

William & Mary Center for Gifted Education

The Pursuit of Justice with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Alignment

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8, Beginning with School Year 2009-2010.

The English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are organized into the following strands: Reading, where students read and understand a wide variety of literary and informational texts; Writing, where students compose a variety of written texts with a clear controlling idea, coherent organization, and sufficient detail; Research, where students are expected to know how to locate a range of relevant sources and evaluate, synthesize, and present ideas and information; Listening and Speaking, where students listen and respond to the ideas of others while contributing their own ideas in conversations and in groups; and Oral and Written Conventions, where students learn how to use the oral and written conventions of the English language in speaking and writing. The standards are cumulative--students will continue to address earlier standards as needed while they attend to standards for their grade. In eighth grade, students will engage in activities that build on their prior knowledge and skills in order to strengthen their reading, writing, and oral language skills. Students should read and write on a daily basis.

The Pursuit of Justice

The Pursuit of Justice is about the path man has taken in his desire for justice. Students will explore the South of the 1930s in the perennial classic *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee; they will also read some of her short stories and essays that have intrigued readers. The plight of the Little Rock Nine becomes a first- person account in *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Pattillo Beals. Students will read the primary source newspapers of the day to get other perspectives on how Civil Rights and integration shook the nation. They will also travel the path of the migrant ranch hand in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Students will also have a chance to examine poetry, songs, essays, and art that portray the pursuit of justice. Vocabulary and grammar will align with the readings. Opportunities to research, write expository pieces, and create meaning for themselves will abound in this unit.

The Pursuit of Justice Essential Book Titles

[Of Mice and Men](#)

[No Promises In The Wind](#)

[To Kill A Mockingbird](#)

[Warriors Don't Cry](#)

[The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail](#)

This unit is intended to represent a semester's work in language arts for high ability learners. This unit does not include specific lessons in spelling, developmental reading skills, or all types of writing, it's recommended that these elements be integrated into the unit or considered upon completion of this unit of study.

Lesson Description	Gifted Goal 1 To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature	Gifted Goal 2 To develop persuasive, creative, and expository writing skills	Gifted Goal 3 To develop linguistic competency	Gifted Goal 4 To develop listening/oral communication skills	Gifted Goal 5 To develop reasoning skills in the language arts	Gifted Goal 6 To understand the concept of justice in the language arts	TEK Strand and TEK #	Supporting Priority TEKS – CFGE <i>The Pursuit of Justice</i>
Lesson 1 – Introduction and Unit Preassessments	X	X	X	X		X	Reading 8.3C Writing 8.18A	(3) Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. (C) explain how the values and beliefs of particular characters are affected by the historical and cultural setting of the literary work. (18) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write a persuasive essay to the appropriate audience (A) establishes a clear thesis or position
Lesson 2 – Introduction to the Concept of Justice		X				X	Writing 8.14B 8.19A	(14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. (B) develop drafts by choosing an appropriate organizational strategy (e.g., sequence of events, cause-effect, compare-contrast) and building on ideas to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing (19) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. (A) use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking
Lesson 3 – Analyzing Poetry; Introduction to the Literature Web	X		X		X	X	Reading 8.4 8.8 Writing 8.15A	(4) Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to compare and contrast the relationship between the purpose and characteristics of different poetic forms. (8) Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the effect of similes and extended metaphors in literary text. (15) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. (A) write an imaginative story
Lesson 4 – Analyzing an Essay; Introduction to the Vocabulary Web	X		X			X	Reading 8.7 Writing 8.14 Reading 8.11A	(7) Comprehension of Literary Text/Literary Nonfiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. (14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. (11) Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. (A) compare and contrast persuasive texts that reached different conclusions about the same issue and explain how the authors reached their conclusions through analyzing the evidence each presents

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Lesson 5 – Expository Writing	X	X	X		X	X	Reading 8.10D Writing 8.17A 8.19 8.20 8.21	<p>(10) Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. (D) synthesize and make logical connections between ideas within a text and across two or three texts representing similar or different genres and support those findings with textual evidence.</p> <p>(17) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. (A) write a multi-paragraph essay to convey information about a topic</p> <p>(19) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing.</p> <p>(20) Writing/Conventions of Language/Handwriting. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions.</p> <p>(21) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings.</p>
Lesson 6 – Argumentative Writing: Introduction to Reasoning	X	X	X	X	X	X	Writing 8.18A 8.18C 8.19 Research 8.22A 8.22B	<p>(18) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. (A) establishes a clear thesis or position; (B) considers and responds to the views of others and anticipates and answers reader concerns and counter-arguments; (C) includes evidence that is logically organized to support the author's viewpoint and that differentiates between fact and opinion.</p> <p>(19) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing.</p> <p>(22) Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. (A) brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic; (B) apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources and create a written plan after preliminary research in reference works and additional text searches.</p>
Lesson 7 – Literary Analysis for “The Valiant Chattee Maker”	X		X		X	X	Reading 8.2 8.3A 8.3B 8.3C 8.5	<p>(2) Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing.</p> <p>(3) Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. (A) analyze literary works that share similar themes across cultures; (B) compare and contrast the similarities and differences in mythologies from various cultures (C) explain how the values and beliefs of particular characters are affected by the historical and cultural setting of the literary work.</p> <p>(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the similarities and differences in the setting, characters, and plot of a play and those in a film based upon the same story line.</p>

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Lesson 8 – Introduction to the Research Project		X	X		X	X	Research 8.22A 8.22B 8.23 8.24	(22) Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. (A) brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic; (B) apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources and create a written plan after preliminary research in reference works and additional text searches. (23) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. (24) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information.
Lesson 9 – Continuation of Research Project Work	X	X	X	X	X	X	Research 8.23A 8.23B 8.24 8.25A 8.25B 8.25C Listening/ Speaking 8.26	(23) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. (A) follow the research plan to gather information from a range of relevant print and electronic sources using advanced search strategies; (B) categorize information thematically in order to see the larger constructs inherent in the information (24) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. (25) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that, (A) draws conclusions and summarizes or paraphrases the findings in a systematic way; (B) marshals evidence to explain the topic and gives relevant reasons for conclusions; (C) presents the findings in a meaningful format. (26) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings.
Lesson 10 – Analyzing and Interpreting Picture Books	X				X	X	Reading 8.3 8.6	(3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. (6) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.
Lesson 11 – Analyzing and Interpreting Art	X				X	X	Writing 8.16 Reading 8.12	(16) Writing. Students write about their own experiences. Students are expected to write a personal narrative that has a clearly defined focus and communicates the importance of or reasons for actions and/or consequences. (12) Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents.

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Lesson 12 – Literary Analysis of <i>Of Mice and Men</i>	X		X		X	X	Reading 8.5 8.6A 8.6B 8.6C	(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the similarities and differences in the setting, characters, and plot of a play and those in a film based upon the same story line. (6) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to: (A) summarize the elements of plot development (e.g., rising action, turning point, climax, falling action, denouement) in various works of fiction; (B) recognize dialect and conversational voice and explain how authors use dialect to convey character; and (C) describe different forms of point-of-view, including first- and third-person.
Lesson 13 – Literary Analysis of Poetry	X	X	X		X	X	Reading 8.1 8.13A 8.13B 8.13C 8.13D	(1) Reading/Fluency. Students read grade-level text with fluency and comprehension. (13) Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. (A) explain messages conveyed in various forms of media; (B) recognize how various techniques influence viewers' emotions; (C) critique persuasive techniques (e.g., testimonials, bandwagon appeal) used in media messages; and (D) analyze various digital media venues for levels of formality and informality.
Lesson 14 – Oral Presentations				X	X		Listening/ Speaking 8.26A 8.26B	(26) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. (A) listen to and interpret a speaker's messages (both verbal and nonverbal) and ask questions to clarify the speaker's purpose and perspective; (B) follow and give oral instructions that include multiple action steps; and (C) paraphrase the major ideas and supporting evidence in formal and informal presentations.
Lesson 15 – Analysis of Quotes in Literature			X		X		Reading 8.2	(2) Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing.
Lesson 16 – Literary Analysis of <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> and <i>Warriors Don't Cry</i>	X				X	X	Reading 8.5 8.6A 8.6B 8.6C	5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. (6) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. (A) summarize the elements of plot development (e.g., rising action, turning point, climax, falling action, denouement) in various works of fiction; (B) recognize dialect and conversational voice and explain how authors use dialect to convey character; and (C) describe different forms of point-of-view, including first- and third-person.

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Lesson 17 – Analyzing and Interpreting Picture Books	X				X	X	Reading 8.3 8.6	(3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. (6) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.
Lesson 18 – Literary Analysis of a Play	X		X		X	X	Reading 8.5 Listening/ Speaking 8.28	(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the similarities and differences in the setting, characters, and plot of a play and those in a film based upon the same story line. (28) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams.
Lesson 19 – Reviewing the Concept of Justice	X				X	X	Reading 8.9	(9) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
Lesson 20 – Unit Postassessments	X	X	X		X	X	Reading 8.9 Writing 8.14 Research 8.25 Listening/ Speaking 8.27	(9) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to compare and contrast the stated or implied purposes of different authors writing on the same topic. (14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. (25) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. (27) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language.