

Composition

Vertical Enduring Understandings, Grades 7-12

Enduring Understandings:

1. Writing is a powerful vehicle for communicating meaning, sharing information, and developing a style.
2. Reading and writing are reciprocal processes, which support one another. Readers actively construct meaning and writers actively communicate meaning.
3. Clarity in writing results in communication of meaning.
4. Consideration of audience, purpose, and form provides focus for writers.
5. Writing is a process enhanced by the use of strategies and tools.
6. Knowledge about literature, and the writer's craft, helps the writer to write.
7. Writers shape language for effective communication.
8. Writers write from a base of knowledge about their subjects. They use their knowledge to communicate clearly and effectively.
9. Ideas are made complete by substantiation.

	7/8 Overarching	9/10 Overarching	11-12 Overarching
Organization	Organization is an essential element in the effectiveness of written communications. <i>Why should I have a specific kind of beginning, middle and end in my writing?</i>		Organizational structure can be manipulated to increase the impact of the message in writing. <i>Why should I move beyond the five-paragraph essay?</i>
Sentence Fluency	Sentence need to be varied to hold the readers attention. <i>Is one sentence structure better than another?</i>		Sentence structures need to be varied and manipulated to allow complex ideas to be communicated. <i>Is there a perfect balance of sentence structures?</i>
Word Choice	Words have specific meanings. <i>How does the reader know if I've selected the right word?</i>		Words have unique meanings that are affected by context. <i>Why isn't a good enough word good enough?</i>
Ideas	The focus of an academic paper needs to answer the right question. <i>Why can't I just write about something I'm interested in?</i>		The focus of an academic paper should illuminate the reader's understanding. <i>When is a thesis good enough?</i>
Voice	Writing can be appropriate to the audience and still reflect the writer's personality. <i>If I pick the words, don't they automatically reflect my personality?</i>		Literature can be understood more completely when the reader is aware of the writer's voice. <i>Does great voice make a writer great?</i>
Conventions	Good writers adjust the words they use to match up with the audience they are writing for. <i>Why does what I write need to be different from the way I talk?</i> Good writers are considerate of their readers. One way to show this consideration is to make use of correct grammar and usage. <i>How does correct grammar and usage help me communicate more clearly?</i> Good writers use "formal English" when the purpose and audience necessitate that it be used. <i>When do I need to use "formal English"?</i>	Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the message of the writing. <i>Why can't I just write the way I talk?</i>	

Literary Analysis

Vertical Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions, Grades 7-12

Enduring Understandings:

1. Reading should be an enjoyable and valuable human experience.
2. Literature interprets human experience and enriches culture.
3. Different forms of print have different functions – form shapes meaning.
4. Knowledge about the author's craft helps a reader construct meaning.
5. Knowledge about genre characteristics helps a reader construct meaning.
6. A reader's experiences influence his/her interpretation of a work of literature.
7. A writer's experiences influence his/her work and perspective.

Essential Questions:

1. How does literature express the values of society?
2. How do an author's choices create meaning?
3. How does engagement with text reinforce and refine critical reading, writing and thinking?
4. How do subtleties of expression affect meaning?

	7/8 Overarching	9/10 Overarching	11-12 Overarching
Literary Analysis	<p>Authors are like artists. Each has a unique style he/she uses to create meaning. Authors intentionally select a form to shape meaning. <i>How will understanding the techniques an author employs increase my understanding of a work?</i></p> <p>Good readers can pull out a literal meaning. <i>What does the text say (literal)?</i></p> <p>Good readers recognize how the author created meaning. <i>How does it say it? (figurative)</i></p> <p>Good readers can pull out multiple meanings. <i>What does it mean? (inferential)</i></p> <p>Good readers use their experiences and prior knowledge to interpret a work of literature. <i>Why does it matter? (interpretation)</i></p> <p>Your form can shape your meaning, and increase the credibility of your writing. <i>Why would I want to use techniques in my writing that other authors have used in theirs?</i></p>	<p>Good readers have an understanding of the historical context of the literature they are analyzing. <i>When I read, how do I use what I'm learning in classes other than Language Arts?</i></p> <p>Good readers can recognize common archetypes and use them to make inferences. <i>What patterns do I see when I read?</i></p> <p>Good readers use textual evidence to show how an author employs literary devices to communicate a theme. <i>How are various literary devices used to communicate a theme?</i></p> <p>Good readers are aware that different critical perspectives are used by different readers. <i>What are some different ways I can chose to focus on a text?</i></p>	<p>Good readers use their knowledge from different disciplines to create a complex understanding of the context of the literature they are analyzing. <i>How do different cultural forces interact?</i></p> <p>Good readers build a knowledge base of common cultural patterns and allusions and use them to analyze the text they are reading. <i>How and why do readers with different cultural backgrounds respond differently to texts?</i></p> <p>Good readers are able to choose from a variety of critical perspectives when they approach and analyze a text. <i>When I'm having trouble understanding the significance of what I read, what critical perspective will help me answer my questions?</i></p>
Literature: Contemporary and Classical	<p>Literature interprets human experience and enriches culture. <i>Do these works and authors have a message for me today? How does literature express the values of society? Why should I read works that are considered classical?</i></p>	<p>Students need to read works from the canon to be culturally literate. <i>Why do I need to read this book written so long ago?</i></p> <p>Students need to read works from individuals and communities not included in the canon to foster their understanding of prejudice and oppression. <i>Why do I need to read this book by someone no one has ever heard of? Why do authors write? How can a piece of literature help a reader gain perspective on her/his life and the world at large?</i></p>	

Skills of Independence

Vertical Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions, Grades 7-12

Enduring Understandings:

1. Successful students identify the essential elements of learning and assessment and manage their workload accordingly.
2. Successful students manage their personal time and balance priorities wisely.

Essential Questions:

1. How do I balance my schoolwork with my growing priorities outside of school?
2. How can I be successful in all of my classes?

	7/8 Overarching	9/10 Overarching	11-12 Overarching
Research Skills	<p>Good researchers understand that you must give credit to someone for what he/she created.</p> <p>Good researchers take into consideration others' ideas and use these to strengthen or support their own ideas.</p> <p>Good researches have the skills to properly evaluate the credibility of a source.</p> <p>Good researchers don't believe everything they read.</p> <p><i>What is my plan for selecting, evaluating, and using informational resources without plagiarizing?</i></p>	<p>The research process is constructive learning and allows the student to guide and control the content and method of the process. <i>What do I need to do when I research?</i></p> <p>Good researchers use a variety of types of sources. <i>How do I do research that isn't on the internet?</i></p> <p>Good researchers know how to evaluate the quality of the sources they find. <i>If I can't use everything I find, how do know which sources to use?</i></p>	<p>Good researchers understand that research is a process of careful study, inquiry, analysis, and evaluation. <i>How do I set up a timely and productive research project?</i></p> <p>Good writers use research to support and expand their own ideas. <i>How do I fluidly incorporate the ideas I got from my research into my own writing?</i></p>

Reading

Vertical Enduring Understandings, Grades 7-12

Enduring Understandings:

1. Readers work actively to construct meaning.
2. Reading is thinking.
3. Understanding is promoted by a reader's use of strategies and tools.
4. Knowledge about literature, language and the world helps a reader construct meaning.

	7/8 Overarching	9-10 Overarching	11-12 Overarching
Vocabulary	<p>Good readers continuously increase their reading vocabulary to enhance their reading comprehension. <i>How does vocabulary development increase my reading comprehension?</i></p> <p>Good readers have strategies to call upon when they come across a word they don't know. <i>What do I do when I come across a word I don't know?</i></p> <p>Good readers always establish a purpose for their reading. <i>What is my purpose when I am reading?</i></p>	<p>Good communicators use precise vocabulary to express complex ideas. <i>How does vocabulary increase my ability to express and understand complex ideas?</i></p>	<p>Good communicators use specific technical vocabulary to express and extend complex discussions. <i>Why does academic writing have so much jargon?</i></p>
Reading Strategies	<p>Good readers work actively to construct meaning when they're reading. <i>How can I interact with the text?</i></p> <p>Good readers know that reading means thinking about what you're reading before reading, during reading, and after reading.</p> <p>Good readers use their own personal and cultural perspectives to understand a text.</p> <p>Good readers use strategies and tools to make sense of what they read. <i>How do I know if I understood what I read?</i></p>	<p>Good readers match specific ways of reading to different kinds of texts based on their own reading skills. <i>Why am I more successful at reading different kinds of material?</i></p> <p>Different kinds of texts require different ways of reading. <i>How can I be successful at reading different kinds of material?</i></p> <p>Good readers recognize why they do or do not retain information from a text. <i>How can I identify my own problems in reading?</i></p>	

