



## 8th Grade English Language Arts Unit 4: Analyzing Across Genres

Anchor Text(s)

***Animal Farm* by George Orwell**

Pacing

7 Weeks

### Unit Overview

In this unit, students will read George Orwell's *Animal Farm* with the goal of understanding its role as an allegory of the Russian Revolution and the Communist Soviet Union. In order to truly access this text, students must understand that in an allegory, everything has symbolic meaning. Students will examine nonfiction texts about the time period in order to better interpret Orwell's novel and analyze its impact. Within *Animal Farm*, they will analyze character motivations and how different events propel the plot. Students will make inferences about different points of view and analyze the effect this has on the reader. Ultimately, students should walk away able to articulate George Orwell's central themes and explain how his craft and choices intentionally conveyed them.

Another major goal for this unit is for students to engage meaningfully with a variety of texts across genres in order to understand *Animal Farm* on a deeper level. For this reason, making comparisons and connections across texts and genres is a central skill. Students will also learn the importance of examining what they are told, and they will investigate the danger of believing propaganda without examining its source.

By the end of the unit, students should be able to explain the following:

- I. *Animal Farm* is an allegory, serving directly as a critique of Communism and Stalin's leadership and more generally as a critique of totalitarianism
- II. Authors can use literature as a form of political commentary. Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* as an allegory largely so that its complex ideas and criticisms would be accessible (and interesting) to a wider audience.
- III. People use rhetoric and propaganda to gain and maintain power. For this reason, we must be careful and thoughtful consumers of information.
- IV. With freedom and power comes great responsibility, and it is dangerous when people with malicious or corrupt intentions get into positions of absolute power.

Because *Animal Farm* is an allegory (likely a new concept for students), it will be important to emphasize the necessity of re-reading and annotating in order to better understand both layers of this story. In this genre, rereading is for more than basic comprehension. Rereading and collecting information from a variety of sources will enable students to analyze the symbolism, author's purpose, and themes.

The unit concludes with a weeklong exploration of literary elements and themes that span across two texts: *Animal Farm* and the short story, "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut. Students will demonstrate mastery of skills and understanding of key themes and ideas by participating in a seminar discussion and by writing an argumentative essay, or "position paper."

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

Essential Questions	Genre and Standards-Based Vocabulary	Cutting to the Core
<p><u>Standards Based Essential Questions:</u></p> <p>I. What is the purpose of allegory? How do we read allegories for both literal and symbolic meanings?</p> <p>II. How do authors use literature to critique historical people and events?</p> <p>III. How do we determine a character's underlying motivations?</p> <p><u>Thematic Essential Questions</u></p> <p>I. How is language (and propaganda) used to influence or manipulate people?</p> <p>II. What does it mean to be free? Are true freedom and equality attainable?</p> <p>III. What are the responsibilities of those in power? What happens when power is taken advantage of?</p> <p>IV. What are the dangers of being a "follower?" What happens when people blindly follow others?</p>	<p>Allegory Fable Fiction Perspective Motivation genre dramatic irony suspense word choice tone historical setting theme silent observer propaganda rhetoric persuasive explicit implicit symbolic literal figurative society interdependence freedom moral equality</p>	<p><b>I: Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts</b></p> <p>➤ <i>"Students need to be grounded in information about the world around them if they are to develop the strong general knowledge and vocabulary they need to become successful readers"</i></p> <p><b>II: Reading and writing grounded in evidence from the text</b></p> <p>➤ <i>"Quality text-based questions, unlike low-level "search and find" questions, require close reading and deep understanding of the text"</i></p> <p><b>III: Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary</b></p> <p>➤ <i>"The ability to comprehend complex texts is the most significant factor differentiating college-ready from non-college-ready readers. This shift toward complex text requires practice, supported through deliberate close reading"</i></p>

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### Common Core State Standards *(Including how the standards progress across grade levels)*

7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade
RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<b>RL.8.1:</b> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	RL.9.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.	<b>RL.8.2:</b> Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.	RL.9.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).	<b>RL.8.3:</b> Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	RL.9.3: Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
RL.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.	<b>RL.8.4:</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	RL.9.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
RL.7.6: Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.	<b>RL.8.6:</b> Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.	RL.9.6: Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
RL.7.7: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).	<b>RL.8.7:</b> Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.	RL.9.7: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
RL.7.9: Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction	<b>RL.8.9:</b> Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.	RL.9.9: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

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<p><b>RI.7.2:</b> Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p><b>RI.8.2:</b> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p><b>RI.9.2:</b> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>
<p><b>RI.7.3:</b> Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).</p>	<p><b>RI.8.3:</b> Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p>	<p><b>RI.9.3:</b> Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.</p>
<p>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</li> <li>Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</li> <li>Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.</li> <li>Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.</li> </ol>	<p><b>SL.8.1:</b> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</li> <li>Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</li> <li>Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.</li> <li>Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.</li> </ol>	<p><b>SL.9.1:</b> Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</li> <li>Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</li> <li>Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</li> <li>Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.</li> </ol>

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<p><b>SL.7.4:</b> Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p>	<p><b>SL.8.4:</b> Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p>	<p><b>SL.9.4:</b> Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.</p>
<p><b>W.7.1:</b> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ol>	<p><b>W.8.1:</b> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ol>	<p><b>W.9.1:</b> Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.</li> <li>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</li> <li>d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</li> <li>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ol>

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Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- a. Apply *grade 7 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history").
- b. Apply *grade 7 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims").

**W.8.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- a. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new").
- b. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., "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").

**W.9.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- a. Apply *grades 9-10 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").
- b. Apply *grades 9-10 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning").

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Anchor Text: “ Animal Farm by George Orwell “

#### Overview

George Orwell’s novel *Animal Farm*, published at the end of World War II, is a cautionary tale of the dangers of totalitarianism and the human tendency for corruption, especially in politics. The story is an allegory for the Russian Revolution and Stalin’s leadership of the Communist Soviet Union, but it also serves as a criticism of all totalitarian regimes.

*Animal Farm* begins with the animals of Manor Farm gathering together to listen to the vision and prophecies of Old Major, a well-respected boar. He enlightens the animals of the unjust principles they’re subject to as workers on Manor Farm. He paints a picture of human beings as corrupt leaders who take but never give back to the animals. He dreams of a day when the animals will live in freedom and will control their own destiny. After he dies, the pigs – the cleverest animals on Manor Farm – codify his words into a system of thought called “Animalism,” representing Communism.

The pigs begin a rebellion, in which they take over the farm, and help defend it from humans. At first, the other animals rally around the pigs, forbidding human behavior. Three pigs - Napoleon (symbolizing Joseph Stalin), Snowball (symbolizing Leon Trotsky), and Squealer (symbolizing the Soviet Press and Communist propaganda) - assume leadership roles in this new society.

Eventually, through manipulative techniques and rhetoric used to oppress the other animals, Napoleon seizes absolute power and begins to restrict animal freedoms. Slowly, the pigs take power away from the other animals and amass wealth and rights for themselves.

By the end of the book, the pigs are walking on their hind legs, carrying whips, dressing in human clothing, fraternizing with humans, drinking alcohol, and carrying on in a similar manner as the farmers they drove out. At the end of the book, the animals can no longer tell the difference between the pigs and the men they are fraternizing with.

#### Important Considerations for Instruction

**I. Text Complexity:** At a Lexile level of 1170, *Animal Farm* is a rigorous text. Students will need support breaking down the novel’s challenging vocabulary and syntax, along with interpreting the central allegory. The story is engaging for students on a literal and symbolic level, and will be a very rewarding read once they begin to notice Orwell’s allegorical connections to real people and events.

**II. Big Ideas/Themes:** Orwell once wrote: “Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism.” This purpose shines through in *Animal Farm*, as its central theme is a warning against the political corruption of people in power, and the human tendency to manipulate others (often through language/rhetoric and propaganda) for their own gain. Orwell directly criticizes Stalin’s Soviet Union, but he also critiques totalitarianism in general.

**III. Text Structure:** The structure of *Animal Farm* is cyclical. It starts and ends with totalitarian leaders who oppress the lower, working class. Although much happens in the middle, the purpose of the cyclical structure is to show that totalitarianism (disguised as a socialist pursuit for “equality”) regimes will always leave their people oppressed, manipulated, and worse off than before. The author uses third-person omniscient narration.

**III. Real World Connections:** Many of the characters and plot events in *Animal Farm* represent real people and events from the Russian Revolution. Additionally, the themes, including the dangers of totalitarianism, political corruption, abuse of power, and the importance of independent, critical thought are very relevant in the world today.

**IV. Potential Challenges:** Building background knowledge is particularly important to this unit. Students must have an understanding of Stalin’s totalitarian rule and the Communist Soviet Union in order to grasp the allegory of *Animal Farm*. The informational videos and supplemental texts included are good ways to support students in noticing these connections.

# Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

## Instructional Calendar

Weekly Focus	Teaching Points	Texts and Resources	Suggestions for Implementation
<p><b>Week 1:</b></p> <p>RL.2 RL.4</p>	<p><b>I. What is an allegory, and how can readers uncover an allegory’s deeper meaning?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allegories are stories that have two levels of meaning – the literal level and the deeper, symbolic level. In an allegory, all of the characters, events, and ideas act as symbols and have hidden meaning. Usually, the symbolic level of an allegory reveals a universal truth about human existence or explains a political or moral message.</li> <li>To interpret allegories, we must always make connections between the literal story and what it represents in the world. These steps helps readers interpret allegories:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the literal story first – What happened?</li> <li>Make connections between the characters and events in the literal story and the real world: Who or what might _____ represent/symbolize?</li> <li>Interpret the allegory: Review the symbolic meanings and deduce the moral or political message the author is trying to convey.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Read aloud Dr. Seuss’s “The Lorax” and use the three steps to interpret this famous allegory. Using the Allegory Analysis Chart in Appendix D, students should understand “The Lorax” as an allegory conveying the moral and political message that it’s our responsibility to cherish and protect our greatest resource – our environment. You may want to model this process and interpret the allegory together with students, as this is new.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For additional partner or independent practice, students can read “The Sneetches” (soft copy in Appendix B) and interpret the allegorical moral message about difference, prejudice, discrimination, and power.</li> <li>Encourage students to look out for other examples of allegories they know or encounter, and bring them in.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Anchor Text:</b> <i>Animal Farm</i> Chapter 1</p> <p><b>Appendix B: (Supplemental texts)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Lorax</i> (hard copy)</li> <li><i>The Sneetches</i></li> <li>“A Brief History of Communism in Russia” Article</li> <li>Russian Revolution Informational Video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmKPLvctdaA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmKPLvctdaA</a></li> <li>(optional – low level) “Revolution in Russia”</li> <li>(optional – complex) “The Russian Revolution, 1881-1939”</li> </ul> <p><b>Appendix D (Supplemental Resources)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Animal Farm</i> LitCharts (Teacher Analysis Resource)</li> <li>Allegory Analysis Chart (“The Lorax” and “The Sneetches”)</li> <li>Old Major’s Speech:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To launch the unit, you can show the <i>Animal Farm</i> movie trailer to build interest (link in Appendix D).</li> <li>Build a word wall or anchor chart with new literary terminology like “allegory” and content-specific words like totalitarian, czar, etc.</li> <li>The Allegory Analysis Chart in Appendix D is designed for use with the Dr. Seuss stories this week, but feel free to modify it for use with <i>Animal Farm</i> in future weeks.</li> <li>Note: All students should read “A Brief History of Communism,” but there are also two additional/optional articles included in Appendix B. The text called “Revolution in Russia” is lower level and simpler, and the</li> </ul>



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RI.2  
RI.3  
W.8

### II. Determine the central ideas of a nonfiction text to build knowledge about the novel's historical context, the Russian Revolution.

- George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* as an allegory for the Russian Revolution. This week we'll read to learn about why the Russian Revolution happened and who some of the key people involved in leading the revolution were.
  - Define terminology related to major political schools of thought: totalitarianism, dictatorship, czar (vs. democracy). Then, read the article "A Brief History of Communism in Russia" to build knowledge about the causes of the Russian Revolution and the key people involved in its early stages, including Czar Nicholas II, Karl Marx, and Lenin. Students will refer back to the information in this text multiple times throughout the unit to assist them in making connections and interpreting the allegory.
  - Pair the article with the informational video, "The Russian Revolution: Timeline, Causes, and Effects." Students should take notes in a structured organizer and/or answer specific questions while viewing the video.

### III. In Chapter 1, analyze Old Major's point of view and determine the central argument of his speech. How does Old Major convince the other animals to agree with his viewpoint? (RL.6, RL.4)

- After reading Chapter 1 aloud, analyze a variety of quotes from Old Major's speech to determine his main argument about Mr. Jones, life on the farm, and the condition of the animals' lives. Students can select the most persuasive parts of his speech and explain how they help him convince the animals to rally around his ideas.
- Interpreting the Allegory: Revisit the informational text "A Brief History of Communism in Russia" to make connections between real people (Czar Nicholas II, Karl Marx, and Lenin) and the characters in Chapter 1 (Mr. Jones, Old Major, and the farm animals). Students should connect:
  - Old Major and his message about the necessity of revolution to the ideas of Marx and Lenin
  - Mr. Jones's rule over Manor Farm (and the mistreatment/exploitation of the animals for their labor) to Czar Nicholas II's leadership (and his mistreatment/exploitation of the Russian people) that spurred the Russian Revolution

### Questions and Analysis Chart

- *Animal Farm* cartoon movie trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGCo5Tva39s>
- Full Summary (for teachers only – interprets allegory)
- Character Flow Chart (Relationships)
- Chapter Vocabulary and Comprehension Questions
- Parallels Between *Animal Farm* and History (one-pager, slides, and traits)

text called "The Russian Revolution, 1881-1939" is significantly more complex and can be given to interested or high readers as an extension.

- Note: Students focus on the causes of the Revolution, Marx, Lenin, and Czar Nicholas II this week because these topics connect to the characters and events in Chapter 1 of *Animal Farm*. As new characters like Napoleon and Snowball are introduced in later chapters, students will have opportunities to expand their knowledge about people like Stalin and Trotsky. You do not need to cover these people and topics during this first week.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 2:

RL.3

#### I. Analyze how particular lines and details develop characters (particularly the pigs) and progress the story's plot.

- In chapters 2 and 3, track how life is changing for animals on Animal Farm as a result of the pigs' leadership, including establishing the commandments, banning ribbons, and holding formal assemblies. At this point, how does life compare to life during Mr. Jones's ownership? Analyze why these changes are happening and make predictions, based on knowledge about the historical allegory, about how the pigs' leadership will continue to evolve.
- Conduct a close reading of pages 34-36 to analyze how the pigs use language and persuasive speech (rhetoric) to get and keep their power. How do they justify the unequal rations of milk to the other animals? Why do the other animals go along with what they say, even though they don't fully understand? What does this incident tell us about the pigs?
- In Chapter 4, analyze how the revolution at Animal Farm is impacting the outside world and other farmers including Foxwood and Pinchfield. In the second half of the chapter, focus on Boxer and how being involved in the Battle of the Cowshed impacts him. What does the interaction between Boxer and Snowball at the end of the chapter reveal?

#### II. Build background knowledge through videos and nonfiction texts to support students' interpretation of *Animal Farm* as an allegory.

- Define and determine differences between two economic schools of thought: Communism/Socialism (*for our purposes of interpreting Orwell's allegory, we'll group these together*) and Capitalism using the video (Appendix B) and corresponding questions (Appendix D). A basic conceptual understanding of the differences between these two systems of thought will help students understand the animals' motivation for overthrowing Mr. Jones (*unfair distribution of wealth*). It will also help them understand the pigs' thinking behind the new economic system they attempt to put in place at Animal Farm (*Communism/Socialism*).
- Investigate the "leadership" of Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky, and the conflict resulting from their pursuit of power by reading the mini-biographies and watching the short biographical videos in Appendix B. Students should begin noticing similarities between:
  - Napoleon and Stalin
  - Trotsky and Snowball

RI.2

RI.3

RL.4

#### Anchor Text:

*Animal Farm*  
Chapters 2-4

#### Appendix B (Supplemental texts)

- Economics Video (Capitalism vs. Socialism):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBxW2WLO9d8>
- Joseph Stalin Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN2Jb6JoNyw>
- Leon Trotsky Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kO1T0JCsko>
- "Key People of the Russian Revolution" Lenin (optional), Stalin, and Trotsky

#### Appendix D (Supplemental Resources)

- Economics Video Analysis Questions
- Stalin/Trotsky Video Analysis Questions
- Ch. 3 TDQs
- Ch. 1-3 Analyzing Allegory Graphic O.
- *Battle of Cowshed Explanation*
- Ch. 4 Close Readings

- Chapter 4 and the Battle of Cowshed illustrate the growing gap between what the animals think they are fighting for (equality, freedom from oppression) and what their victory actually achieves (even more power and control for the pigs). Continue to track times when the animals don't fully understand what they're supporting or fighting for, but we as readers have a deeper understanding of the pigs' motivations.
- Plan purposeful pausing points for clarifying questions and processing during the economics video.
- Begin a two-column anchor chart with the headings "What the Pigs Say" and "What the Truth Is." Track instances when readers must infer the truth behind the pigs' language.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 3:

RI.2  
RL.3  
RL.4

### I. What is propaganda, and how do the pigs use it to get and keep power?

- Propaganda is biased language or images used to influence or manipulate people. It is often used for political reasons. Students should read the informational article in Appendix B to learn about propaganda and how it's been used to manipulate people and/or to advance political causes throughout history.
- Analyze how Orwell characterizes Squealer and develops his role in the story. Pay attention to Squealer's word choice during his speeches, and analyze how his selection of words (and their connotation) perpetuates the animals' ignorant loyalty to Napoleon and paints Snowball in an evil light.
  - Close Reading Passage: Squealer's speech on pages 55-56. Sample TDQs include:
    - *How does Squealer want the animals to feel while listening to his speech? Which words and phrases best accomplish this goal?*
    - *Squealer describes what Napoleon did as a "sacrifice." Why does he choose this word?*
    - *He also describes leadership not as a "pleasure," but as a "deep and heavy responsibility." What does his word choice imply? What does he want the animals to believe?*
    - *Why does Squealer repeatedly threaten that Mr. Jones is going to return? Is Mr. Jones the real threat?*
    - *What is Squealer's purpose for giving this speech? What does he really want to achieve?*
    - *Does Squealer's message accurately represent what's going on? Why do the animals believe what he says?*
- Real World Connection: How does the use of propaganda (in the world and in *Animal Farm*) impact citizens? Why is it important to be critical consumers of the information you encounter in the press and media?
  - Propaganda is frequently used during political campaigns. Encourage students to keep an eye out for presidential campaign ads that incorporate the strategies we've discussed.

**Anchor Text**  
*Animal Farm*  
Chapters 5-6

### Appendix B (Supplemental texts)

- "What is Propaganda?" Article

### Appendix D (Supplemental Resources)

- Ch. 5: Analyzing Napoleon/Stalin TDQs
- Ch. 6: TDQs and Squealer close reading
- "Types of Propaganda"
- Examples of Propaganda in *Animal Farm* and Log
- Additional/Extension Resource: WWII Museum Lesson Plan (Propaganda)
- Additional/Extension Resource: Propaganda Website  
<http://www.propagandacritic.com/>

- The "What is Propaganda?" Article is the only required supplemental text this week. However, feel free to supplement or extend study with the WWII and/or website resources listed in Appendix D if time permits.
- Add dramatic irony, suspense, and propaganda to your word wall/chart this week.
- See the "Unpacked Standards" Guide at the end of this unit plan for additional sentence frames you can use when planning TDQs.
- The student materials found in Appendix D are not required, but please use them as resources for planning. Feel free to adapt them.
- Have students rewrite sections of the text from a different character's

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

RL.6

### II. Analyze how differences in point of view between the characters and reader (dramatic irony) create suspense.

- **Teaching Point:** Dramatic irony occurs when the readers are aware of something that characters in a story are not. (*Note: Remind students that we analyzed Roald Dahl's use of dramatic irony when we read "Lamb to the Slaughter."*)
- In Chapters 5 and 6, notice differences between what the animals allow themselves to believe (despite inklings that something's not quite right) and what we as readers know (that the pigs are manipulating the commandments of Animalism for their own gain). Student will have to make inferences about Napoleon's true reasoning and motivation, as Orwell does not state this explicitly. Examples of dramatic irony that students can analyze include:
  - When Napoleon and Squealer convince the animals, even Boxer who has memories of Snowball's bravery, that Snowball is a criminal and deserves exile.
  - Pigs changing the commandment to read, "No animal shall sleep in a bed *with sheets*."
  - Napoleon blaming the destruction of the windmill on Snowball when we as readers understand the storm is to blame.

### III. Interpreting Orwell's Allegory

- Revisit the biographical videos and texts from last week to connect events in Chapter 5 (the growing conflict around Snowball and Napoleon leading to Snowball's exile) to history (Trotsky's exile).
- Watch the following video about Stalin's "Secret Police" (<http://www.biography.com/people/joseph-stalin-9491723/videos/joseph-stalin-the-secret-police-2237394247>) along with a close reading of pages 52-54 (Napoleon's dogs). Make connections between Stalin's methods of intimidation and manipulation with Napoleon's actions throughout this week's chapters.
  - Determine George Orwell's perspective: What is Orwell's point of view about Stalin's leadership based on how he portrays Napoleon?

RI.2

RI.3

RL.4

RL.6

perspective as an extension for their study of point of view; discuss and analyze how the story changes when this happens.

- At the end of this week, students will have read over half of the novel. At this point, begin pushing students to analyze the allegory on deeper levels. Instead of being satisfied with identifying a parallel ("Oh! Napoleon represents Stalin!"), challenge students to explain how and why Orwell portrays that character in a certain light, and what that reveals about Orwell's opinions.
- Students can create their own propaganda posters that Napoleon and Squealer might have created to send to other farms. Posters should include evidence and methods from the article.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 4:

RL.1  
RL.2  
RL.3  
RL.6

### I. Determining Themes in *Animal Farm*

- *Big Ideas: Totalitarianism and Corruption*
  - In chapter 7, focus on pages 83-87 (83-85 depict the Napoleon's mass slaughter of the pigs and hens who led mini-rebellions, and 86-87 describe Clover's sad reflections about the state of *Animal Farm*).
    - Analyze what makes the mass killings a significant turning point. What can you infer is Orwell's point of view about Napoleon's leadership and the state of *Animal Farm*?
    - On pages 86-87, analyze how the reality of life for the animals has strayed from Old Major's original vision. Who and/or what is responsible for this gap between the dream of equality and the reality of life? Has Animalism failed?
  - Throughout these chapters, make inferences about the true meaning behind what Napoleon (and Squealer, whom he controls) says. How does he justify certain actions, like rewriting Animalism's commandments and banning the song "Beasts of England," to the animals in order to trick them? What can we infer his true motivations are (*to perpetuate and strengthen his total control*)?
- *Big Ideas: War and Violence (as a tool to gain/maintain power)*
  - Closely read pages 104-105, from "They had won, but they were weary and bleeding" → "'That is our victory,' said Squealer." Contrast Squealer and Boxer's point of view about the battle. Students should make and defend a claim about whether or not this battle was truly a victory through discussion and/or writing.
  - Then, determine what lessons or themes Orwell might be conveying about war and violence through his portrayal of this event. Which character does he seem to want readers to sympathize with? How does this reveal Orwell's point of view about the battle (and symbolically, WWII)?

**Anchor Text:**  
*Animal Farm*  
Chapters 7-8

### Appendix B (Supplemental texts)

- "To Have Power Over Others" (poem) by Francis Duggan
- "The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939"
- "Battle of Stalingrad"

### Appendix D

- Ch. 7 Text Dependent Questions and Writing Prompt
- Ch. 8 Allegory visuals and analysis questions
- Ch. 8 "Napoleon vs. Reality" graphic org.

- To launch this week, have students generate a list of recurring "big ideas" or topics that Orwell deals with in the novel, such as "violence" and "power." As students find evidence related to any of these big ideas, encourage them to add quotes and details to post-it notes and store them on the anchor chart.
- The two informational texts are intentionally short this week so that you are able to read aloud a section of the novel each day too.
- The student materials found in Appendix D are not required, but please use them as resources for planning. Feel free to adapt them.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

RL.2  
RL.9  
W.1

### II. Determining Themes in Poetry

- Read the poem, “To Have Power Over Others” by Francis Duggan. Students should discuss and answer a series of text-dependent questions to determine the author’s central message that true leadership does not require power, and so the motives of people who desire power cannot be trusted.
- Make thematic connections between the poem and *Animal Farm* by having students make and support a claim about whether or not people in power can ever be trusted. They should answer this question from both Duggan’s and Orwell’s point of view, and support both claims with text evidence. Afterwards, encourage students to make connections to real-world leaders using current events or other knowledge.

RI.2  
RI.3  
RI.4  
RL.4

### III. Interpreting Orwell’s Allegory

- Read the short article “The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939” to draw parallels between this time period and Napoleon’s manipulative negotiations with Mr. Frederick (*symbolizing Hitler and fascist Germans*) and Mr. Pilkington (*symbolizing Russian Allies before WWII, mostly the British*). Text-dependent questions are included in Appendix B.
- Read the “Battle of Stalingrad” informational text (with corresponding text-dependent questions in Appendix B) alongside the video to make connections between the Battle of Stalingrad and the Battle of the Windmill, focusing on pages 101-105 in *Animal Farm*. Use this text to elaborate on themes and inform claims about Orwell’s perspective about war.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 5:

RL.2  
RL.3

#### I. Determining Themes in *Animal Farm*

- In the beginning of chapter 9, analyze how life has changed since the original rebellion and how the pigs have completely rewritten the history of *Animal Farm* for their own benefit. Why haven't the other animals done anything about this? What do their experiences teach us about being informed, educated, and critical of information we receive?
  - Students can also use this section of text to help them determine a theme about "revolutions" in general. When are they justified? What must happen *after* a revolution to ensure its goals (ie. equality) are actually met? Why do some revolutions fail to uphold the values they say they fought for?
- Determine the values that Boxer represents throughout the story, including blind loyalty, endurance, and hard work. On pages 118-126, focus on Napoleon's treatment of Boxer and make inferences about how he lies to the animals. What makes Boxer's death even more devastating than other deaths? How does Napoleon's treatment of loyal Boxer convey themes about power and corruption?

#### II. Analyzing how *Animal Farm's* Structure Conveys Themes

- Explain that George Orwell structured his book in a "cyclical" way, which means that, like a circle or cycle, the story begins and ends in a similar way. In this type of story, the series of events lead back to the starting point.
- While reading chapter 10, students should find evidence of this cyclical structure. They should record similarities between life on *Animal Farm* years after the revolution and at the beginning of the novel. After gathering evidence, answer the question:  
**How has *Animal Farm* come to resemble the very society it overthrew?**  
*Sub-Questions:*
  - How do the pigs resemble Mr. Jones and the humans Old Major described in his speech in Chapter 1?
  - How have the animals' lives similar to the way they were in the beginning of the story? How are their

RL.2  
RL.5  
RL.6

**Anchor Text:**  
*Animal Farm*  
Chapters 9-10

#### **Appendix B (Supplemental texts)**

- "First They Came for the Communists" (poem) by Martin Niemoller

#### **Appendix D (Additional Resources)**

- Ch. 9: Boxer Analysis
- Ch. 10: Text Dependent Questions

- As an extension to Teaching Point II about structure, students can analyze if *Animal Farm's* deterioration could have been prevented – what would it have taken to disrupt the "cycle?"
- Corresponding text-dependent questions for "First They Came..." can be found in Appendix B with the poem.
- Create a space for students to interpret the story's ambiguous ending and express/defend whether or not it is satisfying and appropriate. Allowing students to illustrate the final paragraph using concrete details from the text may help them interpret its complexities.
- The student materials found in Appendix D are not required, but please use them as resources for

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

RL.1  
RL.2  
RL.6  
RL.9

- freedoms restricted more than ever?
  - Zoom in on the last paragraph of the novel: What is the meaning of these sentences? Paraphrase them to interpret what Orwell wants to convey.
- Then, push students to analyze *why* George Orwell structured his book in this particular way.
  - Why did Orwell craft the story's ending in a way that is so similar to the story's beginning?
  - What message does this structure convey about revolutions and power?

### III. Determining Themes in Poetry and Making Connections

- Read Martin Niemoller's poem "First They Came for the Communists" in Appendix B. Students should read first with the purpose of determining Niemoller's theme about standing up for each other across lines of difference (questions 1-7 in Appendix B). Then, they should make connections and apply Niemoller's theme to *Animal Farm* (questions 8-10 in Appendix B).

planning. Feel free to adapt them.



## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 6

RL.4  
RL.6  
RI.9  
W.1

#### I. Analyzing Author's Purpose: Why did George Orwell write *Animal Farm* as an allegory for the Russian Revolution? Was his use of allegory effective?

- First, revisit the informational texts you read about the Russian Revolution and its key leaders in Weeks 1 and 2. Students should discuss the similarities and differences between the two texts as a whole. Through discussion, they should explore:
  - *What are the benefits and shortcomings of the informational texts?*
  - *What are the benefits and shortcomings of the allegorical novel?*
  - *Which helped you understand the key ideas of the Russian Revolution more effectively, and why?*
  - *What are the benefits of reading these two types of text together?*
- Then, analyze three quotes about the purpose of literary allegories and why some authors choose to write them (see materials in Appendix D). After answering the text-dependent questions and paraphrasing each quote, students will make and support a claim about the following questions:
  - a) Why did George Orwell write *Animal Farm* as an allegory?
  - b) Was his use of allegory effective in conveying the complex people, lessons, and “essence” of the Russian Revolution?

#### II. Analyzing Differences Between a Text and Film Version of a Story

- Analyze how a filmed version of a story compares to the written version. Notice times when the filmmaker changes or omits elements of the written novel, and analyze why they might have made those choices.
- Zoom in on the portrayal of particular characters (ie. the pigs) in the movie influences your understanding and impressions of them. For example, students may conclude that the pigs are much more goofy and humorous in the cartoon than they imagined in while reading. This emphasizes Orwell's desire to critique their behavior, not glorify it. Evaluate whether or not the movie is true to the book's descriptions.

RL.6  
RL.7  
SL.1

**Anchor Text:**  
*Animal Farm*

#### Appendix B (Supplemental Texts)

- *Animal Farm* Full Movie:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcKChE9VqMk>

#### Appendix C (Performance Tasks)

- MCLASS End of Unit Assessment
- MCLASS Teacher Rationale/Answer Key

#### Appendix D (Additional Resources)

- “Why Do Authors Write Allegories?” Student Handout (Quote Analysis)
- *Animal Farm* Movie Analysis Questions

- Pacing: To allow students enough time to gather evidence, discuss their ideas, and write organized and well-supported claims for Teaching Point I, you may want to spend two class periods on Orwell's use of allegory. Two additional days this week can be spent watching and analyzing the film version of *Animal Farm*. One day this week should be reserved for students to take their MCLASS online assessment (this can be taken whatever day computers are available this week).
- The movie analysis questions included in Appendix D can be used after watching the film for discussion and writing purposes. During the movie, students should record similarities and differences they notice, along with other general

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

- After analyzing these differences between the film and the novel, prompt students to consider how the movie further illuminates why George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* as an allegory. Students will benefit from being able to write about and discuss this complex idea.

### III. Take MCLASS End of Unit Assessment online.

- One day of class this week should be dedicated to completing the end of unit MCLASS assessment. You can choose which day works best for your class based on computer availability.

observations about their impressions of the film vs. book in a graphic organizer.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Week 7

RL.1  
RL.2  
RL.3  
RL.4  
RL.6  
RL.9  
  
SL.1  
SL.9  
  
W.1  
W.9

### I. Culminating Performance Task: Seminar and Writing Project

- Throughout this week, students will complete the various components of their final performance task. To successfully complete the task, students will read a new short story (“Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut), make explicit connections to *Animal Farm*, participate in a seminar discussion, and write an on-demand essay in class. The combination of these tasks will give students the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of important themes in a variety of ways.
- A complete overview of this task, along with a student-facing prompt and materials, can be found in Appendix C. A broad overview of the week is listed here:
  - Day 1:* Read and analyze the story “Harrison Bergeron.”
  - Day 2:* Complete the “Connecting and Comparing Texts” Task
  - Day 3:* Prepare for and participate in a seminar discussion about the “Big Questions.”
  - Day 4:* Plan Your “Position Paper”
    - Select one of the Big Questions to focus on, and write your thesis statement
    - Collect evidence from both stories to support your thesis
  - Day 5:* On-Demand Writing – Write a Position Paper
- The “Big Questions” referenced above are listed below. Students’ position papers must answer one question in a way that is supported by evidence in both *Animal Farm* and “Harrison Bergeron.”
  - *What does “equality” mean? Is equality a goal that societies should strive for?*
  - *What are the qualities and responsibilities of an effective leader?*
  - *How much power should a society’s government have?*
  - *Why do attempts to improve society sometimes fail? How can people create positive change in their society?*

**Anchor Text:**  
*Animal Farm*  
(for use with Performance Task)

#### Appendix C (Performance Tasks)

- “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut: Text and Resources
- Performance Task Prompt, Rubric, and Student Materials

#### Appendix D (Additional Resources)

- “Quote Sandwich” – Strategy for Introducing Quotes in Writing
- *(optional extension or extra credit)* Ideas for *Animal Farm* Creative Projects

- If you feel that students need additional support introducing and integrating quotes as evidence in an opinion paper, consult the “Quote Sandwich” strategy and example in Appendix D.
- Because there are so many pieces of this Performance Task, and because students will write the essay “on-demand” without a full revision process, students will be graded on the task-specific rubric included in App. C.
- The speaking and listening component of this task can be modified to meet the needs of your students. Feel free to add additional guiding questions or change the format (ie. fishbowl, small group discussions, etc.).
- If possible, students should type essays.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

### Appendix A: Unpacked Standards Guide

Source: Public Schools of North Carolina NCDPI Collaborative Workspace

Standard	Explanation and Example
<p><b>RL.8.1:</b> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p>	<p>Eighth grade students will analyze a text for a central theme or idea and support their analysis with strong textual evidence. Students will learn that evidence is considered strong when it both convinces the reader and effectively expresses the central ideas or theme(s) of the text. To achieve this, students will first read closely to determine both explicit and inferred meanings of a text. This process involves determining the author's purpose and overall message of the text. Students may choose to mark the text as they read to guide their thinking. For example, students may mark, annotate, or highlight repeated ideas or patterns and inferred meanings as they read. Based upon their analysis, students may then determine the author's purpose, overall message of the text, and which details best support this meaning. Work like this may involve students sorting textual evidence and using only the strongest segments; specifically, those which directly connect with and uphold the central idea or theme. Once students are able to distinguish between the varying levels of textual strength, they move toward mastering the standard independently. Repeated modeling through think-alouds and guided practice will aid students in this process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What textual evidence supports your inference that _____?</li> <li>• What can you infer from _____ (#) paragraph? Explain your thinking.</li> <li>• What can you infer about ____? Cite evidence from the text to support your inference(s).</li> <li>• Which evidence shows _____? Explain.</li> </ul> <p><i>*Please note that any reading comprehension question, either literal or inferential, falls under this "umbrella standard." The key is students must cite textual evidence to support answer.</i></p>

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

**RL.8.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

Students will record repeated messages or patterns they observe within various story elements. Students will note of how recurring interpersonal conflicts between characters, changing settings, and plot twists all influence/shape the theme and guide the reader toward realizing the theme in its entirety. Once students begin to realize the central idea, they should reflect on how the writer used such recurring patterns through the subtle avenues of setting, characterization and plot to slowly reveal it indirectly. Students will then be able to write objective summaries revealing the sequential development of a theme through description of characters, setting, and plot. Students may use a story map as a guide to outlining the story's thematic development.

Question Stems:

- What best summarizes the entire text / a section of text?
- Which statement objectively summarizes the text?
- What big ideas or themes are hidden in this text?
- How does the author use [the setting/character X/plot event X] to develop the theme?
- How does the conflict between X and Y shape the story's theme?
- How does the story's setting influence the theme or central message?

**RL.8.3:** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of character, or provoke a decision.

To master this, students will be able to determine how specific events or dialogue significantly impact the development of a story. Students may demonstrate this knowledge by determining critical turning points of the plot, analyzing choices made by characters, or examining external and internal conflicts -- all of which build the momentum of the story. Once students have determined these critical moments, they should be able to explain the cause/effect result in relation to the story's plot or development. To do this work, students may band together in groups and highlight or mark the text those moments and/or scenes which they deem to be turning points (and explain why).

Question Stems:

- How does character X's thoughts/speech/actions contribute to his/her characterization?
- Which detail from the text reveals character X's traits?
- What is the turning point in the story, and why?
- What conflict leads to the turning point in the story?
- Why/how does the character's conflict with X affect the story?
- How does line/event X propel the plot forward?
- When character X does Y, what happens to Z?

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**RL.8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

To interpret a writer's style and word choice, eighth grade students will work to gain insight into how the writer uses figurative language, how he creates a "sub-story" or "story-within-a-story" and why he may refer to an alternate text in his writing. To achieve this, students will learn to identify words and phrases that create/reveal a variety of tones. Once students can see the link between word choice and tone, they will be prepared to analyze multiple texts in which textual references, via allusion or allegory, are present. Through partner, small group, or whole class discussions, students should then debate the why of that inclusion. Essential questions for this discussion may be: why does the writer relate his or her text to another through allegory or allusion; what purpose does making this text-to-text connection serve. Finally, students should demonstrate their mastery of this standard by independently analyzing how a writer's use of language creates meaning within a text.

### Question Stems:

- What does the word/phrase \_\_\_\_\_ mean in this selection? What clues did you use to determine the meaning? Cite specific textual evidence.
- Without changing the meaning of the sentence, what word can best be used to replace the underlined part?
- When the author uses \_\_\_\_\_, what connotation is s/he intending? Explain how you know. Cite specific textual evidence.
- What is the meaning of the analogy \_\_\_\_\_? Cite specific textual evidence.
- To what does \_\_\_\_\_ (word/phrase) allude? Cite specific textual evidence.
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of \_\_\_\_\_ in paragraph \_\_\_\_\_?
- Find an example of figurative language and explain its meaning. Discuss its impact on the tone of the poem/story citing specific textual evidence.
- What tone does the author evoke when s/he uses \_\_\_\_\_? Cite specific textual evidence.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

**RL.8.6:** Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Students will understand the role of point-of-view in a given text. They should be guided to see how the point-of-view is essentially the lens through which the reader is allowed to see the story. To do this work, students may examine one story from a variety of viewpoints. For each viewpoint they assume, students should determine what “they” (as the character) know versus what other characters know. Once students have mapped out the differing viewpoints, they are ready to discuss the techniques writers use in order to experiment with and even manipulate point-of-view. In turn, placing themselves in the role as the reader, students can discuss how these techniques create specific tones and moods within the piece.

### Question Stems:

- What point of view does the author use? Explain the benefits and shortcomings of this choice in the context of the story. Cite specific textual evidence.
- What effect does the author create with narrator’s point of view? How does the narrator control the flow of information readers receive?
- How does the character’s point of view differ from the reader’s? What effect does that create?
- How does the author use dramatic irony to keep the reader engaged? Use examples from the story to support your analysis.
- How does the author use point of view to create suspense? Cite specific textual evidence.
- How does the author use point of view to create humor? Cite specific textual evidence.
- How does telling the story from \_\_\_\_ (character’s) point of view create humorous/suspenseful situations? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author’s word choice develop the narrator’s point of view?
- How would the story be different if it were told from \_\_\_\_ (character’s) point of view? What information from the story supports your analysis?
- What is the most likely reason the author told the story from \_\_\_\_ (character’s) point of view? What information from the story supports your analysis?

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**RL.8.7:** Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

Students will understand how any given literary text can be transformed into and presented as another art form entirely; perhaps via film or live performance. To first understand how performed literature requires a different approach than written literature, students should be exposed to each medium and then be asked to assess and reflect upon the similarities and differences between them. For example, students could read a piece of literature and record their impressions as a reader. What strategies did they use as they read? What impressions did they have of the character? What details from the text directly contributed to these impressions? Then, the same piece of literature could be shown as a performance. Students may then reflect upon the similarities and differences between their initial understandings derived from the original text and those created from visual interpretation. For instance, they can observe how closely the setting in the live portrayal aligns with the details in the text that created their initial visual image. Furthermore, they may notice that particular scenes and characters have been omitted and then analyze the reason behind those omission(s) and alterations. To extend this standard, students could take text from a screenplay and attempt to convert it into written literature. This activity encourages students to look deeper into the reasons for the artistic choices made by the film or play's director, such as the choice of particular lighting, staging, costuming, and even casting.

### Question Stems:

- Select an event from the story and compare it to a scene from the film. How are they different, and why?
- How does the production differ from the text? Cite specific textual evidence from both mediums.
  - Why would the director choose to depart from/stay faithful to the text? Cite specific textual evidence from both mediums.
- Do you agree with the director's decision to \_\_\_\_\_? Why or why not?
- Compare and contrast \_\_\_\_ (text title) with the filmed version of the story. Use specific examples in your comparison.
- Is the filmed version of \_\_\_\_\_ (text title) effective? Why or why not? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- To what extent does \_\_\_\_ (filmed production) stay faithful to/depart from the text? Were the choices the director and actor(s) made effective? Why or why not? Use examples in your analysis.
- Which medium most impacts your understanding of the selected work?



## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

**RL.8.9:** Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Eighth grade students will understand the timeless nature of literary themes. Specifically, they should be able to observe how the same theme is presented across multiple texts, particularly in the genres of myths, traditional stories, and religious works. To master this, students must first be exposed to a variety of texts of varying formats and time periods that all focus around a common literary theme, such as love, friendship, or perseverance. As students read and discuss these texts, they should consider the author's message about life. Once students have identified an overall theme of a text, they should examine how the writer created that theme. Students should specifically look for patterns of events, conflicts, or character types when choosing evidence of a theme. The final step of this standard involves students looking closely at the genres of myths, traditional stories, or religious works and determining how writers modernized their presentation of the theme while still holding true to the characteristics of that genre. As students read these texts, they should note specific use of elements such as language, character traits, conflicts, and settings in order to analyze the writer's approach.

### Question Stems:

- How is the theme of \_\_\_\_\_ (modern text) similar to the theme of \_\_\_\_\_ (traditional work/myth/story/religious or Biblical)? Cite specific textual evidence.
- How is the pattern of events of \_\_\_\_\_ (modern text) similar to the pattern of events of \_\_\_\_\_ (traditional work/myth/story/religious or Biblical)? Cite specific textual evidence.
- How are the characters of \_\_\_\_\_ (modern text) similar to the characters of \_\_\_\_\_ (traditional work/myth/story/religious or Biblical)? Cite specific textual evidence.
- What changes are made to \_\_\_\_\_ to modernize the theme/plot/characters? Cite specific textual evidence.

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**RI.2:** Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

**RI.3:** Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Students will determine the central idea or focus of a text. This involves becoming aware of and recording repeated understandings or messages as they read. Students are encouraged to actively read and take note of how recurring examples, images, and conclusions drawn by the writer support and build the central idea of the text. Once students realize the central idea, they should reflect on how the writer used repetition to slowly reveal it to the reader. Therefore, summaries should reveal the ways the central ideas develops. For example analysis may include analyzing an author's choice of structure, features, and support.

Eighth grade students will analyze a writer's style and presentation to determine the relationship between individuals, ideas, or events. To achieve this, students will first understand how different text structures present and link information. For instance, using graphic organizers, students could read brief pieces that present information using a variety of structures including comparisons, analogies, and categories. Students could then reflect on how the writer's choice of structure relates to the overall central idea or purpose. To further explore this concept, students could generalize how specific genres of informational texts tend to rely on particular structures to determine relationships between individuals, ideas, or events.

Question Stems:

- What is the central idea and how is it developed? Cite specific textual evidence.
- Explain the relationship between the supporting ideas and the central idea. Cite specific textual evidence.
- Write an objective summary of the text.
- How does the author develop his/her analysis of \_\_ (a concept) \_\_ in order to help the reader understand the material being presented? Use examples from the text in your explanation.
- How does the author help the reader understand the connections between ideas presented in the text? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author presents the series of ideas in the order s/he does? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author introduce, develop, and draw connections between ideas and events? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

## Unit 4: Analyzing Critical Perspectives

**W.1:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Students must be able to construct a particular claim based on an issue within a text, consider all counterclaims, and then search for textual evidence to support the claims in a persuasive manner. Work may include examining a literary text or closely reading articles/journals and other sources identified as legitimate or not, depending on the assignment. Once students have established a strong foundation in the defining features of editorials, including controversial topics, structures, and word choice, they are then prepared to create their own editorials. Instruction may focus on how to recognize and *use* evidence from the text in order to prove a given claim, in a 'voice' that is both authoritative and rational. In effect, students will then, in proper order, logically tie all claims/counterclaims, evidence, and closing remarks together to produce a well-supported argument.

**W.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Students will use their understandings from literary and literary nonfiction texts to support their writing. For a literary text, students may reference patterns of events, conflicts, or character types as evidence of their analysis and determination of theme(s) presented. When writing about literary nonfiction texts, students may cite claims, facts, and evidence outlined in the text. To master this standard, students will need to evaluate evidence based on the strength of its connection to the overall theme or central idea. Instruction may involve modeling of the thought process writers undergo as they work to support and elaborate upon their ideas through textual evidence.

**SL.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Eighth grade students will work together in groups in an effort to collaborate and 'bounce ideas' off one another on various issues within a text, in order to reach a common understanding. To show mastery, students may participate in activities including book clubs, Socratic seminars, and philosophical chairs. To prepare for discussions and debates such as these, students must read a text closely and with predetermined purpose(s). Students then come together, under the guidelines of a specific structure, and probe for deeper meanings beneath the text. They should ask pointed questions, *actively* listen for and gauge other students' responses, and reflect on and re-evaluate their initial belief or stance. This process encourages students to practice skills such as active listening, connecting to others' ideas and seeking to construct a higher truth or synthesis on whatever topic of discussion/debate is at hand.