

LLW 8

Literature, Language & Writing

Through novels, short stories, and informative articles, students learn foundational reading and analytical skills with a focus on literature. Class discussions and text analysis will help students develop original insights and express their ideas clearly. Throughout the course, students explore classic literary works and practice diverse academic writings in preparation for advanced secondary education.

Students build foundational vocabulary through context clues, word roots and affixes, and synonyms and antonyms, then apply new words in discussion and writing. They also learn to identify literary devices and explain how these choices shape meaning, tone, and theme.

Course Theme

Dreams and Humanity in a Changing World

Across fiction and poetry, students examine how social pressures shape dreams, belonging, and individual freedom. They compare the promise of progress with its human costs, asking what preserves empathy, independent thought, and meaning in a changing world.

Novels

Reading and Author	Thematic Focus
Of Mice and Men John Steinbeck	Dreams, friendship, loneliness, and unequal opportunities.
Fahrenheit 451 Ray Bradbury	Censorship, independent thought, and the value of literature.

Short Stories

Reading and Author	Thematic Focus
The Pedestrian Ray Bradbury	Conformity, surveillance, and individual freedom.
Exhalation Ted Chiang	Consciousness, mortality, and the limits of knowledge.
The Machine Stops E. M. Forster	Technological dependence, isolation, and human connection.

Reading and Analysis

Students examine historical context, character motivation, narrative perspective, and social criticism. They compare how symbolism, irony, and foreshadowing develop themes, and support interpretations with carefully selected evidence.

Poetry

Grade 8 poetry study moves from literal meaning to ambiguity, tone, and social criticism. Vocabulary support and guided discussion help students analyze challenging language and compare how poetry and fiction develop related ideas.

Poem and Poet	Theme and Text Connection	Literary Focus
Harlem Langston Hughes	Deferred dreams and unequal opportunity. Pair with Of Mice and Men, while considering each work's distinct historical and racial context.	Simile, imagery, rhetorical questions
The Unknown Citizen W. H. Auden	Conformity and identity. Pair with The Pedestrian or Fahrenheit 451 to question whether social approval measures a meaningful life.	Satire, irony, speaker
Ozymandias Percy Bysshe Shelley	Power and impermanence. Pair with Exhalation or The Machine Stops to compare the limits of human achievement and control.	Irony, symbolism, sonnet form

Vocabulary and Literary Devices

Students reinforce foundational vocabulary and expand academic word knowledge through context, roots and affixes, synonyms and antonyms, and connotation. They analyze how metaphor, imagery, symbolism, irony, and diction shape tone and theme, then use precise language in discussion and writing.

Writing

Essay Type	What it is & Why
Persuasive/Argumentative	Focuses on taking a clear position on a topic using evidence and reasoning to convince readers, helping students develop critical thinking and persuasive communication skills.
Literary Analysis	Examines themes, characters, and literary devices within a text to deepen comprehension and cultivate analytical writing skills.
Comparative	Evaluates similarities and differences between two or more texts or concepts to foster higher-level synthesis and nuanced perspective.

Writing Skills

Thesis construction and outlining; essay structure, organization, and cohesion; evidence extraction and synthesis; editing, review, and revision.

Thematic Writing Practice

Develop a comparative thesis about a shared theme in poetry and fiction. Integrate quotations, explain how literary choices shape meaning, and consider an alternative interpretation before revising the essay.