

5-7 WEEKS



8th Grade: Unit Four

CONTACT SPORTS: WORTH THE RISK?

Unit at a Glance

Grade Level: 8th

Essential Question: Are contact sports worth the risks? How can we provide a clearer picture of the benefits and risks of contact sports to prospective players and their parents?

Length: 5-7 weeks (see [Pacing Guide](#))

Unit Texts: (see [full list of texts](#))

- “What a lifetime of playing football can do to the human brain” by Brian Resnick (Informational Text)
- “The Concussion Gap: Head Injuries in Girls Soccer Are An ‘Unpublicized Epidemic’” by Lee van der Voo (Informational Text)
- “The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football” by The American Academy of Pediatrics (Press Release)
- “Heads Up Football Program Flourishing” by Associated Press (News Article)
- “The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports” by Paige Maslen (Informational Text)
- Supplemental Texts Included (English + Spanish)

Focus Skills: (see [Reading and Writing Skill Arcs](#))

Reading:

- Development of central idea [RI.8.2]
- Connections among and distinctions between ideas [RI.8.3]
- Author’s point of view and purpose [RI.8.6]

Writing:

- Research Writing [W.8.8]

Language:

- Sentence combining and punctuation [L.8.2.A]
- Grade appropriate academic vocabulary [L.8.6]

Speaking and Listening:

- Incorporate others into a discussion [SL.8.1.C]

Unit Overview

Football is the most popular sport in America today — but concerns about player safety have cast a shadow on the sport in recent years. In this 360 Research Unit, students will investigate the connection between contact sports, concussions, and chronic brain impairment. Students begin the unit with a Related Media Exploration where they learn how perspectives regarding concussions in sports have changed over time. Throughout the unit, students will read about athletes who struggle with brain injuries, and also learn about the many benefits of team sports. These texts will prepare students to respond to the unit research question: Is playing contact sports worth the risk? With each text, students will be prompted to track evidence that they will apply to their argumentative research paper. Students will also have the opportunity to add to their research with unit supplemental texts.

By the end of this 360 Unit, students should be able to use evidence to argue whether the risks or benefits of playing contact sports is more important. To demonstrate these skills, students will draft a research paper that argues a claim, distinguishes their claim from opposing views, and incorporates proper in-text citations and a Works Cited page. The unit also includes an optional student-led project, which asks students to create a balanced and informative brochure on the benefits and risks of playing contact sports for an audience of prospective student athletes and their parents. To close out the unit, students will apply what they have learned about reading non-fiction to a unit test aligned to the focus skills in the unit.

WHAT’S INCLUDED

- ✓ 5 Reading Lessons
- ✓ A Set of Supplemental Texts
- ✓ 4 Writing Lessons
- ✓ 2 Vocabulary Activity Sets
- ✓ 2 Vocabulary Quizzes
- ✓ 1 Grammar and Usage Activity Set
- ✓ 1 Grammar and Usage Quiz
- ✓ 1 Discussion Skill Lesson
- ✓ 1 Related Media Exploration
- ✓ 1 Independent Research Task
- ✓ 1 Argumentative Research Paper
- ✓ Differentiated Support Options

Skill Focus:

By 7th grade, students should be able to analyze the development of two or more central ideas in a text [RI.7.2], determine how different details interact with or influence one another [RI.7.3], and notice how an author shows that their point of view is different from others' [RI.7.6]. In this 8th grade unit, students will build on these 7th grade skills. They will analyze how specific supporting details help develop the central idea in a text, and how authors use comparison to connect or make distinctions between ideas [RI.8.2, RI.8.3]. Students will also learn to recognize and analyze an author's point of view by noticing how they present conflicting information [RI.8.6].

Reading lessons in this unit include scaffolded questions and annotation prompts to help students meet these grade level reading standards. Independent practice activities for each reading lesson are aligned to RI.8.2, RI.8.3, or RI.8.6, and may include multiple choice independent practice, short answer responses, or both.

Writing lessons in this unit are focused on teaching students the research process. Students will be prompted to take notes and keep evidence organized. They will have the opportunity to independently select texts from a supplemental text set to add to their research. Students will also learn to acknowledge and refute counterclaims as they draft their arguments. For students not reading and writing on grade-level, supportive writing lesson options are included. These lessons include optional lessons for in-text citations and a Works Cited page.

How does RI.2 shift?

7th Grade: Determine **two or more central ideas** in a text and **analyze their development over the course of the text**; provide an objective summary of the text.



8th Grade: Determine a **central idea** of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its **relationship to supporting ideas**; provide an objective summary of the text.

How does RI.3 shift?

7th Grade: Analyze the **interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text** (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).



8th Grade: Analyze how a text makes connections among and **distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events** (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

How does RI.6 shift?

7th Grade: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author **distinguishes his or her position from that of others**.



8th Grade: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author **acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints**.

ARC OF READING INSTRUCTION

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
"What a lifetime of playing football can do to the human brain" by Brian Resnick (Informational Text)	"The Concussion Gap: Head Injuries in Girls Soccer Are An 'Unpublicized Epidemic'" by Lee van der Voo (Informational Text)	"The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football" by the American Academy of Pediatrics (Press Release)	"Heads Up Football Program Flourishing" by Associated Press (News Article)	"The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports" by Paige Maslen (Informational Text)
Students read to analyze how particular details contribute to the text's central idea [RI.2].	Students read to analyze how an author uses a comparison to develop the central idea [RI.3].	Students read to analyze how specific words and phrases reveal an author's point of view [RI.6].	Students read to analyze how particular details contribute to the text's central idea [RI.2].	Students read to analyze how particular details contribute to the text's central idea [RI.2].

This unit also includes:

- Optional supplemental texts in English and Spanish that support students in developing reading volume and stamina.

Unit Test

Coming Soon: Unit Tests will be available for SY 2022-2023 as part of the CommonLit 360 for Schools package of services. For more information, encourage your administrator to email 360@commonlit.org.

ARC OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

Writing Lesson 1	Writing Lesson 2	Writing Lesson 3	Writing Lesson 3
Discussing and Outlining your Research Paper	Writing about a Counterclaim	Works Cited Formatting	In-Text Citations
Prompt (Recommended): Is playing contact sports worth the risk? Use evidence from at least three of the texts you have read to support your thesis.			

VOCABULARY, DISCUSSION, AND GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Vocabulary

This unit includes **explicit vocabulary instruction** on 17 academic words, split into two activity sets. Students complete 5 activities for each activity set. Consistent with research, students encounter these words in context. Word usage is reinforced in reading, writing, and discussion activities [L.8.6]. [Learn more here.](#)

Discussion

In all CommonLit units, students discuss the texts they are reading daily. In addition to multiple opportunities for **informal discussion**, there is one **formal whole class discussion** that allows students to hear and respond to their classmates' thoughts on the unit research question: Is playing contact sports worth the risk? [SL.1.C]

Note that this lesson focuses on SL.1.C at the ninth grade level.

Grammar Instruction

This unit includes a short lesson and 6 practice activities that focus on different methods for combining sentences and the appropriate punctuation for each [L.8.2.A]. This skill helps students write sentences with more complexity and variety.



Lessons & Materials

Below, you will find all of the materials needed to teach this unit. To better help you understand the choices and flexibility within the unit materials, individual lessons are tagged as Essential, Recommended, or Optional.

A sample Pacing Guide is available [here](#).

Unit Introduction

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Kick off the unit with this ready-made, editable slide deck to introduce students to this 360 Unit's themes.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Lead students through this slide deck whole-class (10 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)

Vocabulary Activity Set List 1

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary activity set will help students master 9 high-impact academic vocab words they will see in the stories they read. These 5 activities are great for a quick warm-up activity or homework.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Use the Slide Deck to facilitate Vocabulary Activity 1 whole-class (20 min)
- Flexibly assign the remaining activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the Vocabulary Quiz.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Activity Set](#)
- Teacher Answer Key*
- [Activity 1 Slide Deck](#)
- [Word Wall](#)

**Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!*

Related Media Exploration: Playing Through the Pain

RECOMMENDED


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This not-to-be-missed related media exploration introduces students to the way football culture has changed in recent decades as scientists learn more about the long-term effects of repeated concussions.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Lead students through the introductory slides. Release students to complete the remainder of the exploration with partners. (55 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Teacher Copy](#)

Reading Lesson: “What a Lifetime of Playing Football Can Do to the Human Brain” (Informational)

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This article details the current scientific understanding of how multiple concussions may cause CTE, and how this damage can be linked to football. As students read, they will analyze how particular details contribute to the text’s central idea.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (35 min)
- Have students add notes to their graphic organizers (10 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (5 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy*
- Student Copy*

**Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.*



Research Note Taking Graphic Organizer

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Students will use this graphic organizer to record notes on each of the texts they read in preparation for writing a research paper later in the unit.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Have students add notes to the appropriate row after reading each unit text and independent research text (10 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

Reading Lesson: “The Concussion Gap: Head Injuries in Girls Soccer Are an ‘Unpublicized Epidemic’” (Informational)

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this text students will learn that the risk of collisions and concussions extends to sports beyond football, specifically, to girls soccer. As students read, they will analyze how an author uses a comparison to develop the central idea.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (30 min)
- Have students add notes to their graphic organizers (10 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (5 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy*
- Student Copy*

**Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://www.commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.*

Vocabulary Quiz 1

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary quiz assesses students' knowledge of the vocabulary words in Vocabulary List 1.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- To assign this quiz digitally, click “Assign” and schedule the quiz. Set aside 15 minutes for students to complete the vocabulary quiz.
- To have students complete the quiz on paper, access the student copy of the assignment materials and distribute it to students.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Quiz](#)
- Teacher Answer Key*

**Quizzes assigned digitally will be scored automatically. To ensure assessment security, a printable answer key is not available at this time.*

Vocabulary Activity Set List 2

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary activity set will help students master 8 high-impact academic vocab words they will see in the texts they read. These 5 activities are great for a quick warm-up activity or homework.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Use the Slide Deck to facilitate Vocabulary Activity 1 whole-class (20 min)
- Flexibly assign the remaining activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the Vocabulary Quiz.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Activity Set](#)
- Teacher Answer Key*
- [Activity 1 Slide Deck](#)
- [Word Wall](#)

**Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!*

Reading Lesson: “The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football” (Press Release)

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Students will learn what America’s pediatricians think about the risk of concussion in youth football and how they suggest that risk might be reduced. As students read, they will analyze how specific words and phrases reveal an author’s point of view.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (20 min)
- Have students add notes to their graphic organizers (10 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (5 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy*
- Student Copy*

**Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are unavailable in PDF due to copyright restrictions. Please consider assigning [the digital version of this reading lesson](#).*



Reading Lesson: “Heads Up Football Program Flourishing” (Informational)

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This is an independent reading assignment.

This text introduces students to USA Football’s training program for coaches, which is meant to reduce concussions among young players. As students read, they will analyze how particular details contribute to the text’s central idea.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Have students independently complete the reading and questions (15 min)
- Have students add notes to their graphic organizers (10 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (15 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy*
- Student Copy*

**Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are unavailable in PDF due to copyright restrictions. Please consider assigning [the digital version of this reading lesson](#).*

Vocabulary Quiz 2

ESSENTIAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary quiz assesses students' knowledge of the vocabulary words in Vocabulary List 2.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- To assign this quiz digitally, click “Assign” and schedule the quiz. Set aside 15 minutes for students to complete the vocabulary quiz.
- To have students complete the quiz on paper, access the student copy of the assignment materials and distribute it to students.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Quiz](#)
- Teacher Answer Key*

**Quizzes assigned digitally will be scored automatically. To ensure assessment security, a printable answer key is not available at this time.*

Grammar and Usage Activities

OPTIONAL


ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This 360 Unit’s grammar and usage materials contain 6 activities that allow students to practice different sentence-combining methods and the appropriate punctuation. Great for a quick warm-up activity or homework!

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Assign the 6 activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the grammar quiz.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Grammar Activities](#)
- [Teacher Answer Key](#)

Reading Lesson: “The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports (Informational) - Independent Reading

RECOMMENDED

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This is an independent reading assignment.

This text provides students with some of the benefits of playing team sports. As students read, they will analyze how particular details contribute to the text’s central idea.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Have students independently complete the reading and questions (20 min)
- Have students add notes to their graphic organizers (10 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (15 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy*
- Student Copy*

**Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.*

Grammar and Usage Quiz

OPTIONAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This grammar quiz assesses students' knowledge of the unit’s grammar skill: sentence combining and punctuation.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Assign the grammar quiz to students (10 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Grammar Quiz](#)
- Teacher Answer Key*

**Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!*

Introduction to Independent Research

RECOMMENDED

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this activity, students will choose at least two texts about sports and CTE (from a set of six) to read independently. Students will add notes from these texts to their Research Note Taking Graphic Organizer.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Lead students through the introductory slides. Release students to read and take notes independently. (45 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

Discussion and Writing Lesson: Discussing and Outlining your Research Paper

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This discussion lesson will help students synthesize information in preparation for outlining their argumentative research papers. The optional skill lesson will provide students with an example of how they can include classmates who haven't spoken yet in a discussion. The assignment materials include a handout to teach the discussion skill whole-class, a handout to help students prepare for discussion and outline their papers, and teacher resources to help you facilitate whole-class or small group discussions.

Students will discuss their answers to the following question: Are contact sports worth the risk?



HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Lead students through the Discussion Skill Lesson (15 min)
- Have students prepare for discussion using the Discussion Prep handout (5 min)
- Launch discussion and have students take notes during discussion (15 min)
- Have students complete the outline for their research papers (25 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Discussion Skill Lesson Student Copy](#)
- [Discussion Skill Lesson Teacher Copy](#)
- [Discussion and Outlining Student Copy](#)
- [Discussion and Outlining Teacher Copy](#)
- [Discussion Protocols](#)
- [Student Voice Tracker](#)

Writing Lesson: Writing about a Counterclaim

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this multi-part writing lesson, students will learn how to explain and rebut a counterclaim in argumentative writing. Students will apply this skill in their argumentative research papers.



HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led, assigned as partner work, or independent practice. (25 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

Writing Lesson: Argumentative Research Paper

ESSENTIAL

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This end of unit activity requires that students respond to the following writing prompt:

Is playing contact sports worth the risk? Write an essay in which you use evidence from at least three texts to support your opinion on this question.



HOW TO FACILITATE:

Have students use their resources to draft their essay.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Essay Prompt](#)
- [Exemplar Essay](#)
- [Essay Rubric](#)

5 Minute Writing Review: Works Cited Formatting

OPTIONAL



ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this writing lesson, students will learn how to create a properly formatted Works Cited page for their argumentative research papers.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led, assigned as partner work, or independent practice. (15 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

5 Minute Writing Review: In-Text Citations

OPTIONAL



ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this writing lesson, students will learn how to create properly formatted in-text citations for their argumentative research papers.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led, assigned as partner work, or independent practice. (15 min)

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

Final Project

OPTIONAL



ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This is an optional final unit project.

For this project - a Contact Sports Informative Brochure - students create a balanced and informative brochure on the benefits and risks of playing contact sports for an audience of prospective student athletes and their parents.

This project is student-led and the resources are flexible. We recommend reading the project outline in advance to make adaptations and modifications that meet the needs of your students.

HOW TO FACILITATE:

Review the project overview with students and guide them through the listed project steps.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy - Final Unit Task Overview](#)
- [Student Copy - Final Unit Task Overview](#)



Training & Support Resources

CommonLit 360 is rich with resources for teachers and administrators. In addition to this PDF Unit Guide, here are just a few additional tools available to teams for free:

- ↳ Document: [Curriculum Framework, An Overview](#)
- ↳ Document: [Themes & Topics Overview](#)
- ↳ Live Webinar: [Getting Started with CommonLit 360](#)
- ↳ Instructional support videos available on each unit's [Support and Resources page](#)

Ready to roll out CommonLit 360 in your school or district? [Read about the affordable professional development](#) we offer for schools and districts through our CommonLit for Schools packages.

Pacing Guide

With appropriate pacing, Grade 8, Unit 4 should take roughly 5-7 weeks of instructional time. This assumes **45 minutes** of daily instruction. With this assumption, many of the reading lessons can last up to 2 days/class periods and should be spaced accordingly. Supplemental reading, vocabulary activities, and grammar activities can often be assigned as homework. Teachers should expect to revise pacing as needed.

WEEK 1

Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Unit • Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 1 & Slide Deck • Related Media Exploration: Playing through the Pain - Day 1 RECOMMENDED
Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 2 • Related Media Exploration: Playing through the Pain - Day 2 RECOMMENDED
Wed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 3 • "What a Lifetime of Playing Football Can Do to the Human Brain" Slide Deck • "What a Lifetime of Playing Football Can Do to the Human Brain" - Day 1
Thurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 4 • "What a Lifetime of Playing Football Can Do to the Human Brain" - Day 2
Fri.	Flex time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of previous activities • Supplemental text set reading • Teacher-created activities

WEEK 2

Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 5 "The Concussion Gap" Slide Deck "The Concussion Gap" - Day 1
Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Quiz 1 "The Concussion Gap" - Day 2
Wed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 1 and Slide Deck "The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football" slide deck "The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football" - Day 1
Thurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 2 "The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football" - Day 2
Fri.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activities 3 & 4 <p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of previous activities Supplemental text set reading Teacher-created activities

WEEK 3

Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 5 "Heads Up Football Program Flourishing" Slide Deck "Heads Up Football Program Flourishing" - Day 1
Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Quiz 2 "Heads Up Football Program Flourishing" - Day 2
Wed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and Usage Activities: Parts 1-3 OPTIONAL "The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports" Slide deck "The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports" - Day 1
Thurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and Usage Activities: Part 4 OPTIONAL "The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports" - Day 2
Fri.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar and Usage Activities: Parts 5 & 6 OPTIONAL <p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of previous activities Supplemental text set reading Teacher-created activities

WEEK 4

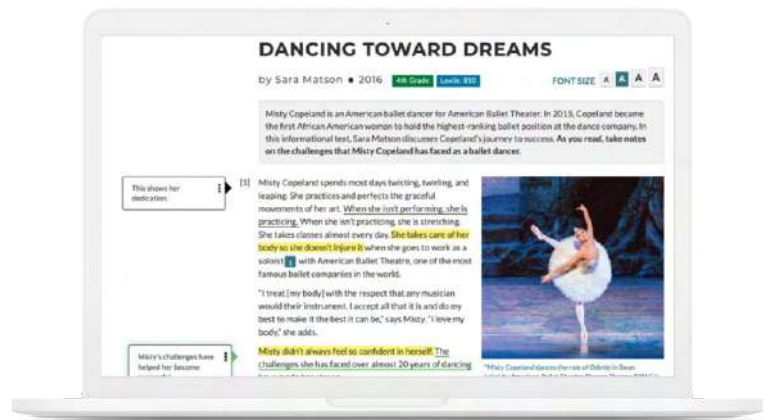
Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar and Usage Quiz OPTIONAL • Independent Research Slide Deck RECOMMENDED • Independent reading and note taking RECOMMENDED
Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argumentative Research Paper Slide Deck • Discussion Skill Lesson OPTIONAL • Writing Lesson: Discussing and Outlining your Research Paper - Day 1
Wed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Lesson: Discussing and Outlining your Research Paper - Day 1 • Writing Lesson: Writing about a Counterclaim
Thurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Lesson: Drafting your Research paper
Fri.	Flex time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of previous activities • Supplemental text set reading • Teacher-created activities

WEEK 5

Mon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Lesson: Works Cited Formatting OPTIONAL • Writing Lesson: In-text Citations OPTIONAL • Essay drafting time
Tues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Unit Project OPTIONAL
Wed.	Flex time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of previous activities • Supplemental text set reading • Teacher-created activities
Thurs.	Flex time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of previous activities • Supplemental text set reading • Teacher-created activities
Fri.	Flex time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of previous activities • Supplemental text set reading • Teacher-created activities

CommonLit 360: Digital Experience

One of the reasons CommonLit 360 is so unique is that it is accessible through a free, state-of-the-art digital platform. Reading, writing, and vocabulary lessons and assessments within a CommonLit 360 unit can be assigned to students through CommonLit.org. During and after the lesson, teachers can view formative assessment data through a real-time lesson dashboard to easily track completion and progress. All of these digital features are free for teachers and students, just like the rest of CommonLit. To learn more about the digital experience, [sign up for an upcoming CommonLit 360 webinar](#) or email help@commonlit.org.



Appendix I: Text Selection & Text Complexity

When selecting texts for this unit, CommonLit considers both quantitative and qualitative measures of text complexity.

UNIT TEXTS

Title by Author	Lexile	Description
“What a Lifetime of Playing Football can do to the Human Brain” by Brian Resnick (Informational Text)	1230L	This informational text introduces students to CTE and its connection to repeated concussions. It outlines multiple scientific studies that suggest an increased risk of CTE for those who begin playing tackle football at younger ages.
“The Concussion Gap: Head Injuries in Girls Soccer are an ‘Unpublicized Epidemic’” by Lee van der Voo (Informational Text)	1280L	This informational text introduces students to another sport that carries a high risk of concussion: girls soccer. Students will explore how head injuries have been treated differently in girls soccer and football.
“The American Academy of Pediatrics on Tackling in Youth Football” by the American Academy of Pediatrics (Press Release)	1490L	In this press release, the American Academy of Pediatrics outlines their recommendations for making tackling safer for young players.
“Heads Up Football Program Flourishing” by Associated Press (News Article)	1170L	This news article describes a successful program being used to make football safer by educating players and training them in new tackling techniques.
“The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports” by Paige Maslen (Informational Text)	1240L	In this informational text, students explore the reasons why some might argue contact sports are worth the risk of injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (ENGLISH)

Title by Author	Lexile	Description
<u>"Why the latest effort to make youth football safer could fail"</u> by Ryan Swanson (Informational)	1310L	This text illuminates the discussion of youth football safety throughout history. Use it to connect to central themes of the safety and benefits of youth football, and how different opinions, values, and interests have affected and will continue to affect the evolution of regulations and participation within the sport.
<u>"Control the Head: Combating Concussions in Wrestling"</u> by WOUB Public Media (Informational)	1050L	This text reveals the risk and impact of concussions in wrestling, using vivid descriptions and first-person accounts. Use this text to underscore the complexities with making all contact sports safer and connect to themes of short- and long-term risks athletes face regarding their health and safety.
<u>"The Concussion Gender Gap: Why Girls Suffer More Head Injuries"</u> by Kim Elseser (Informational)	1280L	This text uncovers the heightened risk for concussion injury in girl's athletics and explores data that supports and explains the dangers. Use this text to offer students examples and data about what makes youth sports unsafe, what types of regulations could be used to make sports safer, and to help them make connections to themes of risk of concussion in sports beyond youth football.
<u>"13 Concussions"</u> by Casey Cochran (Informational)	810L	This text shares a first-hand account of a successful college football player who chose to quit the sport after suffering numerous concussions. Use this text to connect to themes focusing on the risks of concussions in football, and the challenging choices athletes face.
<u>"Playing Teen Sports May Protect From Some Damages of Childhood Trauma"</u> by Susie Nielson (Informational)	1240L	This text explores the positive effects of teen sports on people who have experienced childhood adversity. Use this text to offer students perspectives into the positive effects of youth sport participation and considerations of supporting youth sports participation for at-risk youth.
<u>"The Pros and Cons of Youth Sports Aren't Only Physical"</u> by Dr. Marika Lindholm (Informational)	1140L	This text conveys both the psychological risks and benefits of youth sport participation for children. Use this text to offer a range of perspectives that parents must consider when evaluating their child's participation in youth sports, and to support students' understanding of the research question.



SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (SPANISH)

Title by Author	Lexile	Description
<u>"Por qué el último esfuerzo para hacer que el fútbol americano juvenil sea más seguro podría fallar"</u> por Ryan Swanson <i>(Informational)</i>	1260L	This text illuminates the discussion of youth football safety throughout history. Use it to connect to central themes of the safety and benefits of youth football, and how different opinions, values, and interests have affected and will continue to affect the evolution of regulations and participation within the sport.
<u>"Controla la cabeza: combatir los traumatismos en la cabeza en lucha"</u> por WOUB Public Media <i>(Informational)</i>	1030L	This text reveals the risk and impact of concussions in wrestling, using vivid descriptions and first-person accounts. Use this text to underscore the complexities with making all contact sports safer and connect to themes of short and long term risks athletes face regarding their health and safety.
<u>"La brecha de género en el traumatismo en la cabeza: por qué las chicas sufren más lesiones en la cabeza"</u> por Kim Elsesser <i>(Informational)</i>	1240L	This text uncovers the heightened risk for concussion injury in girl's athletics and explores data that supports and explains the dangers. Use this text to offer students examples and data about what makes youth sports unsafe, what types of regulations could be used to make sports safer, and make connections to themes of risk of concussion in sports beyond youth football.
<u>"Los pros y los contras de los deportes para jóvenes no son solo físicos"</u> by Dr. Marika Lindholm <i>(Informational)</i>	1010L	This text conveys both the psychological risks and benefits of youth sport participation for children. Use this text to offer a range of perspectives that parents must consider when evaluating their child's participation in youth sports, and to support their understanding of the research question.

