

## Grade 8

The Grade 8 Core ELA Units take students through literary and nonfiction texts that explore how individuals are affected by their choices, their relationships, and the world around them. In Unit 1, *Everyone Loves a Mystery*, students will try to determine what attracts us to stories of suspense. Unit 2, *Past and Present*, asks the essential question: *What makes you, you?* Unit 3, *No Risk, No Reward*, asks students to consider why we take chances, while Unit 4, *Hear Me Out*, asks students to consider the unit’s driving question—*How do you choose the right words?*—by providing a range of texts that allow students to consider how a person’s words can affect an audience. Next, Unit 5’s *Trying Times* asks students to think about who they are in a crisis. Finally, students finish up the year with an examination of science fiction and fantasy texts as they think about the question “What do other worlds teach us about our own?” in Unit 6, *Beyond Reality*.

<p><b>Unit Title:</b> Everyone Loves a Mystery</p> <p><b>Essential Question:</b> What attracts us to the mysterious?</p>	<p><b>Genre Focus:</b> Fiction</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Narrative</p>	<p>After reading classic thrillers and surprising mysteries, students will craft fiction, applying what they have learned about suspense to their own narrative writing projects.</p>	<p><b>Sample Readings:</b></p> <p>The Tell Tale Heart</p> <p>Monster</p> <p>Excerpt from Ten Days in a Mad House</p>
<p><b>Unit Title:</b> Past and Present</p> <p><b>Essential Question:</b> What makes you, you?</p>	<p><b>Genre Focus:</b> Poetry</p> <p><b>Extended Writing</b></p> <p><b>Project:</b> Literary Analysis</p>	<p>This unit will explore what it means to be yourself, to feel like nobody, and even to feel on top of the world, using the lens of figurative language to understand how authors express varied ideas about identity and belonging, past and present.</p>	<p><b>Sample Readings:</b></p> <p>“I’m Nobody! Who are you?”</p> <p>Excerpt from <i>The House on Mango Street</i></p> <p>“The Road Not Taken.”</p>
<p><b>Unit Title:</b> No Risk, No Reward</p> <p><b>Essential Question:</b> Why do we take chances?</p>	<p><b>Genre Focus:</b> Informational Text</p> <p><b>Extended Writing</b></p> <p><b>Project:</b> Informational</p>	<p>Texts are from authors who explore risk-taking from a variety of viewpoints and genres.</p>	<p><b>Sample Readings:</b></p> <p>Vanishing Island</p> <p>Excerpts from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave &amp; The Call of the Wild</p>
<p><b>Unit Title:</b> Hear Me Out</p> <p><b>Essential Question:</b> How do you choose the right words?</p>	<p><b>Genre &amp; Writing Focus:</b> Argumentative</p>	<p>Some of history’s greatest wordsmiths are represented in this unit including historical speeches.</p>	<p><b>Sample Readings:</b></p> <p>Ain’t I a Woman?</p> <p>The Gettysburg Address</p> <p>Excerpt from Across Five Aprils</p>