Unit 4 Reading: Investigative Journalism: Reading Feature Articles

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 2**
Length: **5-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Pacing Guide

Please refer tothis Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 8.

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.)

Please refer to the Middle School ELA, Grade 8 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.

This particular unit focuses on the exploration of the concept of investigative journalism by reading and discussing a variety of journalistic pieces. Students will compare and contrast these with the more-familiar “news report” and discover the purpose and implications of investigative journalism. They will also analyze the craft used in creating powerful pieces of investigative journalism in order to prepare them to ultimately write their own investigative pieces in the paired writing unit.

For this particular unit, teachers should...

- Select texts elements of journalism analysis
- Prepare materials for teaching elements of journalism
- Select materials for discussion of author bias
- Prepare materials for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- Select mentor texts for modeling
- Prepare for conferences with students
- Create formative and summative assessments

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 8 folder under "reading."

Instructional Materials

- "Emergency Declaration Ends in Flint Water Crisis" (article by Associated Press)
- "High School Journalists Land a Scoop, and the Principal Resigns" (article from the New York Times, April 5, 2017)
- "Poison in the Water" (article by Bryan Brown from Upfront Magazine)
- http://pix11.com/2016/05/16/lawmakers-pressure-port-authority-to-cut-back-on-pollution/ (link to online article "Lawmakers Pressure Port Authority to Cut Back on Pollution" from May 16, 2016)
- https://issuu.com/emilysmith41/docs/march_17 (link to online article "District Hires New Principal")
- Possible Anchor Charts: News Reporting vs. Investigative Journalism, Journalistic Text Features, Narrative Elements)
- Reveal Podcast's "School haze" episode (https://www.revealnews.org/episodes Feb 18, 2017) *use search bar to find "School haze" episode

Teacher Resources

- http://projects.propublica.org/muckreads/
- http://www.brandeis.edu/investigate/
- https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/
- Newsela: http://www.newsela.com
- Reading Nonfiction, Beers and Probst
- Reveal Podcast: https://www.revealnews.org
- Scope Magazine
- ThinkCerca: http://www.thinkcerca.com
- Thinking Through Genre, Lattimer

Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

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 format (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Take frequent breaks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual student's abilities and needs.
- Supply study guide questions, graphic organizers, and access to class notes.
- Individualize reading choices based on ability (reading level), readiness, and choice through extensive classroom library
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide discreet 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

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

Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.