

# Grade 8 Language Arts/Reading

Course Duration: Full Year

Category: Middle School, Reading/Language Arts

Prerequisite: Grade 7 Language Arts/Reading

Assessment: Lesson Practice, Unit Exams, Mid-Term Exam, Final Exam

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## Course Overview

Grade 8 Language Arts/Reading uses literary classics in teaching students to analyze literature and recognize literary structures and devices. Writing skills are reinforced through the mechanics of a logical and organized writing process in various types of texts, from personal narrative and poetry to persuasive and expository writing. Course topics include:

- Reading Strategies
  - Narrative Writing
  - Point of View and Figurative Language
  - Wonderful Words
  - Expository Essay
  - Power of Poetry
  - Drama
  - Speaking Your Words
  - Informational Texts
  - Writing
  - Research
  - Analyzing Text
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## Scope and Sequence

### Unit 1

In this unit students study *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. They begin by gaining understanding of the troublesome word pair who/whom. Next they review vocabulary from the book. As they read the first half of the book, they study early inference, point of view, narrator, and character types.

### Unit 2

In this unit students continue to study *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. As they read the second half of the book, they explore symbols and metaphors, characters and dialogue, plot structure, and foreshadowing. In addition, they investigate theme evolution, impact of theme, and comparing and contrasting. They continue by learning about modern comparisons and reflexive pronouns.

### Unit 3

In this unit students learn how to write a fictional narrative, beginning with the introduction, and followed by using dialogue, transitions, and prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing the narrative. Next students explore political history as they read "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. They also learn about paraphrasing.

#### **Unit 4**

In this unit students study the novel "War of the Worlds" by H.G. Wells. They begin by gaining understanding of the troublesome word pair accept/except. Next they review vocabulary from the book, and then, as they read sections from the book, they learn about point of view and irony, imagery, personification, and suspense. They also discuss intensive pronouns.

#### **Unit 5**

In this unit students focus on grammar. They begin by studying the troublesome word group to/two/too, and then continue by learning about prefixes, suffixes, affixes, and root words. They study similar words, synonyms and antonyms. Finally, they gain understanding of puns as found in the work of William Shakespeare and explore the proper use of the semicolon.

#### **Unit 6**

In this unit students learn to write an expository essay. They begin by studying with how to write the introductory paragraph, followed by the thesis statement and the topic sentence. Next they focus on supporting details, analysis, varied transitions, and the concluding paragraph.

#### **Unit 7**

In this unit students study poetry. They begin by exploring the troublesome word group there/their/they're. Next they discuss the power of poetry, and they review form and sound devices in poetry. They learn about figurative language including imagery, simile, analysis, and personification, and they compare the structures of haiku and the sonnet. They study the literary device called mood, and learn to interpret poetry. This unit is followed by the Mid-Term Review and Exam.

#### **Unit 8**

In this unit students explore the narrative poem, "Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Lawrence Thayer. They begin by studying the author, and then continue by learning what a narrative poem is. Next they read the poem, and then learn about rhyme, repetition and suspense. Next, as they study the epic poem Beowulf, they learn about paraphrase and comprehension, and then they study the proper use of the colon and the troublesome word pair all ready/already.

#### **Unit 9**

In this unit students study the play "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare. They begin by exploring the background of the play, and then they delve into Acts I and II with a summary. They discuss personification in the play, then continue with a summary of Acts III, IV, and V. Students next tackle active and passive verbs and verb effects, and then study gerunds.

#### **Unit 10**

In this unit students study public speaking. They begin by addressing the troublesome words a lot, ain't, lay/lie, set/sit, and can/may. Next, they learn what public speaking is and how to make a speech engaging. They learn the difference between a formal and an informal speech, they learn about collaborative discussions, and they learn about participles.

#### **Unit 11**

In this unit students learn how to properly use commas and appositives, and then delve into informational texts, first learning what they are. They study an informational text, "The Truth About the Titanic" by Archibald Gracie, to learn about analyzing text, inferences, theme, summary, and impact. They study a "Letter to the President of the United States" by Thomas Jefferson to learn about context clues, story structure, and author point of view. They further study infinitives.

#### **Unit 12**

In this unit students study persuasive writing and learn to write a persuasive essay. They explore writing the introduction, as well as how to analyse evidence. They learn about parallelism, prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. They compare two different journal entries written about the same event to learn to compare points of view. They learn about using commas, ellipses, and dashes, and then delve into a study of narrative writing. They also explore how to use commas in a list.

**Unit 13**

In this unit students learn how to do informative writing. They learn how to use a dictionary or thesaurus. They learn about the power of research, including using the Internet, evaluating results, and evidence. They also learn to embellish their writing with related graphics.

**Unit 14**

In this unit students discuss the comma splice. Next, they learn about the author O. Henry and his piece, "A Retrieved Reformation." They learn about symbolism, situational irony, and theme. Following this unit, students are given the Final Review and Exam.