



[CONNECTIONS]

English Language Arts

GRADE 8

UNIT 1 Essential Question What are the benefits and challenges of living in a diverse society?

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
Chapter 1 Poetry from <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i> by Thannha Lai 9 pages	Making Inferences (10, 18)	Analyzing Symbolism and Theme (20)	Analyzing how Structure Contributes to Meaning (22)	Verbals (24)	Response Journal (18) Write three sentences— inferences (20) Write a short paragraph— symbolism (22) Write a paragraph— structure (24) Write three sentences using verbals (26)	Review a peer's paragraph on structure (24)	Traditional Food Brochure (26) Free Verse Poetry (27)	Research Suggested full text: <i>Drita, My Homegirl</i> (28)	Making Inferences, identifying themes, analyzing structure (29)
Chapter 2 Novel from <i>The House on Mango Street</i> by Sandra Cisneros 4 pages	Analyzing Theme (34, 38)	Analyzing How Structure Reveals Character (39)	Comparing the Themes, Style, and Structure of Multiple Texts (42)	Verbs and Moods (46)	Response Journal (37) Write several paragraphs—explain the theme (39) Write a paragraph— explain the excerpt's structure (41) Write several paragraphs—compare themes from two excerpts (45)	Discuss the novel's unique structure (41) Discuss poetry's structure and style (45)	"The Great-Grandmother's Story" Digital Presentation (48)	Research Suggested full text: <i>The House on Mango Street</i> Read reviews Viewing suggestion: <i>He Named Me Malala</i> (49)	Analyzing the theme and style of a text, comparing two texts with similar themes (50)
Chapter 3 Article from "Kimchee and Corn Bread" by Helie Lee and Stephanie Covington 6 pages	Analyzing Allusions (55, 61)	Analyzing Authors' Points of View (63)	Understanding Author's Purpose (64)	Italics (68)	Response Journal (60) Summarize two points of view (64) Write a paragraph on character development (68)	Discuss strengths and weakness of a summary (64)	Public Service Announcement (69) Cultural Diversity Essay (70)	Suggested full text: <i>New Boy</i> Research Viewing suggestion: 42 Organize a potluck (71)	Identifying allusions, analyzing how purpose and point of view affect content (72)
Chapter 4 Speech from A More Perfect Union by Senator Barack Obama, March 18, 2008 5 pages	Determining the Central Idea (76, 80)	Analyzing Text Organizational Structures (83)	Analyzing Point of View (86)	Verb Tenses (87)	Response Journal (80) Write a paragraph— explain central idea (83) Write a paragraph— explain how structure supports central idea (85) Write a paragraph— discuss speaker's tactics (87)	Debate your analysis of structure (85) Discuss opinions about speaker's tactics; ask questions (87)	Speech (89) A Perfect Union: Context and Impact Research Paper (90)	Viewing suggestion: <i>Speech by Barack Obama</i> Research Film suggestion: <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (91)	Determining central idea, analyzing structure, analyzing points of view (92)

UNIT 1 Continued

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
<p>Chapter 5 Article from "Assimilation Nation No More" by Ed Feulner 3 pages</p> <p>from "Common Arguments Against Immigration" by Alex Nowrasteh 2 pages</p>	Defining Terms (97, 100)	Evaluating an Argument (102)	Analyzing Conflicting Information (104)	Punctuation When Quoting Sources (108)	Response Journal (100) Write two paragraphs—evaluate authors' arguments (108)	Discuss inferences and definitions of key terms (101) Discuss evaluations of author's argument (103)	Letter to the Editor (109) Brochure (110)	Research Film suggestions: <i>The Namesake</i> ; <i>The Other Side of Immigration</i> Interview an immigrant Analyze for figures of speech (111)	Evaluating arguments, evidence, and conflicting information (112)
End of Unit	Writing Process Assignment: Writing an Argumentative Essay—Diversity (116–126)								
	Practice Performance Task: Synthesize multiple short excerpts from the unit to answer the Essential Question (127–132)								

UNIT 2 Essential Question What does humanity's future hold?

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
Chapter 6 Article from "Are the robots about to rise? Google's new director of engineering thinks so" by Carole Cadwalladr 4 pages	Analyzing Categories (136, 140)	Examining Word Choice and Tone (142)	Analyzing How an Author Responds to Other Viewpoints (144)	Examining Roots, Prefixes and Suffixes (145)	Response Journal (139) Write a paragraph—use evidence to determine author's opinion (142) Write a paragraph—describe tone (144)	Discuss evidence presented in the article (142) Share evidence of the article's tone (144) Class discussion: how did this author respond to conflicting viewpoints? (145)	Personal Essay (147) Digital Presentation (148)	Suggested full text: <i>Nanobots for Dinner: Preparing for the Technological Singularity</i> Watch Ted Talks Film suggestion: <i>The Singularity Is Near; The Transcendent Man</i> (149)	Analyzing how a text made connections and distinctions, examining the effects of word choice, considering how an author responded to conflicting viewpoints, using word parts as clues to word meaning (150)
Chapter 7 Novel from <i>The Rapture of the Nerds</i> by Cory Doctorow and Charles Stross 4 pages	Determining the Meaning of Words and Phrases (155, 158)	Supporting an Analysis with Evidence (162)	Summarizing Fiction (165)	Using a Dictionary to Confirm Word Meanings (161)	Response Journal (158) Infer why authors use inventive language (160) Write a paragraph about a character's opinions (165) Write a summary (168)	Negotiate to find meaning of phrases from text (160) Evaluate a classmate's analysis (165) Discuss summarizations of a text (168)	Formal Letter (168) Pastiche (169)	Suggested full texts: <i>Little Brother; Homeland; The Complete Idiot's Guide to Publishing Science Fiction</i> Research (170)	Determining the meaning of words and phrases, supporting an analysis with evidence, summarizing an excerpt of fiction (171)
Chapter 8 Report from "SmartThings Future Living Report" by Maggie Aderin-Pocock 5 pages	Supporting an Analysis with Evidence (175, 179)	Analyzing the Structure of a Paragraph (181)	Evaluating Media Portrayals of a Topic (185)	Understanding Denotation and Connotation (190)	Response Journal (179) Write a paragraph—summarize authors' opinions (181) Write an essay—compare a report with a video (189)	Evaluate a classmate's analysis (181) Compare understandings of sentence roles (184) Discuss analysis of media portrayal (189) Discuss your connotations of words (191)	Problem-Solution Essay (191) Draw a Diagram (193)	Research Watch Ted Talks (194)	Citing evidence to support an analysis, analyzing the structure of a text, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of media in presenting ideas, studying word denotations and connotations (195)
Chapter 9 Novel from <i>The Postman</i> by David Brin 5 pages	Analyzing an Incident in a Novel (200, 205)	Interpreting an Allusion to Another Text (207)	Comparing a Text Version to a Filmed Version (210)	Spelling Words Ending in -ance and -ence (213)	Response Journal (204) Write a paragraph describing plot structure of the excerpt (207) Write a short essay—compare and contrast film and text (212)	Discuss basic structure of excerpt (207) Compare similarities between two passages (210) Peer review a classmate's essay (213)	Change the Point of View Character Analysis (215)	Suggested full text: <i>The Postman</i> Research (216)	Examining how incidents propel a plot, analyzing literary allusion, comparing a written incident to its filmed version (217)

UNIT 2 Continued

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
<p>Chapter 10 Report from "Crocodiles and Palm Trees in the Arctic? New Report Suggests Yes" by Marianne Lavelle 3 pages</p> <p>Article from "Global Warming Is a Myth" by Edmund Contoski 4 pages</p>	Analyzing the Development of a Central Idea (221, 223)	Evaluating an Argument (225, 228)	Analyzing Conflicting Interpretations (232)	Sentence Voice and Mood (234)	<p>Response Journal (223)</p> <p>Write a paragraph—explain reasons for conducting interviews (225)</p> <p>Write a paragraph—Choose which article is more convincing (232)</p> <p>Write a paragraph—compare articles' interpretations (234)</p> <p>Write a paragraph—argument for/against global warming (234)</p>	<p>Discuss reasons an author would conduct interviews (225)</p> <p>Class discussion—evaluating arguments (231)</p> <p>Group conversation—facts about carbon dioxide (234)</p>	<p>Roundtable Discussion (236)</p> <p>Brochure (237)</p>	<p>Research</p> <p>Watch Ted Talks (239)</p>	Analyzing the development of a central idea, evaluating an argument, analyzing two texts' interpretations (240)
End of Unit	<p>Writing Process Assignment: Writing a Comparative Essay—Comparing predictions about the future (242–256)</p> <p>Practice Performance Task: Synthesize multiple short excerpts from the unit to answer the Essential Question (257–264)</p>								

UNIT 3 Essential Question Why do we tell stories?

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
Chapter 11 Novel from <i>The Wrath and the Dawn</i> by Reneé Ahdieh 10 pages	Examining how Dialogue Propels Plot (268, 277)	Recognizing Dramatic Irony (279)	Understanding the Purpose of a Story Within a Story (281)	Punctuation with Dialogue (283)	Response Journal (277) Explain how dialogue develops the plot (278)	Share how word choice impacts a story's meaning (280) Reflect on relationships between parts of a story (283)	Retell a Folktale Write a Frame Narrative (284)	Suggested full texts: <i>The Wrath & the Dawn; The Rose & the Dagger</i> Read an excerpt: Arabian Nights Research (285)	Analyzing dialogue and structure (286)
Chapter 12 Short Story from "Jeremiah's Song" by Walter Dean Myers 3 pages	How Dialogue Reveals Character (291, 293)	Recognizing the Effects of Figurative Language (294)	Identifying the Role of Minor Characters (295)	Nonstandard Verbs (297)	Response Journal (293) Write a few sentences—explain a character's viewpoint (295)	Act out the scene (294) Discuss minor characters' importance (297)	Tell a Story (298) Interview an Elder (299)	Suggested full text: "Jeremiah's Song" Research Listen to <i>This American Life</i> (300)	Analyzing the way an author tells a story (301)
Chapter 13 Poetry from <i>Paul Revere's Ride</i> by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 5 pages	Summarizing Narrative Poetry (305, 309)	Comparing and Contrasting Narrative Poetry and Prose (312)	Placing a Story into Cultural Context (313)	Verbals (316)	Response Journal (310) Write a sentence—the point of a poem (311) Write a paragraph—how structure informs meaning (313)	Share analyses of cultural context (315)	Stage a Debate (317) Narrative Poem (318)	Suggested full texts: "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere"; "The Raven"; "The Highwayman"; "Casey at the Bat"; "The Walrus and the Carpenter" Research Listen to <i>Hamilton: An American Musical</i> (319)	Understand the purpose and structure of a text (320)
Chapter 14 Nonfiction from <i>The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone: Key to Ancient Egypt</i> by James Cross Giblin 4 pages	Analyzing the Development of the Central Idea (324, 327)	Recognizing Connections Among Events and People (329)	Determining Author's Point of View (330)	Using Em Dashes (330)	Response Journal (327) Write a summary (329)	Discuss author's point of view (330)	Brochure (331) Group Discussion (332)	Research (332)	Looking at the idea and details of an informational text (333)
Chapter 15 Memoir from <i>How I Came to Be a Writer</i> by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor 3 pages	Making Inferences (337, 340)	Identifying Events That Reveal Character (341)	Recognizing How Irony Creates Humor (342)	Verbal Irony (344)	Response Journal (339) Write a paragraph—analyze a character (342)	Act out the scene (343)	Humorous Video (344) Column (345)	Start a book club Research Read a newspaper (346)	Analyzing events and types of irony (347)
End of Unit	Writing Process Assignment: Writing a Personal Narrative (349–356)								
	Practice Performance Task: Synthesize multiple short excerpts from the unit to answer the Essential Question (357–364)								

UNIT 4 Essential Question What informs your decisions?

Genre/Text	1st Read Focus	2nd Read Focus	3rd Read Focus	Language Lesson	Integrated Writing in Response to Reading	Integrated Speaking/Listening	Project-Based Assessments	On Your Own: Integrating Ideas	Connect to Testing
Chapter 16 Novel from <i>Stargirl</i> by Jerry Spinelli 4 pages Poetry "The Drum" 1 page	Analyzing Character Interaction (368, 372)	Determining Theme (374)	Comparing Themes (375)	Asyndeton (377)	Response Journal (372) Write character descriptions (373)	Discuss your analyses of theme (375) Discuss how asyndeton changes sentences (378)	Fictional Journal Entry Poem (378)	Research (379)	Analyzing characters, identifying and comparing themes (380)
Chapter 17 Play from "Pandora's Box: How Curiosity Unleashed Evil into the World" 7 pages	Analyzing Characters' Motivations (385, 391)	Analyzing the Structure of a Play (393)	Understanding Dramatic Effect (395)	Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement (396)	Response Journal (391) Write a paragraph—analyze play structure (394)	Define myth; analyze the story based on the definition (396)	Retell a Myth (398) Perform a Missing Scene (399)	Research Suggested full texts: <i>Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</i> (399)	How dialogue reveals character and advances plot (400)
Chapter 18 Speech "I would have preferred to carry through" by Richard M. Nixon 4 pages Article "Nixon Resigns" by John Herbers 2 pages	Analyzing Central Ideas (404, 407)	Analyzing the Impact of Word Choice on Tone (409)	Comparing Points of View in Primary Sources (412)	Active and Passive Voice (415)	Response Journal (407) Summarize the speech (409) Write several paragraphs—analyze differing viewpoints (415)	Discuss tone and its effect (411) Revise paragraphs based on discussion (415)	Literary Analysis (417) Primary Source (418)	Research Film suggestion: <i>All the President's Men</i> Reading suggestion: "Woodward and Bernstein: 40 years after Watergate, Nixon was far worse than we thought." (419)	Identifying central ideas, analyzing word choice and tone, analyzing conflicting viewpoints (420)
Chapter 19 Article from "Embarrassed? Blame Your Brain" by Jennifer Connor-Smith 4 pages	Making Inferences (424)	Analyzing Structure (429)	Evaluating Claims and Evidence (431)	Participles (433)	Response Journal (427) Write a paragraph—explain how the brain affects behavior (429)	Discuss claims and evidence in the passage (433)	Roundtable Discussion (434) Argumentative Essay (436)	Take a quiz Research (437)	Making Inferences, analyzing structure, evaluating claims and evidence (438)
Chapter 20 Informational "The Locked Door" by Malcolm Gladwell 7 pages	Determining Central Idea and Supporting Details (442, 448)	Analyzing the Development of Ideas (450)	Evaluating Reasoning and Evidence (451)	Hyphens Versus Em Dashes (454)	Response Journal (448) Summarize the passage (450) Write a paragraph—explain whether you're convinced (454)	Share analyses of supporting details; revise (451)	Argument Analysis (456) Lincoln-Douglas Debate (457)	Watch <i>Brain Magic</i> TED Talk Research (459)	Identifying central ideas, analyzing the development of ideas, and evaluating reasoning (460)
End of Unit	Writing Process Assignment: Writing a Research Paper—how the brain impacts human behavior (462–470)								
	Practice Performance Task: Synthesize multiple short excerpts from the unit to answer the Essential Question (471–476)								