) ○ "Listening to Wisdom from a Ten Year Old Son About His Head Injury" (2009) from the NY Times ○ "Unique Study Explores Cumulative Effects of Hits in High School Football" (2011) from Sports Illustrated ○ "Section V: Increasing Physical Activity" (2010) from White House Task force of Child Obesity Report to the President
- Argument Key terms list
- Chart paper/Anchor Charts
- Colored Highlighters/Colored Pens
- Post-Its
- Read-aloud texts (mentor/modeling/related non-fiction texts)
- Related videos or podcasts
- Research new information (Ongoing issues and topics)
- SCOPE Debate articles
- SCOPE Magazines
- SCOPE Paired Readings
- See Appendix: Unit 4 Binder
- Selections from your Library Media Specialist for independent research or excerpt/read aloud use
- Short relatable excerpts (fiction or nonfiction)
- Student resources (Argument key terms, post it requirements, ways to write about reading etc..)
- TCRWP nonfiction text sets

- Types of evidence terms (statistics etc..)
- Video Clips on TCRWP Unit CD
- www.readingandwritingproject.com “Resources”

Strategies for Modification and Accommodation

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

The structure of reading workshop is designed to differentiate and address specific goals and learning for each reader:

- The unit includes presentation of material through multiple modalities such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic to address the unique learning styles of all students.
- The teacher will assign, assess and modify if necessary to address the specific needs of the learner.
- Students will select from authentic literature at their independent and instructional reading levels.
- Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.

Possible accommodations during reading workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts, word walls.
- Have a designated reader for difficult content
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Create packet of suggested ways to “Talk and Share About Books” to allow for independence.
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Questioning techniques – QAR (Question-Answer Relationships) Right There, Think and Search, Author and You, On My Own – (50 Instruction Routines to Develop Content Literacy – Pearson Publishing 2011) Inclusion Strategy Book
- Mark text with a highlighter
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide a distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed.
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines
- Use digital ebooks, technology, audio and video version of printed text
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Access speech to text function on computer

Possible modifications to content during reading workshop include, but are not limited to:

- The teacher will refer to the Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment,

Planning and Teaching to target speciifc strategies to teach students below benchmark levels. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.

Adhere to all modifications and accomodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plans.