



## English Department Curriculum Guide

## Grade 8 ELA

Course Description
<p>The eighth grade English course of studies aims to hone students' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening through structured writing, close reading, and small and large group discussions. The curriculum continues to spiral in the four domains: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Standards are carefully selected each term to maximize student interactions with selected literature and informational texts. Given the pre-requisite skills and interdependency among the standards to access or show mastery of a standard, many standards are revisited each term. Students interact with texts representing a variety of genres, through meaningful literacy tasks such as: close reading and analysis, textual evidence collection, and interpretation via literary elements. Teachers meet the needs of all learners through use of explicitly taught reading and writing strategies.</p> <p>Our program promotes instructional practices that are student-centered and scaffolded as needed. Writing instruction is intended to be a culmination of previously taught writing standards with each year building complexity and a nuanced approach. Students are guided through the writing process with the expectation of developing literary analysis based on collaborative discussions and close reading of texts. Formal and informal assessments are utilized and designed to assess a student's command and mastery of standards.</p>
Content Standards
<a href="#"><u>Grade 8 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework - ELA</u></a>



Subject: Grade 8 – English Language Arts

Units	Essential Questions	Key Activities May Include
<p><b>TERM 1</b></p> <p><b>UNIT 1: Everyone Loves A Mystery</b></p> <p><b>MA Standards:</b>  <b>Reading Literature</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4</b></p> <p><b>Reading Informational</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5</b></p> <p><b>Writing</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.9</b></p> <p><b>Language</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6</b></p> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What attracts us to the mysterious?</li> <li>Can the narrator of a story be trusted?</li> <li>How can setting help develop a theme?</li> <li>How can you build suspense within your own writing?</li> <li>How do writer's use supporting evidence to support an argument?</li> </ul>	<p>Reading short stories, poems, and informational text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Tell Tale Heart</i> by Edgar Allan Poe</li> <li><i>The Lottery</i> by Shirley Jackson</li> <li><i>The Monkey's Paw</i> by W.W. Jacobs</li> <li><i>The Raven</i> by Edgar Allan Poe</li> <li><i>Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science</i> by John Fleischman</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write a summary of a short story distinct from personal opinion or analysis</li> <li>Cite textual evidence to support claims and text dependent responses</li> <li>Make and confirm predictions in order to improve reading comprehension</li> <li>Write a comparative essay utilizing organizational structures, evidence to support claims, pacing with a variety of sentence structures to support cohesion and clarification of ideas</li> <li>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the setting</li> <li>Write a narrative essay by establishing a point of view, using a range of words, clauses, descriptive details, and transitions to support sequencing of events while maintaining a consistent tone</li> </ul>



Units	Essential Questions	Key Activities May Include
<p><b>TERM 2</b></p> <p><b>UNIT 2: Past and Present</b></p> <p><b>MA Standards:</b>  <b>Reading Literature</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4</b></p> <p><b>Reading Informational</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5</b></p> <p><b>Writing</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.9, 8.10</b></p> <p><b>Language</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6</b></p> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What makes you, you?</li> <li>How can you use your passion to empower others?</li> <li>How do poetic elements and structure help show the speaker's attitude toward a topic?</li> <li>What does it mean to be an outsider or an insider in our society?</li> <li>How do perceptions lead to stereotyping and the pressure to conform?</li> </ul>	<p>Reading short stories, poems, nonfiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I'm Nobody! Who are you?</i> by Emily Dickinson</li> <li><i>Slam, Dunk &amp; Hook</i> by Yusef Komunyakaa</li> <li><i>Abuela Invents the Zero</i> by Judith Ortiz Cofer</li> <li><i>The Road Not Taken</i> by Robert Frost</li> <li><i>Curtain Call</i> by Swish Cain</li> <li>Novel: <i>The Outsiders</i> by S.E. Hinton</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the ways in which the structure of a text contributes to its' meaning</li> <li>Analyze how poetic elements and structure contribute to a poem's meaning</li> <li>Identify important character traits through analyzing dialogue and incidents in a story</li> <li>Identify and understand allusion</li> <li>Write a poem using elements of poetry</li> </ul>



Units	Essential Questions	Key Activities May Include
<p><b>TERM 2</b></p> <p><b>Unit 3: No Risk, No Reward</b></p> <p><b>MA Standards:</b>  <b>Reading Literature</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4</b></p> <p><b>Reading Informational</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4</b></p> <p><b>Writing</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.9</b></p> <p><b>Language</b>  <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6</b></p> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b>  <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why do we take chances?</li> <li>Why would a group of people remain in a community or an identified dangerous location?</li> <li>What happens when a big risk has a negative outcome?</li> <li>What does the phrase “knowledge is power” mean?</li> <li>How do differing text structures help to effectively communicate information regarding tragedies?</li> </ul>	<p>Reading short stories, poems, nonfiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Vanishing Island</i> by Anya Groner</li> <li><i>A Night To Remember</i> by Walter Lord</li> <li><i>Address To The Nation On The Explosion Of The Space Shuttle Challenger</i> by Ronald Reagan</li> <li><i>Mother To Son</i> by Langston Hughes</li> <li><i>Learning To Read</i> by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and evaluate details in order to determine key ideas</li> <li>Determine the meaning and usage of grade-level academic English words derived from Greek and Latin roots</li> <li>Analyze how multiple organizational patterns within a text help develop the thesis</li> <li>Demonstrate their understanding of metaphor by writing a short, personal response</li> <li>Participate in a collaborative conversation in response to a prompt and write a reflection on participation in the discussion</li> </ul>



Units	Essential Questions	Key Activities May Include
<b>TERM 3</b>  <b>Unit 4: Hear Me Out</b>  <b>MA Standards:</b> <b>Reading Literature</b> <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4</b>  <b>Writing</b> <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.9, 8.10</b>  <b>Language</b> <b>8.1, 8.2, 8.4</b>  <b>Speaking and Listening</b> <b>8.1, 8.3, 8.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do individual voices/opinions impact society and cultural change?</li> <li>How does the inclusion of facts make an argument more convincing?</li> <li>How can a speech appeal to an audience?</li> <li>How does a writer achieve his/ her purpose in a persuasive speech?</li> <li>How do you choose the right words?</li> <li>What actions can love inspire, both wise and foolish?</li> <li>How can challenge or conflict reveal the best and worst of our true selves?</li> </ul>	<p>Reading short stories, drama, poems, speeches, informational text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>/HUG</i> by Ehud Lavski &amp; Yael Nathan</li> <li>Drama: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> by William Shakespeare</li> <li><i>Gaming Communities</i></li> <li><i>The Gettysburg Address</i> by Abraham Lincoln</li> <li><i>Ain't I A Woman?</i> by Sojourner Truth</li> <li><i>I Have A Dream</i> by Martin Luther King Jr.</li> <li><i>On The Assassination Of Martin Luther King Jr.</i> by Robert F. Kennedy</li> </ul> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine theme and analyze its development</li> <li>Delineate and evaluate an argument and specific claims in both the point and counterpoint texts</li> <li>Compare and contrast ideas in two different texts</li> <li>Analyze the word choices an author makes, including analogies and allusions</li> <li>Understand the difference between connotations and denotations</li> <li>Study and recite a famous speech from memory to facilitate deep analysis of author word choice relevant to the central idea</li> </ul>

Textbook
<i>StudySync</i> ; published by McGraw Hill