

Unit 2: Informational Texts (Weeks 10-18)

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **9 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit 2: Informational Texts

Unit Rationale

Studying this unit will help students meet the following objectives: make connections from themes expressed in the selections to their own lives and the world around them, identify common forms of nonfiction, understand different elements of nonfiction, including autobiography, character, personal essay, argumentative essay, setting, conflict and tone, and understand variations of literary forms and author's use of language to develop forms.

Essential Questions

- How do the differing points of view from multiple characters within a text impact the plot?
- How do authors structure their texts and how does this impact the story?
- How does irony impact the outcome of the plot within a story?

Pre-Assessments

Pre Assessment: The Distracted Teenage Brain By Common Lit

The purpose of this pre assessment is for the students to be measured on their ability to utilize proper textual evidence, to determine the meaning of unknown vocabulary, and to analyze the author's claim.

Teachers could also assigned a Google form assessing the student's prior knowledge for both informational and non-fiction texts.

Instructional Plan

See lessons below.

Resources:

Windows & Mirrors Grade 8 textbook

Scholastic Scope

DogoNews

Newsela

CommonLit informational articles

ALL LESSONS CAN TAKE SEVERAL DAYS

Additional resources and lessons can be found [here](#).

Skill Set 1: Informational Texts

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT identify elements of informational/nonfiction texts

WALT compare different nonfiction text structures

WALT read to locate information

WALT read to recall details

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...name and define different elements of nonfiction texts.

I can...compare different types of nonfiction texts.

I can...identify key information in an informational text.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Group Work

- Reread
- Group Discussions
- Annotation
- Making Thesis Statements

Formative Assessments

- Exit Tickets
- Google forms
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Independent reading logs
- Interactive notebooks

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Ted Talks
 - [TED Talk Review](#)
- Mrs. Flowers, Maya Angelou
- Flocabulary (text structures)
- [Nonfiction Organizer](#)
- [Text Structures Activity](#)
 - [Supplemental Activity](#)

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.IT.8.3	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.
ELA.RI.TS.8.4	Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

Skill Set 2: Central Idea & Summarization

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT use strategies to identify central idea.

WALT identify text evidence that supports a central idea.

WALT determine key details/events that support a central idea.

WALT summarize the main parts of an informational text.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...apply appropriate reading strategies to determine the central idea of a text.

I can...identify relevant text evidence to support the central idea.

I can...name multiple key events/details that support the central idea.

I can...identify the main parts of an informational text by writing a clear summary.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Group Work
- Reread
- Group Discussions
- Annotation
- Making Thesis Statements

Formative Assessments

- Exit Tickets
- Google forms
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Independent reading logs
- Interactive notebooks

Instructional Materials and Resources

- When Do Kids Become Adults
 - [Supplementary Activity](#)
- Ishi in Two Worlds, Theodora Kroeber
- [Steps to Reading Informational Text](#)
- Summary Writing
 - [TAAMIOS method](#)

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.CR.8.1

Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

ELA.RI.CI.8.2

Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Skill Set 3: Author's Purpose & Perspective

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT analyze an author's perspective.

WALT compare perspectives across multiple texts.

WALT identify an author's purpose.

WALT make judgments based on an author's perspective.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can...determine the perspective of an author in an informational text.

I can...compare different perspectives across multiple texts.

I can...identify the purpose of a text.

I can...make reasoned judgments from informational texts.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Group Work
- Reread
- Group Discussions
- Annotation
- Making Thesis Statements

Formative Assessments

- Exit Tickets
- Google forms
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Independent reading logs
- Interactive notebooks

Instructional Materials and Resources

- CommonLit - "Typical Kid"
 - [Supplementary Activity](#)
- Newsela - High School is a Dangerous and Unnecessary Sport
 - [Supplementary Activity](#)
- Edpuzzle
- Soul of a Citizen, Paul Rogat Loeb

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.PP.8.5	Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text and by acknowledging and responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
ELA.RI.MF.8.6	Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.
ELA.RI.AA.8.7	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
ELA.RI.CT.8.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
ELA.SL.II.8.2	Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
ELA.SL.ES.8.3	Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Skill Set 4: Vocabulary

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT analyze word choice in a text.

WALT use context clues to identify challenging words.

WALT identify roots of words to help with understanding meaning.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can...identify clues in context to help me define an unknown word.

I can...describe an author's choice of words

I can...identify roots and affixes of words to help define them.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Direct Instruction
- Group Discussions
- Vocab Jams

Formative Assessments

- Exit Tickets
- Google forms
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Vocab Quizzes

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Vocab.com
- Texts used throughout the unit
- Word analysis activities

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.L.KL.8.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
ELA.L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
ELA.L.VL.8.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.8.3.B	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

Skill Set 5: Writing About Reading

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT respond to what we've read.

WALT organize reading responses in a structured format.

WALT support our thoughts with text evidence.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can...write about what I've read.

I can...use RACE structure to support my writing.

I can...incorporate relevant evidence to support my writing.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Group Work

- Reread
- Group Discussions
- Annotation

Formative Assessments

- Exit Tickets
- Google forms
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Independent reading logs
- Interactive notebooks

Instructional Materials and Resources

- RACE responses
 - [structure](#)
- Reader's notebooks
- Texts used throughout the unit

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.CR.8.1	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.
ELA.W.AW.8.1	Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
ELA.W.IW.8.2	Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Modifications and/or Accommodations

Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, Gifted, At-risk of Failure)

English Language Learners

Native language support: The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

Adjusted Speech: The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

Visuals: The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

Front-Loading Vocabulary: The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

Special Education Students

Chunking: The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

Checking for Understanding: It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

Extra time: The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

Oral Reading: The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

Timers: The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how much time they have to complete an assignment.

Students with 504 Plans

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Gifted & Talented Strategies

Extensions/Enrichments: Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

Modify/Change Activities: Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs students.

Students at Risk of School Failure

Directions or Instructions: Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

Peer Support: Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

Alternate or Modified Assignments: Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

Increase One to One Time: When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

Contracts: It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

Hands On: As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

Tests/Assessments: Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

Seating: Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.

Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Climate Change, Informational and Media Literacy

See Crosswalks.

The novel and short story variety allows for discussions about AAPI, civil rights, Native American culture, and immigration.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uf0fWDvpqWFOAb51rOq7mN5xq-xu-M5Yp2FbEVZ9Kt8/edit?usp=sharing>

New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area

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ELA.L.KL.8.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
ELA.L.VL.8.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
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information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

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Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills

An individual's strengths, lifestyle goals, choices, and interests affect employment and income.

Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking

CS.6-8.8.2.8.EC.2

Examine the effects of ethical and unethical practices in product design and development.

CS.6-8.8.2.8.ITH.2

Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLs for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math

The reading skills taught throughout this unit will provide knowledge, practice, and support in all content areas where reading is required.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bNUBwwW9BLgTLqjfVVAJiet6rbmQ3THg-sXDz2rEnXk/edit?usp=sharing>

Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.

21st Century Life and Career

CRP.K-12.CRP4.1

Analyze and interpret data to determine similarities and differences in findings.

Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready

individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.

SEL Competencies and Standards

SEL.PK-12.2.2

Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals