8ᵗʰ Grade Literacy Learning Scales

Course Map

Unit	Estimated Duration	Content Standards	Grading Topics
Unit One: Elements of Literature	12 weeks	• Reading Literature 1 • Reading Informational Text 1	• Analyzing Textual Evidence
		• Reading Literature 2	• Analyzing Theme
		• Reading Literature 3 • Reading Literature 6	• Analyzing Story Elements
Unit Two: Making Meaning	6 weeks	• Reading Informational Text 2 • Reading Informational Text 3	• Analyzing Central Idea
Unit Three: Argument	12 weeks	• Reading Informational Text 6 • Reading Informational Text 8	• Evaluating Arguments and Purpose
		• Writing 1	• Writing Arguments
Unit Four: The Author's Craft	6 weeks	• Reading Literature 5 • Reading Informational Text 5 • Reading Informational Text 9	• Analyzing Text Structure

At DMPS, we use a consistent 4-point grading scale that is based solely on achievement of learning goals. Topic scores are based on multiple bodies of evidence. Topic scores are then converted into a letter grade at the end of each term or semester.

Unit 1: Elements of Literacy

In this 12-week unit, we focus on elements of literature. Through reading a novel and other short stories, students will have multiple opportunities to practice each learning goals and deepen their knowledge.

Grading Topic: Analyzing Textual Evidence

4 ▲ In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:
- Possible Target: Analysis

3 🔒 Learning Goal Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Support** analysis with inferences and evidence paraphrased from text
- B. **Support** analysis with inferences and evidence cited directly from text
- C. **Distinguish** between relevant and irrelevant evidence in a text

2 ➕ Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Describe** what a text says explicitly
- B. **Draw** logical inferences from the text

1 ✖ Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

Grading Topic: Analyzing Theme

4 ▲ In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:
- Possible Target: Investigation

3 🔒 Learning Goal Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Analyze** the relationship between theme and the characters, setting, and plot in a text

2 ➕ Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Determine** a theme in a text

1 ✖ Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.

Grading Topic: Analyzing Story Elements

4 ▲ In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications:
- Possible Target: Investigation

3 🔒 Learning Goal Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Analyze** how dialogue moves the story forward and provokes characters to make decisions
- B. **Analyze** how events move the story forward and provoke characters to make decisions
- C. **Analyze** how differences in points of view between characters create such effects as suspense and humor

2 ➕ Students demonstrate they have the ability to:
- A. **Identify** significant dialogue or events in a work of literature
- B. **Identify** how dialogue or events reveal information about a character
- C. **Determine** different points of view within a story

1 ✖ Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.
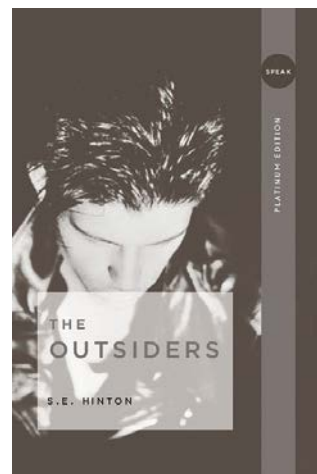
Resources:

- *The Outsiders*
- Raymond's Run
- The Treasure of Lemon Brown
- The Tell-Tale Heart
- The Elevator

Unit 2: Making Meaning

In this 6-week unit, we focus on determining the message of a non-fiction text. Through reading non-fiction articles and short stories, students will have multiple opportunities to practice each learning goals and deepen their knowledge.

Grading Topic:
Analyzing Central Ideas

4 ◬ In addition to meeting the *Learning Goal*, students demonstrate *in-depth inferences and applications:*
- Possible Target: Decision-Making

3 🔒 *Students demonstrate they have the ability to:*
Learning Goal
A. **Analyze** development of a central idea over the course of a non-fiction text, including its relationship to supporting ideas
B. **Provide** an objective summary of a text
C. **Analyze** how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, and events

2 ✚ *Students demonstrate they have the ability to:*
A. **Determine** central idea of a non-fiction text
B. **Recognize** examples of irrelevant or unimportant details in isolation
C. **Identify** the use of comparisons, analogies, or categories in a text

**1** ✖ *Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

Resources:
- TIME Upfront Magazine
- Scholastic Scope

Unit 3: Argument

In this 12-week unit, we focus on how argument works and is successfully made. This unit has many opportunities for larger project-driven work, from research to presentations. Through reading non-fiction articles, short stories, and a novel, students will have multiple opportunities to practice each learning goals and deepen their knowledge.

Grading Topic:
Evaluating Arguments and Purpose

4 ◬ In addition to meeting the *Learning Goal*, students demonstrate *in-depth inferences and applications:*
- Possible Target: Decision-Making

3 🔒 *Students demonstrate they have the ability to:*
Learning Goal
A. **Evaluate** whether the reasoning is logical in a specific claim or an entire argument
B. **Evaluate** whether the evidence is sufficient in a specific claim or an entire argument
C. **Analyze** how an author acknowledges and refutes counterclaims in an argument

2 ✚ *Students demonstrate they have the ability to:*
A. **Delineate** the argument and specific claims in a text
B. **Determine** an author's point of view or purpose in a text

1 ✖ *Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

Resources:
- TIME Upfront Magazine
- Scholastic Scope
- The Kalief Browder Story
- Other "Current Event" stories

Grading Topic:
Writing Arguments

4 ◬ In addition to meeting the *Learning Goal*, students demonstrate a command of voice and style that rises above formulaic writing.

3 🔒 *Students demonstrate they have the ability to write multi-paragraph arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. These texts:*
Learning Goal
➤ Introduce the argument and claims
➤ Acknowledge and refute a counterclaim within the argument
➤ Organize reasons and evidence logically
➤ Support claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence drawn from accurate, credible sources
➤ Use transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence
➤ Establish and maintain a formal style
➤ Provide a conclusion that supports the argument

2 ✚ *Students demonstrate they have the ability to:*
A. **Write** a claim on a topic and relevant reasons/examples to support that claim
B. **Generate** relevant counterclaims
C. **Write** a concluding statement
D. **Write** a paragraph with a clear claim and supporting evidence
E. **Write** a paragraph that presents and refutes a counterclaim

1 ✖ *Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*
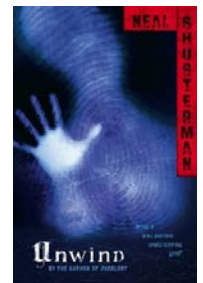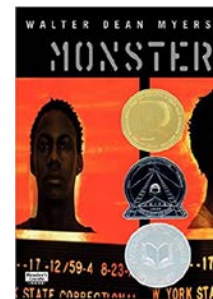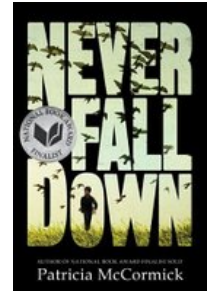
Unit 4: Author's Craft

In this 6-week unit, we will focus is on an analysis of text structure and how the parts contribute to the meaning of the whole. Through reading a novel and other non-fiction, students will have multiple opportunities to practice each learning goals and deepen their knowledge.

Resources:

- *Monster*
- *Never Fall Down*
- *Sold*
- *Unwind*

Grading Topic: Analyzing Text Structure

4 △	In addition to meeting the Learning Goal, students demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications: • Possible Target: Decision-Making
3 🔒 Learning Goal	Students demonstrate they have the ability to: A. **Analyze** how the differing structure of two or more texts contributes to the meaning of each text B. **Analyze** in detail how specific sentences and paragraphs develop and refine key concepts in a text C. **Analyze** how two or more texts provide information on matters of facts or interpretation of the same topic
2 ➕	Students demonstrate they have the ability to: A. **Recognize** signal words or phrases associated with text structure (examples: following, compared with, therefor, as a result of) in a text B. **Describe** the structure of a specific paragraph in a text and the text as a whole C. **Compare** the structure of two or more texts
1 ✖	*Student's performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.*

The Following Yearlong Learning Scales are available upon request.

- Applying Grammar and Mechanics
- Mastering Vocabulary
- Constructing Writing
- Comprehending Text
- Collaborating in Discussions

Questions?

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