

**English Language Arts**  
**Unit 37: Informative/Explanatory: Reading, Writing, Speaking,**  
**Listening, and Language**

<p><b>Essential Understandings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good researchers analyze and assess authors and speakers' evidence, point of view and purpose.</li> <li>▪ Good readers and listeners examine and compare how information is presented in different texts and diverse forms of media.</li> <li>▪ Good readers and listeners determine central ideas and analyze how information is illustrated and elaborated in the text.</li> <li>▪ Informative/explanatory writers and speakers use diverse media, formats, and evidence to convey clearly and accurately their ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Essential Questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do authors and speakers present evidence to support their point of view and purpose?</li> <li>▪ What techniques or formats do authors and speakers use to present information?</li> <li>▪ How does a researcher formulate questions, find evidence and organize information in a well-reasoned and coherent manner?</li> <li>▪ What criteria does an author or speaker use in selecting and presenting relevant information to inform an audience?</li> <li>▪ How does the refining and revising of writing individually and collaboratively strengthen one's writing?</li> <li>▪ Why is adherence to standard English conventions important in communicating one's ideas clearly in writing and speech?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Essential Knowledge</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Informative and explanatory texts examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately.</li> <li>▪ Researchers integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media.</li> <li>▪ Effective authors and speakers present evidence to support their point of view.</li> <li>▪ Effective readers and listeners recognize an author's purpose determines his/her choice of style and content.</li> <li>▪ Effective writers and speakers select, organize and analyze the content of their work.</li> <li>▪ Research is based on focused questions and the relevant information gathered from multiple sources to answer those questions.</li> <li>▪ Authors and speakers draw evidence from literary and informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.</li> <li>▪ Authors and speakers use visual displays and other forms of media to support and enhance their presentation of information.</li> <li>▪ Authors work individually and collaboratively to develop and strengthen writing via meaningful feedback and revision.</li> <li>▪ Writers and speakers adhere to standard English conventions, adapt language and style to fit audience and purpose, and use a range of vocabulary correctly to create a well-written or well-delivered informative piece.</li> </ul>

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<b>Vocab.</b>	<p><u>Terms:</u>          Informative/explanatory writing, thesis, topic sentence, note-taking, outline, works cited, parenthetical citation, plagiarism, paraphrasing, quotation, criteria, MLA Format, subtopics</p>
<b>Essential Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify and incorporate evidence to analyze texts and multimedia presentations.</li> <li>● Determine the uses of central themes and ideas and how characters, ideas and events are used in a text.</li> <li>● Analyze meanings of words and phrases and how they fit within the structure of a text.</li> <li>● Determine the author's point of view in a text and how that fits the author's purpose.</li> <li>● Use multiple forms of media to create informative explanatory texts and presentations that convey clearly a topic or idea.</li> <li>● Engage in collaborative discussions to present information gathered from different texts and media and discuss evidence of claims made in writing or speaking.</li> <li>● Revise and edit writing with support of peers and teachers so it effectively conveys purpose and meets conventions of Standard English</li> </ul>
<b>Related Maine Learning Results</b>	<p><u>Reading Informational Text - grade eight</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RI 8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</li> <li>▪ RI 8.2 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.</li> <li>▪ RI 8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</li> <li>▪ RI 8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</li> <li>▪ RI 8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</li> <li>▪ RI 8.6 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.</li> <li>▪ RI 8.7 Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital ext, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.</li> </ul>

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- RI 8.9 Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
- RI 8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing - grade eight

- W 8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
  - a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (headings), graphics (charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
  - b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
  - c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
  - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
  - e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
  - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
- W 8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W 8.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W 8.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
- W 8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
- W 8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- W 8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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- a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (“Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional sources, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).
- b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (“Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).
- W 8.10: Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening - grade eight

SL 8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL 8.2 Analyze purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL 8.3 Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
- SL 8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- SL 8.5 Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
- SL 8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated and appropriate.

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	<p><u>Language - grade eight</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ L 8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.</li> <li>b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.</li> <li>c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.</li> <li>d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ L 8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.</li> <li>b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.</li> <li>c. Spell correctly.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ L 8.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ L 8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use context (the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</li> <li>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (precede, recede, secede).</li> <li>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</li> <li>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ L 8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Interpret figures of speech (verbal irony puns) in context.</li> <li>b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</li> <li>c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (bullhead, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ L 8.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension and expression.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analyze and assess informational texts for validity of information and the purpose of research. (RI 1-4, RI 9, W2, W4-6, SL 2, L 3, 4, 5)</li> <li>▪ Conduct interdisciplinary research on a historical figure's life using multiple electronic and print resources, avoiding plagiarism, and following a standard citation format (RI 1, 7, 8, 9. W 7, 8, 9)</li> <li>▪ Synthesize, from a variety of sources, information about the individual's contributions in a research essay (RI 1, W 2, 4-9, L1-3)</li> <li>▪ Develop and present a short oral presentation, incorporating visual displays and other forms of media (W2, W4-6, SL 4, 5, 6, , L 1-3)</li> <li>▪ Incorporate visual displays and other forms of media to augment oral presentations. (RI 7, W 6, SL 5)</li> <li>▪ Conduct research on a twentieth century or Maine studies topic and write an informative/explanatory essay. (RI 1, RI 2, RI 3, RI 4, RI 9, W2, W4-6, L 1-6)</li> <li>▪ Examine a variety of ways to gather and organize information (two-column notes, paraphrasing, identifying main idea) (W7, W8, W9)</li> <li>▪ Produce a clear and coherent essay, utilizing a graphic organizer and peer and teacher feedback (W2, W4, W5, W6, W7)</li> </ul>
<b>Sample Lessons And Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay graphic organizer</li> <li>• Introduction Letter</li> <li>• Mini lessons- embedding quotes, writing a strong introduction, transitions, balancing evidence (fact, quote, paraphrasing)</li> </ul>

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<b>Sample Classroom Assessment Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Draft, revise, edit, and submit an informative/explanatory essay/piece- (Contributions to Society Essay- Based on Biography Day reading)</li><li>▪ Teacher-generated rubrics for writing and speaking, based on L. Calkins and CCSS</li><li>▪ Peer/Audience Feedback</li><li>▪ Note taking assessment</li></ul>
<b>Sample Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Publications:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Reviser's Toolbox – Barry Lane</li><li>o <i>Craft Lessons</i> by Ralph Fletcher</li><li>o <i>Write Source 2000: A Guide to Writing, Thinking and Learning</i></li><li>o KidsDiscover.com &lt;magazines on a variety of topics&gt;</li><li>o On-line resources from Lucy Calkins (<a href="http://readingandwritingproject.com/resources/publications/publications-lucy-calkins.html">http://readingandwritingproject.com/resources/publications/publications-lucy-calkins.html</a>)</li><li>o MLA Citation Wizard (<a href="http://21cif.com/tools/cite/mla/">http://21cif.com/tools/cite/mla/</a>)</li></ul></li></ul>