

## Critical Concepts 8.2A Non Fiction Lesson Plans

**Skill CC.8.2A** – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas and providing an objective summary of the text.

**Vocabulary Word Bank:** analyze, central idea, essential, development, objective, summary

### October Lesson Objectives

- SWBAT determine the central idea(s) of an informational text.
- SWBAT explain how central ideas are developed across a text.
- SWBAT provide an objective summary of the text, including essential details.
- SWBAT use academic vocabulary (analyze, central idea, essential, development, objective, summary) in discussion and writing.

**Non-Fiction Texts Suggestions for October** (text selections are suggestion only, teachers can change the text to fit their classroom needs, if choosing another text it should come from the Educational Epiphany Curriculum)

- *Politics in the Social Media Age* (Author Unknown)
- *How Tweeted Is* (Linton Weeks)
- *How Bloggers Can Benefit Fashion Brands* (Justin Fenner)
- *Nelson Mandela's Address on His Release from Prison* (Nelson Mandela)
- *The Gas is Greener* (Robert Bryce, 2011)

**Graphic Organizer:** Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 8.2A-2 (pages 21-24 in the Graphic Organizers Tab)

### I Do (Teacher Model – 15 mins)

**Text:** *Politics in the Social Media Age*

#### Teacher Steps

1. Distribute the organizer.
2. Review word bank aloud.
3. Read aloud first 2–3 paragraphs of the text.
4. Model identifying central idea and supporting ideas.
5. Model combining them into one objective summary.

#### Teacher Think-Aloud

"When I'm trying to summarize, I first ask: *What is this text mostly about?* I notice the author keeps mentioning how social media changes politics. That feels like a central idea. But I don't

want to stop there – I have to check: *Does the author repeat or support this idea throughout the text?* Yes – I see details about Twitter, Facebook, and how quickly information spreads. Now, I need to be careful – the text also talks about misinformation. Is that a separate central idea, or does it support the first one? Hmm... it seems connected because it shows one of the consequences of using social media in politics. That means it's an essential supporting detail, not a separate idea.

Finally, I need to put this into a summary. I'll include the central idea – social media has changed politics – and then add the essential detail – faster communication and the risk of misinformation. I won't add my opinion about whether that's good or bad, because the summary has to stay objective."

### Sample Student Response (Summary)

The article *Politics in the Social Media Age* explains that social media has transformed political communication. Politicians now use platforms like Twitter to reach voters directly, and while information spreads faster, the speed also increases the risk of misinformation.

### We Do (Guided Practice – 20 mins)

**Text:** *How Tweet It Is* by Linton Weeks

#### Steps

1. Read first two paragraphs aloud as a class.
2. Pause to ask: *What's the central idea? What details support it?*
3. Work together to draft an objective summary on the board.

#### Teacher Think-Aloud

"When I read the opening paragraph, I ask: *Is the author defining, describing, or explaining something important?* Here, the author explains that Twitter spreads news faster than traditional outlets. That sounds like a central idea, but let's test it.

The author gives examples of events being reported first on Twitter – that's evidence developing the idea. Later, the author warns about the risk of accuracy. Now I have to decide: is that another central idea, or does it refine the first one? I think it refines it, because it shows a limitation to the main idea of 'Twitter spreads news fast.'

So, in my summary, I'll keep the central idea – Twitter is reshaping how news spreads – and then add the essential details about speed and accuracy. Notice what I'm leaving out: the little examples of celebrity tweets. Those don't feel essential to understanding the whole article. That's how I decide what to cut."

### Sample Class Response (Summary)

In *How Tweeted Is*, Linton Weeks explains that Twitter has become an important source of breaking news. The platform allows events to be shared instantly, but the article also points out that this speed can reduce accuracy and reliability.

### You Do with Partner (Collaborative Practice – 30 mins)

**Text:** *How Bloggers Can Benefit Fashion Brands* by Justin Fenner

#### Steps

1. Partners read assigned sections together.
2. Partners discuss: *What is the central idea? Which details are essential?*
3. Teacher circulates, prompting: *"Is that detail essential, or just extra?" "How could you say that in your own words without opinion?"*

#### Teacher Think-Aloud (while circulating)

"Partners, listen to how I think through this. I notice the author starts with bloggers and fashion. My question is: *What role are bloggers playing here?* The text says bloggers influence consumer choices. That might be the central idea.

But now I have to test it: *Does this idea come up again and again, or is it just in one section?* I see the author also describes how brands actually work with bloggers to shape trends. That tells me I was right – bloggers' influence is the key central idea.

Now here's the tricky part – I have to check: is the author only talking about bloggers being famous, or is it about their impact on fashion companies? The bigger idea is about the industry impact, so that's what belongs in the summary. When I summarize, I'll include the main idea (bloggers influence fashion brands) and the essential details (they shape trends, help with marketing). Anything about personal style or minor brand examples isn't essential."

#### Sample Partner Response (Summary)

Justin Fenner's article *How Bloggers Can Benefit Fashion Brands* explains that fashion bloggers have become powerful partners for companies. Bloggers influence consumer trends and have changed how fashion brands market their products.

### You Do Independently

**Text:** *Nelson Mandela's Address on His Release from Prison*

#### Teacher Steps

1. Students read the text silently or in small groups.
2. Students independently complete the summary box.
3. Teacher reminds: *"Stay objective, no opinions. Only essential ideas and details."*

#### Think-Aloud (preview before release)

"When I look at a speech, I ask: *What are the repeated themes?* Mandela thanks supporters – that shows gratitude. He also emphasizes freedom and equality – that's bigger, maybe the central idea. Then I see him calling for reconciliation instead of revenge.

Now I have to decide: are these three separate central ideas, or do they all connect? If I look closely, they all connect under one theme: Mandela is focusing on building a united, equal South Africa after his release.

So, in my summary, I'll combine the big idea (freedom and unity) with the essential details (gratitude for support, call for reconciliation). What I won't include: the personal emotions or dramatic moments of the speech, because summaries are about the essential ideas, not the feelings I had while reading."

**Sample Independent Response (Summary)**

In his release speech, Nelson Mandela thanks those who supported the struggle against apartheid. He emphasizes the importance of freedom and equality for all South Africans and calls for reconciliation and unity instead of revenge.

## Turning Graphic Organizers into Writing Responses

Each of the sample responses models turning our graphic organizers into complete paragraph responses

1. **Analysis sentence** (**explicit** + **inference** blended)
2. **Text evidence** (direct quote)
3. **Explanation of how evidence supports the analysis**
4. **Closing insight**

### I Do (Teacher Model – Claiming Health: Front-of-Package Labeling of Children’s Food)

The text explicitly states that many popular children’s foods are marketed as healthy by using front-of-package claims, and from this I can infer that food companies are trying to make unhealthy foods appear more nutritious than they really are. The author supports this with evidence, explaining that packages highlight phrases like “whole grain” or “contains vitamins” even when the food is loaded with sugar and fat. This shows how marketing can be misleading to parents and children who want to make healthy choices.

### We Do Model Paragraph (The National Industrial Recovery Act)

The text explicitly states that the National Industrial Recovery Act was created to stimulate economic recovery during the Great Depression, and from this I can infer that the government believed stronger regulations were necessary because businesses could not fix the economy alone. The article explains, “It authorized the President to regulate industry and permitted industries to draft codes of fair competition.” This evidence shows that leaders thought government involvement was the key to stabilizing the economy. By combining what the text says directly with reasoning, we can understand both the stated purpose of the Act and the belief behind it.

### You Do with Partner Model Paragraph (Teens on Twitter: They’re Migrating Sometime for Privacy by Martha Irvine)

The article explicitly says that some teenagers are leaving Twitter to avoid the eyes of parents and teachers, which suggests that teens value their privacy and prefer social media spaces where they feel less supervised. The author supports this by noting, “Many teens are shifting to apps like Instagram and Snapchat, where they feel they have more privacy.” This shows that young people are making choices about technology not only based on popularity but also on how safe and independent they feel. The explicit statement and the supporting evidence together reveal that privacy is a major reason why teens choose certain online platforms.

### You Do Independently Model Paragraph (Fashion Bullies Attack – In Middle School by Vanessa O’Connell)

The text explicitly states that middle school students are often teased because of the clothes they wear, and this implies that fashion acts as a way to create social status and can lead to bullying or exclusion. For example, the article explains, *"Students report being labeled 'out of style' or 'cheap' if they don't wear certain brands."* This evidence shows that students use clothing as a way to rank and judge each other, which can hurt those who cannot or choose not to wear certain labels. By connecting the explicit information with an inference, we see that fashion is more than style—it can be a source of peer pressure and conflict in schools.