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Program Description

Students enrolled in Grades 9-12 in The Ewing Public Schools are required to take four years of English Language Arts. The English curriculum requires that students work toward College and Career Readiness with the support and guidance of a highly-qualified teaching staff and English classes are tiered so the skills necessary for students to be successful beyond high school progress from English I through English IV in a structured way. The three goals for our secondary English program are the following: 1) to help students read and comprehend grade level texts independently, 2) to assist students with text-based thinking and writing and 3) to empower students with a love of reading.

Within all English courses, students read fictional works of literature and informational texts, often considering how one text supports or refutes another; a thematic approach to reading and writing allows students to make these connections. Students write daily; the purpose of student writing is for them to inform, argue, analyze, express or entertain an audience. They work to make sense of literature or information by continually reading, thinking and discussing big ideas. Students read and write daily, sometimes with teacher support, often independently.

Scope and Sequence for Units of Study:

Specific pacing information is included within each unit of study for Grades 9-12.

Unit 1: Eras in American Literature and the Connection to American History (Pacing: 20 Days; some are embedded within Unit 2)

Why Is This Unit Important?

Viewing American literature through the eyes of an historian helps a reader to make connections between a specific time period, major events or shifts of that time period and the works that are highlighted to reflect the culture of the time period. Making such connections helps a reader to more fully understand how literature can be used to reflect culture, growth, challenge and development, all as a reflection of an historical time period. In order for students to truly gain an understanding of how our nation came to be, it is imperative they fully comprehend the culture and experiences of its earliest inhabitants and understand the changes that have taken place in America, as evidenced through the literature of significant time periods. The eras discussed during this unit of study are:

Literature of Early America: Beginnings to 1750 (4 days)

Early National Literature: 1750-1800 (4 days)

Nineteenth-Century Literature: 1800-1870 (7 days)

Age of Realism: 1850-1914 (7 days)

The Modern Age: 1914-1946 (20 days)

The Contemporary Period: 1946-Present (25 days)

The Big Ideas embedded in this unit of study are:

- Works are often written to reflect major changes or shifts in a society or among a people; this is evident when connecting time periods in American history to the literature of each era.
- Writers use literature to communicate or persuade readers, often focusing on issues of religion, politics, or overcoming oppression.
- Common themes overlap works of literature; themes that extend across literary eras must be discussed as they relate to the events or issues evident during each specific era in question.
- Nonfiction works such as speeches or pamphlets must be analyzed to determine purpose and theme based upon the social, political, economic and religious context in which they were originally written and/or presented.
- In literature as in society, America's strength lies in its diversity.

Enduring Understandings:

- Works of literature reflect events occurring in a society at the time when they are written.
- Reading works of American literature through an historical lens will allow a reader to gain a stronger understanding of societal, economic, political, or religious changes to and shifts in American culture.
- All literature is rooted in culture.
- Many modern stories use ideas from past stories as a focus; common themes extend across genres and across literary eras.
- When comparing works across eras, it is imperative that a reader consider the context in which each work was written to fully understand the theme.

- Nonfiction works such as biographical or autobiographical pieces, speeches, or pamphlets reflect an individual's or group's personal thoughts and/or experiences at a particular time in history.

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to reflect upon an historical time period by analyzing the writings of that time period?
- What makes reading literature of a time period different from reading a nonfiction account of the time?
- How is culture defined?
- What has helped define American culture?
- Where do people get their beliefs?
- How are beliefs passed from one generation to another?
- What is the oral tradition?
- How does one identify theme when it is not explicitly stated?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Reading works of literature, both fiction and nonfiction, help one to understand an historical time period more thoroughly because they provide a personal insight into social, political, economic and religious events of the time.
- "Culture consists of the beliefs, behaviors, objects and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values and contribute to society. Thus, culture includes many societal aspects: language, customs, values, norms, mores, rules, tools, technologies, products, organizations and institutions" (Culture and Societies Online).
- The diversity for which America is known is also evidenced when reading American literature.
- Many works of literature share common themes, which must be inferred from information provided in the text.
- Common themes can extend across literary eras, but it is imperative to review and evaluate a theme based upon the historical and societal context in which it was written.

Acquired Skills:

- Read works of literature from six different American literary eras: Literature of Early America, Early National Literature, Nineteenth-Century Literature, Age of Realism, the Modern Age and the Contemporary Period.
- Extrapolate key literary elements and explain how changing one element would result in changes for the remaining elements (i.e., a different setting, a different antagonist, a different decision made mid-story, etc.)
- Analyze the writer's use of figurative language and literary devices.
- Examine the style, tone, mood and form of literary works from varying time periods and discuss what the writing says about the era's writers.
- Connect works of literature, both fiction and nonfiction, to social, historical, political and/or religious events that occurred in America at the time when the work was originally written.
- Explain what a work says or tells about the culture it represents in the time period when it was written.

- Compare works from different authors from different cultures, ethnicities, or races that were written during the same time period and explain what it says about differences between groups at the time when it was written.
- Compare works that share a common theme, from within the same time period or across time periods and explain what it tells about the era(s).

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Original writings mimicking the style of a particular time period (i.e., religious influence of the early Americans, fragmentation of the Modernists, etc.)
- Tests or quizzes including written responses to text-based questions
- Journals writing (response journal, reflective journal, character journal, etc.)
- Essay writing
- Research simulation tasks or literary analysis tasks that require students to compare concepts, topics, or themes across sources (benchmark)

Instructional Materials Organized by Literary Era):

Literature of Early America (Beginnings to 1750):

In order for students to truly gain an understanding of how our nation came to be, it is imperative they fully comprehend the culture and experiences of its earliest inhabitants. Therefore, this unit includes a study of Native American original myths, narrative accounts of the Puritan settlers, as well as their poetry and significant sermons of the era. Each of these elements is integral as they each contributed to the establishment of the American we live in today.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - “The Earth on Turtle’s Back” An Onondaga Myth
 - From “The Navajo Origin Legend”
 - “A Journey through Texas” by Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca
 - “Boulders Taller than the Great Tower of Seville” by Garcia Lopez de Cardenas
 - From “Of Plymouth Plantation” by William Bradford
 - “To My Dear and Loving Husband” by Anne Bradstreet
 - “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” by Jonathan Edwards

Early National Literature (1750-1800):

The fight of the colonists to gain independence from England was documented in the literature from this time period. Much of the writing was autobiographical and took the form of speeches of pamphlets. America’s promise of a new birth of freedom, however, existed side by side with the dehumanizing institution of slavery. Thus, this unit of study includes readings that capture the colonists’ voices for freedom, speeches that extolled the nation’s founding ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and literary works that describe the slave trade that contradicted to the colonists’ fight for freedom.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - From “The Autobiography” and from “Poor Richard’s Almanack” by Benjamin Franklin
 - From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano” by Olaudah Equiano

- *The Declaration of Independence*, Thomas Jefferson
- “An Hymn to the Evening” and “To His Excellency, General Washington” by Phyllis Wheatley
- *Speech in the Virginia Convention*, Patrick Henry

Nineteenth-Century Literature (1800-1870):

By 1870, industrialism, explosive population and economic growth and the Civil War had all aged the nation’s spirit; American literature matured during this time as well. As America expanded west, so too, did American literature and advances in technology spirited social change. The writers of this period would define the American voice—personal, idiosyncratic, bold—the primary theme of most works was the quest of the individual to define him- or herself. The Romantics and Transcendentalists evolved from this time period in American literature. Thus, the readings in this unit include writings by Romantic authors, who elevated imagination over reason and intuition over fact, as well as works by Transcendentalists, who wrote literature that merged philosophy with religion and felt that the most fundamental truths lie outside the experience of the senses.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - “The Devil and Tom Walker” by Washington Irving
 - “The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
 - “Thanatopsis” by William Cullen Bryant
 - “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe
 - “The Minister’s Black Veil” by Nathaniel Hawthorn
 - From “Self-Reliance” and “Concord Hymn” by Ralph Waldo Emerson
 - From “Walden” and From “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau
- Core Book:
 - *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Age of Realism (1850-1914):

In the fifty years after the Civil War, physical expansion and industrialization transformed the American landscape, economy, society and identity; this also created new extremes of wealth and poverty. And just as it dominated politics and preoccupied the nation, the controversy over slavery influenced the literature of the day. Women, African Americans and workers agitated for change in their social, economic and political status. Thus, the works studied during this unit include wartime voices, the Black spiritual, Frontier voices, Naturalism and literature of discontent.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - “An Episode of War” by Stephen Crane
 - “Willie Has Gone to War” by Stephen Foster and George Cooper
 - “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”
 - From “My Bondage and My Freedom” by Frederick Douglass
 - *The Gettysburg Address* and *Emancipation Proclamation* by Abraham Lincoln
 - “An Account of an Experience with Discrimination” by Sojourner Truth
 - From “Life on the Mississippi” by Mark Twain
 - “To Build a Fire” by Jack London
 - “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin

- Core Books:
 - *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
 - *Spoon River Anthology* by Edgar Lee Masters

The Modern Age (1914-1946):

The America that entered the twentieth century was a nation achieving world dominance while simultaneously losing some of its youthful innocence and brash confidence. Two world wars, a dizzying decade of prosperity, a devastating worldwide depression and a renaissance in the small New York town of Harlem mark this era. With these events came a new age American literature, one of artistic experimentation and lasting literary achievement. The Modernists sought to capture the essence of modern life in both the form and content of their work and they dramatically altered the complexion of American literature; proof of this acclaim is the number of Americans who won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Thus, this unit of study will include works that highlight the troubled times of the era as well as those that highlight the changes in American literature.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - “The Great Figure” by William Carlos Williams
 - “Winter Dreams” by F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - “The Turtle” from *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck
 - “In Another Country” by Ernest Hemingway
 - “Ambush” by Tim O’Brien
 - “A Rose for Emily” and *Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech* by William Faulkner
 - “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” and “Acquainted With the Night” by Robert Frost
- Core Books:
 - *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway
 - *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (required text)
 - *Black Boy* by Richard Wright

Contemporary Period (1946-Present):

The years from the end of World War II to the present have been a time of change. Great strides have been made in civil rights and women’s rights. These changes and others have had an effect on American literature. The turbulence of contemporary times has contributed to the development of Postmodernism, where some writers explore new literary forms and techniques (i.e., dialogue alone, blending fiction and nonfiction, experimenting with the physical appearance of their work) while others focus on capturing contemporary life, addressing the impersonal and commercial nature of today’s world. The writers of the Contemporary Period are proving that in literature as in society, America’s strength lies in its diversity. The readings in this unit will reflect such diversity in an ever-changing world.

- *The American Experience* (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007):
 - “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker
 - “Hunger in New York City” by Simon J. Ortiz
 - “What For” by Garrett Hongo
 - “Loneliness...An American Malady” by Carson McCullers
 - “Straw Into Gold: The Metamorphosis of the Everyday” by Sandra Cisneros

- “Mother Tongue” by Amy Tan
- From “Hiroshima” by John Hersey
- “Mirror” by Sylvia Plath
- *Inaugural Address* by John F. Kennedy
- From “Letter from Birmingham City Jail” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- “Camouflaging the Chimera” by Yusef Komunyakaa
- Core Books:
 - *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
 - *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry (required text)
 - *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd
 - *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail* Jerome Lawrence
 - *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
 - *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (required text)
 - *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
 - *Fences* by August Wilson
 - *Piano Lesson* by August Wilson

Much of the description highlighted here is from *The American Experience* (Prentice Hall, 2007).

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- All of the units included in this study of literary eras will connect to American history. One objective of this study is to look at literature through an historical lens, so the cross-content reading and writing is imbedded.
- Studying the technological advances that have influenced American society would be an interesting way to include scientific study within the units presented here.
- When studying American history, the arts can be presented to show a visual representation of a particular event, time period, etc.

Technology Connections:

- Websites such as Docs Teach (<https://www.docsteach.org/>) provide primary and secondary source documents that can be infused to build historical background for all literary ears of study
- American Literature Association: A coalition of Societies Devoted to the Study of American Authors, Princeton University (<http://americanliteratureassociation.org/>)
- Washington State University’s American literature information available at <http://www.wsu.edu/~campbelld/amlit/sites.htm>
- The Cambridge History of English and American Literature: Great Books Online (<http://www.bartleby.com/cambridge/>)

Accommodations or Modifications:

- Utilizing graphic organizers while reading will assist student in focusing on what the teacher feels is key information. Dependent readers often struggle with what is “important,” so providing a graphic organizer helps them to focus. Differentiating graphic organizers holds all students accountable for extrapolating key information from a text but provides flexibility for the teacher, allowing him/her to meet the diverse needs of students within a classroom.

- Many of the suggested readings and required titles are available on audio CD or eBook download. Providing such resources allows auditory learners the ability to learn within their preferred learning style. It is important to note that an audio recording is not intended to replace reading the work, rather as an additional support for students.
- Video versions of literature read in class (i.e., *The Crucible*, *A Raisin in the Sun*) can be used to support struggling readers or to help students learn the strategy of visualization when reading. It is important to know that a video is not intended to replace reading the work, rather as an additional support for students.
- Teachers can adopt and utilize different versions of the same text and can differentiate the reading materials to meet students' need.
- Differentiated class assignments will help to meet the needs of various learners.

List of Applicable Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts:

- Reading Standards for Literature: RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.7, RL.11-12.9, RL.11-12.10
- Reading Standards for Informational Texts: RI.11-12.1, RI.11-12.2, RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.5, RI.11-12.6, RI.11-12.7, RI.11-12.9, RI.11-12.10
- Writing Standards: WS.11-12.2a, WS.11-12.2b, WS.11-12.2c, WS.11-12.2d, WS.11-12.2e, WS.11-12.2f, WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.5, WS.11-12.7, WS.11-12.9a, WS.11-12.9b, WS.11-12.10

Thematic Comparison [Benchmark Assessment]:

Project Description

You have spent the last several weeks reading many works of literature from different American literary eras. As we've discussed, it is important for you to understand the time period in which a work was written (social, political, economic, and/or religious) in order to fully understand the author's purpose and the work's theme.

Essay Prompt

- Choose two works from the same literary era read during this semester and identify and explain the overarching theme.
- Identify the literary time period in which the work was written and briefly explain the social, political, economic, and/or religious influences that may have influenced the overarching theme.
- Connect the work itself with the historical information presented above. How is this work reflective of the time period?

NOTE: The emphasis of this assignment is on the connection between and analysis of the work and the time period; this is not intended to be a summary.

Unit 2: Research Simulation Tasks, Literary Analysis Tasks and Writing Across Multiple Sources (Pacing-20 Days; some are embedded within Unit 1)

Why Is This Unit Important?

Synthesizing information from a variety of different sources, connecting research to literature and supporting a thesis with details written in one's own words or cited from its original source are essential skills in reading and writing. The Big Ideas included in this unit of study are:

- A clearly-written thesis statement will convey the main idea of an essay or research paper.
- Details extrapolated from different sources and from different kinds of sources (i.e., books, databases, literary criticism, videos, radio addresses, speeches, websites, etc.) must be used to support a thesis statement; synthesis of information from a variety of sources is key.
- Details obtained when reading an informational text may provide insight into the analysis of a particular work or an author's body of work.
- Providing in-text or parenthetical citations for newly acquired information obtained through research is necessary to avoid the accusation of *plagiarism*.
- A works cited page is recommended to provide a source list when a research paper is completed.
- Writing a narrative, argumentative, or informational essay including information synthesized from multiple sources is a skill that will carry a student through high school and into college.

Enduring Understandings:

- A research simulation task (RST) requires that students synthesize information across informational sources and respond to a text-based question using evidence from multiple sources. A literary analysis task (LAT) requires the same cross-source writing, but it involves works of fiction rather than works of information.
- The main idea of an entire RST or LAT must be summarized in one sentence; this is called the thesis statement. The remainder of the research paper must provide support for this statement.
- Primary sources (i.e., speech, interview) differ from secondary sources (i.e., biography, book, and informational video) in that primary sources were created during the time under study while secondary sources interpret or analyze primary sources. Each has value, but each must be considered and used differently.
- Plagiarism, also known as literary theft, is defined by Merriam-Webster in the following way: to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; to use (another's production) without crediting the source.
- In-text or parenthetical citations are used to credit an original writer for his or her words or thoughts. Such citations must connect to works listed on a works cited page.
- MLA and APA styles are commonly used to document sources and citations at post-secondary institutions and within the world of work.

Essential Questions:

- How does one summarize the thoughts presented in an entire research paper in only one sentence?
- What is the benefit of a primary source over a secondary source or vice versa?
- How do you utilize secondary sources to support a literary analysis?
- Do writers use personal experiences as inspiration for their writing?
- What impact does the historical and/or social context surrounding a work of literature have on the work itself?
- How is plagiarism of literary works similar to copyright infringement related to music lyrics?
- When would one use APA format instead of MLA format when writing a research paper?

Acquired Knowledge:

- The key ideas presented in an RST or LAT must clearly connect to and support the thesis statement.
- The thesis statement must be supported with the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- Details to support the thesis must be synthesized from multiple print and digital sources, all of which are credible and accurate.
- Complex ideas, concepts and information must be organized so each idea builds upon that which precedes it to create a unified whole (including formatting).
- Primary and secondary sources must be used to obtain information that will help a reader to more thoroughly understand the life of a writer, the times in which an author lived and wrote and the work that a writer produced.
- The historical and social contexts surrounding a work of literature influence the meaning of the writing.
- A works cited page and note cards help a writer to organize notes and sources in order to organize the paper and avoid plagiarism.
- Precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile and analogy help the writer to manage the complexity of a subject.
- It is necessary to sustain a formal style and objective tone while managing the complexity of the research topic.
- Avoid plagiarism by following MLA or APA format for citations (i.e., parenthetical citations and a works cited page).
- The conclusion of the research essay or term paper must flow logically from the information presented or explanation provided.

Acquired Skills:

- Craft a thesis statement that identifies the main idea of the paper and is supported by all ideas and details presented in the paper.
- Utilize the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations and other examples to support the thesis statement.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources using advanced search features; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source and quote or paraphrase the information.

- Differentiate between primary and secondary sources, using each kind of source appropriately, to support a literary analysis.
- Synthesize information related to the life of an American author, the historical events that occurred in his/her lifetime and the social context in which he/she lived and make connections between that research and a specific work of literature written by the author.
- Quote or paraphrase data and conclusions obtained through research and provide explanations in one's own wording.
- Utilize note cards and a works cited page when conducting research and taking notes.
- Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile and analogy as an aide in managing the complexity of the writing.
- Maintain a formal, objective style and tone throughout the writing.
- Include parenthetical citations that connect to a works cited page, both following MLA format.
- Draft a conclusion section that flows logically from the information and explanations presented in the research essay or term paper.
- Apply the rules of Standard English presented through mini-lessons as well as those offered during teacher conferences when drafting and when editing his/her draft.

Major Assessments:

- RSTs or LATs embedded into the reading units of study in this curriculum
- PARCC Scoring Rubric for Prose Constructed Response Items: Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task (benchmark)
- Graphic organizers such as Cornell Notes, outlines, etc.
- Teacher conferences, observations and anecdotal notes
- Self-editing, peer-editing, or teacher-feedback sheets

Instructional Materials:

- RSTs and LATs embedded into the Collections units of study
- Graphic organizers such as Cornell Note sheets or outlines
- MLA Handbook
- Citation Samples
- Self, peer and teacher revising and editing checklists
- Project-specific directions and assessment rubric, to be distributed at the beginning of a project or assignment so students are aware of expectations
- Research materials including online resources, district databases, books and videos
 - NOTE: It is recommended that English teachers involve the Media Specialist during the research process.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- When researching the life of an American author or the historical and social context in which a work was written, students will make connections to learning and discussion from history classes.
- Informational texts, especially primary source documents from American history, will be helpful to build background knowledge for some literary works (e.g., *The Crucible*; *The Great Gatsby*; *A Raisin in the Sun*)

Technology Connections:

- Online resources and district databases to conduct research
- Videos to add research opportunities for visual learners
- Websites such as Docs Teach (<https://www.docsteach.org/>) provide primary and secondary source documents that can be infused into all three thematic units of study.
- Released RST and LAT prompts and proficient student responses from the PARCC assessment online at <https://prc.parcconline.org/assessments/parcc-released-items>
- Students can draft, revise and edit, peer review and publish within Google Drive
- Websites such as Easy Bib (www.easybib.com) and Works Cited for You (www.workscited4u.com) help students to format a works cited page by asking them to key information into blanks.
- Websites such as StudyGuide.org (www.studyguide.org/MLAdocumentation.htm) and the Purdue Online Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>) provide links to help students see samples of parenthetical citations as well as works cited pages.

Accommodations or Modifications:

- Using graphic organizers such as blank outlines, note cards, or works cited organizers will help students to focus on the correct information and will ultimately help them to organize their research paper.
- Teachers can differentiate the number of works required for the analysis (i.e., one work, a novel and a poem, or a two full-length works) or they can provide some of the sources and differentiate their expectations related to students obtaining their own reliable, relevant, unbiased sources.
- Exemplary research essays or essay templates provide support for struggling readers and writers. Providing exemplary benchmarks is a best practice that helps students to more thoroughly understand expectations and provides a model for them to use as a guide.
- Individual teacher conferences enable a teacher to provide specific feedback to students; doing so supports the struggling writer while challenging the gifted writer.

Applicable Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts:

- Reading Standards for Literature: RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.9
- Reading Standards for Informational Texts: RI.11-12.1, RI.11-12.2, RI.11-12.9
- Writing Standards: WS.11-12.2a, WS.11-12.2b, WS.11-12.2c, WS.11-12.2d, WS.11-12.2e, WS.11-12.2f, WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.5, WS.11-12.7, WS.11-12.8, WS.11-12.9a, WS.11-12.9b, WS.11-12.10

Benchmark Assessment Rubric:

GRADES 6-11 (July 2015) PARCC SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS

Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task

Construct Measured	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Reading Comprehension and Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates full comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and inferentially by providing an accurate analysis; addresses the prompt and provides effective and comprehensive development of the claim or topic that is consistently appropriate to task, purpose, and audience; uses clear reasoning supported by relevant text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic; is effectively organized with clear and coherent writing; establishes and maintains an effective style. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a mostly accurate analysis; addresses the prompt and provides mostly effective development of claim or topic that is mostly appropriate to task, purpose, and audience; uses mostly clear reasoning supported by relevant text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic; is organized with mostly clear and coherent writing; establishes and maintains a mostly effective style. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates basic comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a generally accurate analysis; addresses the prompt and provides some development of claim or topic that is somewhat appropriate to task, purpose, and audience; uses some reasoning and text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic; demonstrates some organization with somewhat coherent writing; has a style that is somewhat effective. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a minimally accurate analysis; addresses the prompt and provides minimal development of claim or topic that is limited in its appropriateness to task, purpose, and audience uses limited reasoning and text-based evidence; demonstrates limited organization and coherence; has a style that is minimally effective. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates no comprehension of ideas by providing an inaccurate or no analysis; is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to task, purpose, and audience; includes little to no text-based evidence lacks organization and coherence; has an inappropriate style.
Knowledge of Language and Conventions		<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding, but the meaning is generally clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt does not demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English at the appropriate level of complexity. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding.</p>

Unit 3: Informational, Explanatory or Expository Writing (Pacing: 15 Days; some are embedded within Unit 1)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will focus on the craft of informational, explanatory, expository essay writing and will help students to develop the skills needed to effectively communicate with an audience. The purpose of informational/explanatory/expository essay writing is for the writer to synthesize information from primary and secondary sources and craft an essay that serves one of three purposes: 1) to increase a reader's knowledge of a subject, 2) to help a reader better understand a procedure or process, or 3) to provide a reader with an enhanced comprehension of a concept. The Big Ideas embedded through this unit are:

- The main idea or central focus of the essay must be clearly articulated in the thesis and that thesis must be supported with facts obtained from reliable and unbiased sources.
- Thoughts presented in the essay must be organized logically and coherently; transitions must be smooth and must occur naturally.
- A writer's selection of words is one of the most important factors he/she must consider when writing; precision of language and use of domain-specific vocabulary are essential with informational writing.
- Strong essays must meet certain criteria (i.e., the opening and closing are evident, main idea is clearly expressed and is supported with specific details, word choice is powerful and language is skillfully used, voice is clear and powerful, sentence structure is used correctly, a consistent verb tense is maintained throughout a piece and Standard English is used effectively) to be considered proficient.
- Writers continually revise and edit their work to improve their writing, specifically focusing on organization, development, voice, word choice, sentence structure and the conventions of writing.

Enduring Understandings:

- A topic must be supported using 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, all obtained from reliable and unbiased sources.
- The information must be organized so each new piece of information builds on the last, creating a unified and coherent whole.
- When drafting an informational piece, a writer must attend to task, purpose and audience and must maintain an appropriate style and tone.
- A writer's voice and word choice must be passionate and powerful so his/her message is clearly conveyed.
- Writing is never 'done' and can always be improved. It is a recursive process, so writers can move from stage to stage, either forward or backward.

Essential Questions:

- What is the purpose of informational/explanatory/expository writing?
- What differentiates essay writing from other forms of writing (i.e., narrative, prose or poetry, memoir etc.)?

- How does a writer support his or her thoughts without repeating himself or herself? How does one use support to strengthen a work?
- What makes a source more “reliable” than another?
- Why is it important to consider audience and purpose when organizing one’s writing?
- What does the literary term *voice* mean? How does one include *voice* in his or her writing?
- Why is vivid and precise use of language so important?
- What is *Standard English* and why is it important to use *Standard English* in academic writing?

Acquired Knowledge:

- The author’s purpose with informational/explanatory/expository writing is to provide information to a reader that increases his/her knowledge, help him or her to better understand a process or procedure, or provide a reader with an enhanced understanding of a concept.
- Specific evidence must take the form of facts, statistics, quotes, or details and must be obtained from reliable, unbiased sources. The information presented must be the most significant and most relevant to the task at hand.
- Key ideas must be connected to the topic and must flow with varied transitions and syntax so major sections of the text are connected, relationships among complex ideas are clear and the writing is cohesive.
- Precise language, domain-specific wording and technical wording will help to sustain a formal objective style that is straightforward and appropriate for a reader seeking information.
- A concluding paragraph or section must flow logically from the information or explanation provided, restate the main idea and summarize key points, all without repeating what was already stated or introducing new information.

Acquired Skills:

- Create a thoughtfully-worded thesis that communicates the main idea of an informational essay.
- Support a thesis with the most significant and appropriate, relevant and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- Evaluate sources for reliability and possible bias before deciding from which source to record information; use only reliable, credible and unbiased sources.
- Connect all key ideas to the topic and/or writing prompt utilizing transitions, thus clearly creating fluency and cohesion; each new idea must build upon those preceding it.
- Utilize precise language, domain-specific wording and technical wording (where appropriate) to communicate information in a formal, objective style and tone.
- Include compositional risks (i.e., anecdote, rhetorical question, development of mood, etc.) that create a voice appropriate to the audience and purpose.
- Draft a conclusion paragraph or section that flows logically from the information or explanation presented in the essay and effectively concludes thoughts presented in the work, all without repeating what was already stated or introducing new information.
- Apply the rules of Standard English presented through mini-lessons as well as those offered during teacher conferences when drafting and when editing his/her draft.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Expository Essay Graphic Organizer (benchmark)
- Teacher conference, observations and anecdotal records
- Writer's notebook
- Self-editing, peer-editing, or teacher-editing checklists

Instructional Materials:

- Text-specific prompts will be embedded into the literary era unit of study
- Graphic organizers

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Given the literature studied in this course, students will need to write using evidence specifically related to American history.
- Contemporary events that connect to historical or scientific topics also provide an opportunity for cross-content reading and writing.

Technology Connections:

- Students can be provided time on the computer to research a particular topic.
- District databases are available for students to ensure reliability of sources.
- All student drafting, peer and self-revising and editing, teacher feedback and publishing can be completed in Google Drive.
- Historical vides or speeches can be used as informational sources.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL, or Gifted Learners:

- Essay topics can be differentiated based upon student interest, difficulty of interpretation, etc. Students can also be asked to choose a topic of interest to them as the focus of an expository essay.
- In the writing workshop, mini-lessons provide guidance for students to improve their writing. Such mini-lessons are planned based upon the needs of the students, thus incorporating differentiation into planning and instruction.
- Individual conferences are held, at which time teachers model good writing and provide individual instruction and/or feedback to students to meet each child's individual needs. Such a format supports the struggling writer while challenging the gifted writer.
- Models and mentor texts must be provided so that students struggling with a concept or who are reluctant writers have exemplars surrounding them; individual or small group conferences provide time for a teacher to help students make connections between a mentor text(s) and their own writing.
- Gifted writers and thinkers can be challenged to think beyond the literal by providing them with insightful, powerful, somewhat challenging quotes as the focus of explanatory essays. Students can also be given time to conduct research on the history, interpretation and use of selected quotes.

List of Applicable Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts:

- Writing Standards: WS.11-12.2a, WS.11-12.2b, WS.11-12.2c, WS.11-12.2d, WS.11-12.2e, WS.11-12.2f, WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.5, WS.11-12.10

Benchmark Assessment:

EXPOSITORY WRITING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Name: _____ Date: _____

Topic: _____

Opening Sentences:

Transition Word or Phrase

Reason #1 Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Transition Word or Phrase



Reason #2 Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Transition Word or Phrase

Reason #3 Topic Sentence: _____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Concluding Summary: _____

What vocabulary words will I use? _____

NOTE: This organizer is intended to help students organize their notes and thoughts; it is not intended to keep students limited to a five paragraph response.

Unit 4: Argument Writing (Pacing: 15 Days; some are embedded within Unit 1)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will focus on the craft of argumentative essay writing and will help students to develop the skills needed to effectively persuade an audience. Topics presented for argumentative written responses may be based upon controversial issues, current events, or controversial topics that reveal themselves when reading the literature or informational texts assigned in class. The Big Ideas embedded through this unit are:

- The purpose of argument writing is for a writer to clearly and powerfully communicate his or her position to a reader and to support that position with factual information (i.e., history, scientific evidence, current events, information presented in literature) in order to support his/her argument.
- The ideas presented in the essay must support a clearly worded thesis (purpose).
- Strong essays must meet certain criteria including the following: the opening and closing are evident; main idea is clearly expressed in the thesis, is maintained throughout the essay and is supported with specific details; word choice is powerful and language is skillfully used; voice is clear and powerful; sentence structure is used correctly; a consistent verb tense is maintained throughout a piece; and Standard English is used effectively.
- Writers continually revise and edit their work to improve their writing, specifically focusing on organization, development, voice, word choice, sentence structure and the conventions of writing.

Enduring Understandings:

- A thesis statement is the main claim that a writer is making (i.e., the argument) and is supporting throughout the essay.
- Support can take the form of definitions, details, or quotations, must be factual and must be retrieved from a reliable source.
- It is important not only to develop the argument, but also to avoid logical fallacies and use sound reasoning when arguing against a counterclaim.
- A writer must be cognizant of task, purpose and audience and must maintain an appropriate style and tone throughout the piece.
- A writer's selection of words is one of the most important factors he/she must consider when writing; knowledge of one's audience and precision of language are essential.
- A writer's voice must be passionate and powerful so his/her message is clearly conveyed.
- Writing is never 'done' and can always be improved. It is a recursive process, so writers can move from stage to stage, either forward or backward.

Essential Questions:

- What is the purpose of argumentative essay writing? What differentiates argument writing from other forms of writing (i.e., informational, expository, narrative, speculative)?
- Why is it important to consider task, audience and purpose when organizing one's writing?

- How can one utilize evidence from literature when supporting one's position in an argumentative piece?
- What does the literary term *voice* mean? How does one include *voice* in his or her writing?
- Why is vivid and precise use of language so important?
- What is *Standard English* and why is it important to use *Standard English* in academic writing?

Acquired Knowledge:

- To demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the topic, one must support a claim with the most important information, sound reasoning and detailed, relevant and sufficient evidence from the most reliable and credible sources.
- An effective argument not only acknowledges the opposing point of view, but also distinguishes it from the opposing claim and respectfully discredits it.
- Both claims and counterclaims must be presented fairly, evidence for each must be supplied and strengths and limitations of both are necessary, all while avoiding common logical fallacies and propaganda devices.
- Predicting the audience's knowledge and level of concern is essential and must be addressed when presenting claims and counterclaims.
- Argument writing sustains a formal style and objective tone based solely on fact.
- The voice a writer projects in an argumentative piece must be passionate and convincing; the voice must match the purpose.
- A concluding paragraph or section must flow from the argument and end powerfully (i.e., call to action, symbolic ending, reconnection to the beginning, etc.).

Acquired Skills:

- Read informational texts within the 11-12 grade-band related to a topic or issue and determine a position based upon relevant facts from reliable sources.
- Use credible sources when supporting a position, fully explain the relevance of both claims and counterclaims and present a logical, detailed explanation of reasoning while avoiding common logical fallacies and propaganda devices.
- Provide both claims and counterclaims, anticipating the level of knowledge and concerns of an audience and addressing such issues, culminating in an argument.
- Utilize transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link major sections of the text and create cohesion while noting the differences between claims and counterclaims so the writer does not change 'positions'.
- Maintain an objective style and tone appropriate for the purpose and audience of the piece.
- Write with a passionate, authentic and convincing voice that is appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Draft a conclusion paragraph or section that flows naturally from the argument, ends powerfully and attempts to leave the reader thinking (i.e., call to action, symbolic ending, circular ending, etc.).
- Apply the rules of Standard English presented through mini-lessons as well as those offered during teacher conferences when drafting and when editing his/her draft.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Argument Writing Rubric adapted from Collections, 2017 (benchmark)
- Graphic organizer such as a Roman Numeral outline
- Teacher conference, observations and anecdotal records
- Writer's notebook
- Self-editing, peer-editing, or teacher-editing checklists

Instructional Materials:

- Argument essays embedded into Unit 1: Eras in American Literature
- Argument essay prompts based upon paired texts not connected to literature from Unit 1
- Graphic organizers
- Self, peer and teacher revising and editing checklists

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Argumentative essay prompts connect to topics that are presented in other content areas such as controversial topics or decisions from American history or controversial issues related to science or the social sciences.
- Social, political, or religious issues that arise when reading American literature can serve as the focus for additional cross-content reading.

Technology Connections:

- Lessons and resources to help students develop evidence-based arguments are available on websites such as Read Write Think (<http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/developing-evidence-based-arguments-31034.html>) and Achieve the Core (http://achievethecore.org/category/330/student-writing-samples?filter_cat=503&sort=dlc).
- Websites such as Docs Teach (<https://www.docsteach.org/>) provide primary and secondary source documents that can be infused into all three thematic units of study.
- District databases such as Facts on File: Issues and Controversies.
- All student drafting, peer and self-revising and editing, teacher feedback and publishing can be completed in Google Drive.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL, or Gifted Learners:

- Writing prompts can be differentiated based upon student interest, difficulty of content, etc. Students can also be asked to self-select the topic of their persuasive/argumentative essay, especially when initially introducing form and structure; providing choice has been shown to motivate reluctant writers.
- In the writing workshop, mini-lessons provide guidance for students to improve their writing. Such mini-lessons are planned based upon the needs of the students, thus incorporating differentiation into planning and instruction.
- Individual conferences are held, at which time teachers model good writing and provide individual instruction and/or feedback to students to meet each child's individual needs. Such a format supports the struggling writer while challenging the gifted writer.

- Models and exemplary benchmarks must be provided so that students struggling with a concept or who are reluctant writers have exemplars surrounding them; individual or small group conferences provide time for a teacher to help students make connections between a mentor text(s) and their own writing.
- Gifted writers and thinkers can be challenged to write about content-based persuasive or argumentative essays. This could potentially require gifted readers and writers to conduct research, read nonfiction texts, synthesize information, evaluate research for bias, form his/her own opinion and then write a response in a structured way.

List of Applicable Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

- Writing Standards: WS.11-12.1a, WS.11-12.1b, WS.11-12.1c, WS.11-12.1d, WS.11-12.1e, WS.11-12.4, WS.11-12.5, WS.11-12.9a, WS.11-12.9b, WS.11-12.10

Benchmark Assessment - Argument Writing Rubric:

	4 - Exceeding	3-Meeting	2 - Developing	1 - Emerging
IDEAS AND EVIDENCE	<p>The introduction engages the audience; the claim is precise and clearly states a position on an issue.</p> <p>Logical reasons and relevant, sufficient evidence convincingly support the writer's claim. There is a substantive <i>analysis</i> of the topic.</p> <p>Opposing claims and counterclaims are developed fairly and thoroughly and are supported with relevant evidence. Common Logical fallacies are avoided.</p> <p>The conclusion logically follows up on the main ideas of the argument and restates the claim.</p>	<p>The introduction could do more to grab the audience's attention; the claim states a position on an issue but could be more precise.</p> <p>Most reasons and evidence are relevant and support the writer's claim. There is some <i>analysis</i> of the topic.</p> <p>Opposing claims and counterclaims are developed fairly, but their supporting evidence could be addressed more thoroughly. Some common fallacies may be present.</p> <p>The concluding section mostly follows up on the main ideas of the argument and restates the claim.</p>	<p>The introduction is not engaging; the claim identifies an issue, but the writer's position is not clearly stated.</p> <p>The reasons and evidence are not always logically connected to the writer's claim.</p> <p>Opposing claims are identified, but counterclaims are not developed fairly or addressed thoroughly.</p> <p>The concluding section includes an incomplete summary of the main ideas and claims and leaves loose ends for the audience.</p>	<p>The introduction is missing or does not include a claim.</p> <p>Supporting reasons and evidence are missing or are not connected to the claim.</p> <p>Opposing and counterclaims are neither identified nor developed.</p> <p>The concluding section is missing.</p>

	4 - Exceeding	3-Meeting	2 - Developing	1 - Emerging
ORGANIZATION	<p>Reasons and evidence are organized logically and consistently throughout the argument.</p> <p>Transitions link major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify relationships between claims and counterclaims.</p>	<p>The organization of reasons and evidence could be clearer in a few places, but it is mostly easy to follow.</p> <p>A few more transitions are needed to connect evidence and reasons to the claim; the text could be more coherent.</p>	<p>The organization of reasons and evidence is weak in several places.</p> <p>More transitions are needed to connect evidence and reasons to the claim; the text is incoherent in some places.</p>	<p>A logical organization is not used; reasons and evidence are presented randomly.</p> <p>Transitions are not used, making the argument incoherent and difficult to understand.</p>
LANGUAGE	<p>The writing has an appropriately formal style and an objective tone.</p> <p>Persuasive techniques are used appropriately and effectively throughout the argument.</p> <p>Sentences have a variety of beginnings, lengths and structures. They flow rhythmically.</p> <p>Spelling, capitalization and punctuation are correct.</p> <p>Grammar and usage are correct.</p>	<p>The style becomes too informal in a few places and the tone is uneven.</p> <p>Some effective persuasive techniques are used.</p> <p>Sentences are correctly structured and complete, but could have more variety and flow.</p> <p>Some capitalization and punctuation mistakes occur.</p> <p>Some grammatical and usage errors are repeated in the argument.</p>	<p>The style and tone are inconsistent; the style may be too informal in places.</p> <p>Few effective persuasive techniques are used, or some techniques are used inappropriately.</p> <p>Sentence structures have very little variety, with some fragments or run-ons.</p> <p>Spelling and capitalization mistakes occur and punctuation is inconsistent.</p> <p>Grammar and usage are incorrect in many places; the writer's meaning is still clear.</p>	<p>The style and tone are inappropriate for the argument or audience.</p> <p>Persuasive techniques are missing or inappropriate.</p> <p>Repetitive sentence structure, fragments and run-ons make the writing hard to follow.</p> <p>Spelling and capitalization are often incorrect and punctuation is missing.</p> <p>Many grammatical and usage errors change the meaning of ideas and make the writing hard to understand.</p>
USE OF SOURCES	<p>All information was obtained from reliable, credible, unbiased sources.</p>	<p>Most information was obtained from reliable, credible, unbiased sources.</p>	<p>Some information may have been obtained from unreliable or biased sources.</p>	<p>The student did not evaluate sources for reliability or bias.</p>

Adapted from Collections (2017)