

8th Grade Reading – Unit 1 –Changes and Progress

Essential Question:

In what ways can change/progress/growth be both positive and negative?

Duration: 5 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ connotative meaning
- ✓ explicit textual evidence
- ✓ implicit textual evidence
- ✓ literal vs. figurative language
- ✓ setting
- ✓ theme
- ✓ travelogue

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems (some listed below)

- ✓ "The Cremation of Sam McGee" (poem)
- ✓ "Western Wagons" (poem)
- ✓ "The Other Pioneers" (poem)
- ✓ "The Ransom of Red Chief" (short story)
- ✓ "A Retrieved Reformation" (short story)
- ✓ Excerpt from *Roughing It* (memoir)
- ✓ "The Great Rat Hunt" (short story)
- ✓ "Chicago" (poem)
- ✓ "The Great Chicago Fire of 1871" (magazine article)
- ✓ *The Great Fire* (book)

- ✓ *Call of the Wild* (novel)

Focus Standards:

- RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text
- RI.8.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints
- W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences
- SL.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 8, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly
- SL.8.1 (a): 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
- SL.8.1 (b): Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed
- L.8.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies
- L.8.4 (a): Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase
- L.8.4 (b): Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede, recede, secede*)

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction, specifically what these genres reveal about change and progress, and about life during the Westward Expansion period
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature, poetry, and informational text
- ✓ Compare and contrast story characters, plots, themes, and settings from stories about change and progress, and about Westward Expansion
- ✓ Analyze different accounts of the same event
- ✓ Write poetry (concrete or haiku) and perform it for classmates

8th Grade Reading – Unit 2 –Conflicts

Essential Question:

What can we learn from confronting or avoiding a problem?

Duration: 5 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ genre
- ✓ setting (review)
- ✓ text structures
- ✓ explicit textual evidence (review)
- ✓ implicit textual evidence (review)
- ✓ travelogue

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems (some listed below)

- ✓ "Civil War Journal" (primary source)
- ✓ "Drummer Boy of Shiloh" (short story)
- ✓ "O' Captain! My Captain!" (poem)
- ✓ "Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad" (biography, letter/primary source)
- ✓ "The Mysterious Mr. Lincoln" (biography)
- ✓ "The Hitchhiker" (drama)
- ✓ "The Road Not Taken" (poem)
- ✓ "Barbara Frietchie" (poem)
- ✓ *Notes from the Midnight Driver* (novel)
- ✓ *Pink and Say* (picture book)

- ✓ *The Red Badge of Courage* (novel/ebook)

Focus Standards:

- RL.8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style
- RI.8.2: 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.8.7: Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea)
- W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence
- SL.8.1: 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
- SL.8.1 (c): Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives
- SL.8.1 (d): Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task
- L.8.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies
- L.8.4 (c): Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech
- L.8.4 (d): Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary)

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction, specifically what these genres reveal about life during the Civil War period

- ✓ Compare and contrast information learned about life during the Civil War with the previous study of Westward Expansion
- ✓ Compare and contrast story characters, plots , themes, and settings from stories that are set during the Civil War time period
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature, poetry, and informational text
- ✓ Evaluate the structure of various texts and discuss the impact of structure on its meaning
- ✓ Write an argument, supported by clear reasons and evidence, related to the Civil War that you believe was most memorable
- ✓ Recognize nuances in meaning among similar words
- ✓ Participate in group discussions

8th Grade Reading – Unit 3 –Technology and Advancement

Essential Question: Does technology improve life or harm it?

Duration: 4 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ character types
- ✓ historical fiction
- ✓ patterns of evidence
- ✓ point of view
- ✓ pre-conceived notion

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems (some listed below)

- ✓ excerpts from *Ashes of Roses* (novel)
- ✓ “Flowers for Algernon” (short story)
- ✓ *The City of Ember* (novel)

- ✓ *We Were There, Too* (nonfiction book)
- ✓ "There Will Come Soft Rains" (short story)
- ✓ "The Chimney Sweeper" (both versions-poetry)
- ✓ "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" (poetry)
- ✓ "Us and Them" (essay)
- ✓ "The Story of an Eyewitness" (eyewitness account)
- ✓ "Robo-Legs" (magazine article)
- ✓ "Eureka: Scientific Twists of Fate" (online article)
- ✓ from *An American Plague* (nonfiction book)
- ✓ *The Giver* (novel)
- ✓ *We Shall Not Be Moved: The Women's Factory Strike of 1909* (nonfiction book)
- ✓ excerpts from *The Great Gatsby* (novel)

Focus Standards:

- 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
- RI.8.3: Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events, (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories)
- RI.8.9: Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation
- W.8.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration
- SL.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest
- L.8.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction about events from America's past

- ✓ Compare and contrast story characters, plots, themes, and settings from stories about American history, specifically the period of the Industrial Revolution
- ✓ Analyze how historical fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths or traditional stories
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature, poetry, and informational texts, notably the Constitution
- ✓ Determine an author's point of view in a text, and discuss the impact that has on what was written
- ✓ Recite poetry with classmates
- ✓ Conduct an in-depth research project on a historical event of choice, followed by a multimedia report that includes insights from historical fiction
- ✓ Participate in group discussions

8th Grade Reading – Unit 4—Tough Times

Essential Question: In what ways does adversity bring out the best and the worst in people?

Duration: 4 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ author's style
- ✓ humor
- ✓ irony
- ✓ mood
- ✓ perspective (worm's eye, bird's eye)
- ✓ point of view
- ✓ tone

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems (some listed below)

- ✓ *A Long Way from Chicago* (novel)
- ✓ *Witness* (novel)
- ✓ "The Monkey's Paw" (short story)
- ✓ "The Landlady" (short story)
- ✓ "Leaving Desire" (nonfiction)
- ✓ FDR Inaugural Address (nonfiction/primary source)
- ✓ FDR Fireside Chats (nonfiction/primary source)
- ✓ "The Tell-Tale Heart" (short story)
- ✓ excerpts from *Out of the Dust* (novel)
- ✓ various photographs by Dorothea Lange (photographs)
- ✓ "Sharing Memories: 1930's Life on the Farm During the Great Depression" (online autobiography)
- ✓ Nonfiction article on Great Depression
- ✓ Excerpts from *The Grapes of Wrath* (novel)
- ✓ *Children of the Great Depression* (nonfiction)
- ✓ *Children of the Dust Bowl* (nonfiction)

Focus Standards:

- 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
- RI.8.5: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept
- RI.8.8: 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.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content

SL.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation

L.8.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings

L.8.5 (b): Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words

L.8.5 (c): Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*)

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction, specifically what these genres reveal about the time period of World War I
- ✓ Determine an author's point of view in a text, compare it with an artist's perspective in a work of art, and discuss the impact perspective has on what was created
- ✓ Compare and contrast authors' and artists' motivation for creativity
- ✓ Conduct research on a Civil War topic/figure of choice
- ✓ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used to describe Civil War events and historical figures, including figurative, connotative, and technical vocabulary
- ✓ Discuss how the use of literary techniques, such as humor or point of view, helps engage readers with the text
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature, poetry, informational text, and works of art
- ✓ Participate in group discussions

8th Grade Reading – Unit 5—Beliefs and Ideals

Essential Question: How can acts of inhumanity challenge our beliefs and assumptions about the world?

Duration: 4 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ author's style
- ✓ irony
- ✓ mood
- ✓ perspective (worm's eye, bird's eye)
- ✓ point of view
- ✓ tone

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems

Focus Standards:

- 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
- RI.8.5: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept
- RI.8.8: 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.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content
- SL.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation
- L.8.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings
- L.8.5 (b): Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words

L.8.5 (c): Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*)

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction, specifically what these genres reveal about the time period of World War I
- ✓ Determine an author's point of view in a text, compare it with an artist's perspective in a work of art, and discuss the impact perspective has on what was created
- ✓ Compare and contrast authors' and artists' motivation for creativity
- ✓ Conduct research on a Civil War topic/figure of choice
- ✓ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used to describe Civil War events and historical figures, including figurative, connotative, and technical vocabulary
- ✓ Discuss how the use of literary techniques, such as humor or point of view, helps engage readers with the text
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature, poetry, informational text, and works of art
- ✓ Participate in group discussions

8th Grade Reading – Unit6—Worth the Fight

Essential Question: *What is worth fighting for?*

Duration: 4 weeks

Terminology:

- ✓ allegory
- ✓ explicit
- ✓ hero/heroine

- ✓ implicit
- ✓ satire
- ✓ strength of character
- ✓ symbolism
- ✓ writing style

Resources:

McDougal Littell *Literature* Textbook

Selected stories, nonfiction, and poems

Focus Standards:

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

W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences

SL.8.4: 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

L.8.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening

L.8.3 (a): Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact)

Objectives:

- ✓ Read and discuss a variety of novels /stories/nonfiction pieces that reveal, explicitly or implicitly, the "greater good"
- ✓ Experiment with performing poetry in a variety of styles and discuss how these changes affect its interpretation

- ✓ Compare and contrast characters, plots, themes, settings, and literary techniques used in the stories read
- ✓ Analyze how particular lines of dialogue in literature propel the action and reveal aspects of character
- ✓ Analyze how writing styles and literary techniques, such as symbolism or satire, are used and how their use impacts meaning and reader engagement
- ✓ Write a variety of responses to literature and informational text
- ✓ Analyze the extent to which a filmed version of a story stays faithful to or departs from the text, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors
- ✓ Create a multimedia presentation on “the greater good” where the message is either explicitly stated or implied
- ✓ Participate in group discussions