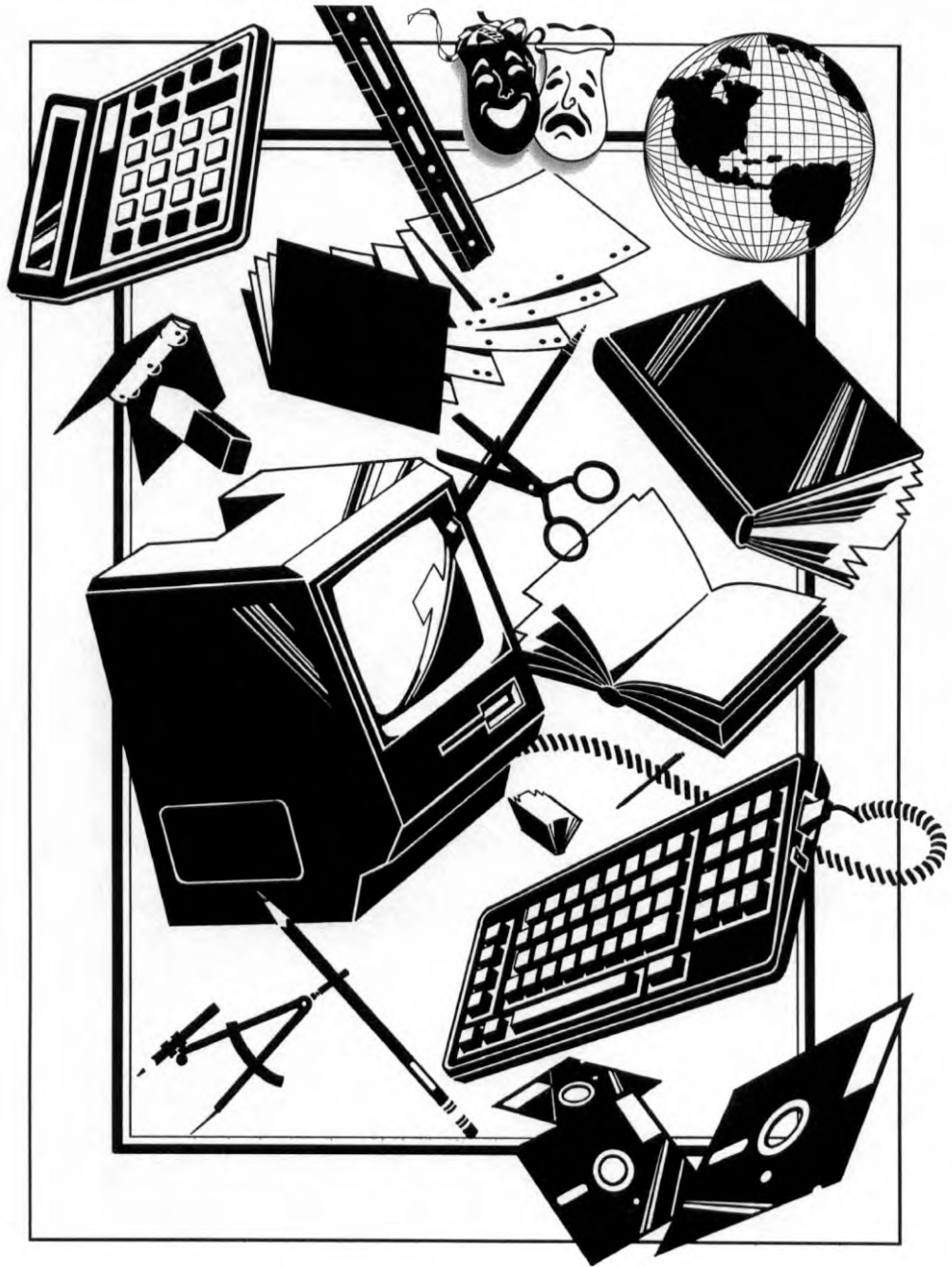


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**The Advanced Reader
Essential Curriculum
Grade 8**



**The Howard County Public School System
Ellicott City, Maryland
Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042**

FOREWORD

The Secondary Language Arts Office collaborated with the Offices of Secondary Science, Secondary Social Studies, and Gifted and Talented Programs to develop The Advanced Reader Essential Curriculum. The course compacts Maryland School Assessment (MSA) reading objectives and allows the above-level reader opportunities to make explicit cross-curricular connections while also developing critical thinking and writing skills. The literacy demands of the 21st century are addressed through this curriculum: Basic Language Literacy, Spatial Literacy, Historical Literacy, Cultural Literacy, Information Literacy, Scientific Literacy, and Political Literacy.

The goal of this course is to provide students with a better understanding of the global nature of the world in which they live, respecting and drawing on the richness of a diverse society.

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Grade 8: Unit Overview

Unit 1: Shared Inquiry

Connecting to Literature

The goal of the unit is to assist students as they develop into creative and critical thinkers. In sixth grade, students are introduced to literary elements as they participate in the shared inquiry process. In seventh grade, students refine their ability to interpret text and support their opinions in discussion. By eighth grade students refine their analytical skills through discussion and synthesis.

Unit 2: Evaluating Scientific Concepts Through the Study of Informational Texts and Literature

Connecting to Science--Reading as a Scientist

This curriculum applies 21st century critical reading skills to scientific concepts through the study of informational and literary texts. Concepts are introduced using literary text (novel) to spark and encourage student interest in and awareness of the scientific topics. Non-fiction scientific articles/journals are used as catalysts for critical thinking and research. Students will be expected to communicate their findings through a variety of modes. As students progress from sixth to eighth grade, the expectation is that final products will become more advanced and reflect an even higher level of critical thinking skills.

Scientific Concepts Reflected: Force and Motion

Unit 3: Reading as a Historian

Connecting the Past to the Present

This unit focuses on the development of the *American Spirit*, from 1803 to 1870. This period in American history encompasses the Industrial Revolution, Westward Expansion, and the Civil War. Essential questions for this unit include: What is the *American Spirit*? How is the *American Spirit* reflected in today's society? This unit is designed to support and enrich content taught simultaneously in eighth grade social studies. Students will make connections between both literary and information text to parallel social studies concepts.

Grade 8

Unit 1: Shared Inquiry-Connecting to Literature

Goal 1. The student will demonstrate the ability to use pre-reading strategies and prior knowledge to facilitate comprehension of text. (Pre-reading)

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Activate prior knowledge and provide a context for understanding a text.
- b. Express ideas in writing in response to an open-ended question.
- c. Compare prior knowledge with peers to extend understanding of context by
 - tracing common ideas among peers.
 - categorizing peer responses.
 - drawing conclusions based on discussion and sharing of ideas.
 - generating additional questions as a result of discussion.
- d. Survey and preview the text features and organizational patterns by
 - *analyzing print features and graphic aids that contribute to meaning.*
 - making predictions based on analysis of text features and other pre-reading activities.

Goal 2. The student will demonstrate the ability to critically listen to, read, and comprehend texts representing diversity in content, culture, authorship, and perspective. (Comprehension)

First Reading

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Clarify understanding of the text by making observations, connecting to text, and asking questions.
- b. Determine parts of the text that are confusing or require further examination.
- c. Generate questions based on predictions, comprehension, and interpretation.
- d. Sort questions based on whether they are factual/background questions, interpretive questions or vocabulary questions.
- e. Determine quality of interpretive questions for a shared inquiry discussion and test questions to determine their possible success as topics for discussion.
- f. Choose two questions that are most interesting for possible further discussion.

Second Reading

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Label places where students notice new details or patterns they had not previously noticed.
- b. Explain why passages were marked.

- c. Provide supporting evidence during discussion.
- d. Locate parts of a selection that support ideas.
- e. *Confirm, refute, or make predictions and form new ideas.*
- f. Identify and explain what is not directly stated in the text by
 - *drawing inferences from the text.*
 - *drawing conclusions or making generalizations about the text.*
- g. Analyze author's use of narrative elements by
 - *analyzing the events of the plot.*
 - *analyzing details that provide information about the setting, the mood created by the setting, and the role the setting plays in the text.*
 - *analyzing characterization.*
 - *analyzing relationships between and among characters, setting, and events.*
 - *analyzing the actions of characters that serve to advance the plot.*
 - *analyzing internal and/or external conflicts that motivate characters and those that advance the plot.*
 - *analyzing author's approach to issues of time in a narrative.*
 - *analyzing point of view and its effect on meaning.*
 - *analyzing the interaction among narrative elements and their contribution to meaning.*
 - *analyzing and evaluating the plausibility of the plot and the credibility of the characters.*
- h. *Analyze and evaluate how specific language choices contribute to meaning by*
 - *analyzing and evaluating language choices to create tone.*
 - *analyzing appropriateness of a particular tone.*
 - *analyzing and evaluating figurative language that contributes to meaning and/or creates style.*
 - *analyzing imagery that contributes to meaning and/or creates style.*
 - *analyzing elements of style and their contribution to meaning.*

Goal 3. The student will demonstrate the ability to develop, understand, acquire, and use new vocabulary through exposure to a variety of texts. (Vocabulary)

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Generate a list of confusing or unfamiliar words and phrases.
- b. Determine the meaning of words using context clues.
- c. Compare inferences to dictionary definitions.
- d. Distinguish between connotative and denotative meanings of words.
- e. Identify synonyms, antonyms, base words, prefixes, and suffixes of new vocabulary words.
- f. Create illustrations, cartoons, narratives, or poems to demonstrate an understanding of the words.

Goal 4. The student will demonstrate the ability to demonstrate critical thinking and discussion skills of texts representing diversity in content, culture, authorship, and perspective (Shared Inquiry).

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Generate answers to an interpretive question based on initial understanding of a text.
- b. Identify and evaluate supporting evidence from the text.
- c. Defend interpretations using supporting evidence, explanations, and personal experiences during Shared Inquiry Discussion by
 - *paraphrasing the main idea.*
 - *summarizing the text.*
- d. Respond constructively to the ideas, questions, and arguments of peers during Shared Inquiry Discussion.
- e. Consider the implications of ideas and weigh the consistency of evidence.
- f. Employ questioning strategies to achieve deeper comprehension during Shared Inquiry Discussion.
- g. Revise responses to discussion questions based on new evidence or a classmate's idea.
- h. Arrive at a satisfying personal interpretation of a text based upon the conclusion of the Shared Inquiry Discussion.
- i. Assess and reflect upon personal contributions and set goals for future Shared Inquiry Discussions.
- j. Evaluate personal interpretations using Critical Thinking Rubric.

Goal 5. The student will demonstrate the ability to organize their knowledge and support an argument with reasoning and evidence through well-constructed written responses (Performance Task).

Objectives--The student will be able to:

- a. Locate and use primary and secondary sources in order to evaluate historical, scientific, and/or cultural accuracy of a text.
- b. Establish cross-curricular connections in order to explore the text in greater depth.
- c. Compare and contrast use of language features, structural features, and themes across different texts.
- d. *Explain the implications of the text for the reader and/or society.*
- e. Defend interpretations of a text by
 - composing interpretive or evaluative essays.
 - writing a meaningful critical response to a text.
 - using rubrics to self-assess the quality of compositions.
 - selecting and assembling a portfolio of works that display growth in critical thinking skills.

Unit 2: Connecting to Science--Reading as a Scientist

Goal 1. The student will demonstrate the ability to examine literature and make cross-curricular connections related to concepts of force and motion.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Analyze details that provide information about the setting, the mood created by the setting, and the role the setting plays in the text.
- b. Appraise the credibility of factual information presented in the narrative.
- c. Trace the development of the technology depicted in the novel using informational text.
- d. *Explain the implications of the text for the reader and/or society.*
- e. *Analyze and evaluate the relationship between a literary text and its historical, social, scientific, and/or political context.*
- f. *Analyze the extent to which a work of literature contains ambiguities, subtleties, or contradictions.*
- g. *Analyze the author's/text's purpose and intended audience.*

Goal 2. The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, evaluate, and interpret informational texts in order to determine how technology related to force and motion has developed over time.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Find similarities and adaptations in meaning for known words or word parts, including base words, prefixes, and suffixes used in a new context.
- b. Explain relationships between and among vocabulary in specific content areas.
- c. Analyze the contribution of graphic aids to the meaning of the text.
- d. *Analyze the contribution of the organizational pattern to clarify or reinforce meaning and support the author's purpose and/or argument.*
- e. *Confirm, augment, and/or refute prior understanding using the information presented in the text.*
- f. *Summarize or paraphrase the text.*
- g. Explain the applications of the text for personal or content-specific use.

Goal 3. The student will demonstrate the ability to follow systematic research steps using the Big6™ process to investigate issues related to technology advances in force and motion.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Define a task and develop guiding questions about an issue related to the force and motion and scientists connected to that issue.

- b. Utilize information-seeking strategies.
- c. Locate and access information related to questions generated.
- d. Use relevant information from appropriate sources by
 - summarizing or paraphrasing text.
 - organizing information using effective note taking processes such as SQ3R, Cornell, graphic organizer.
 - utilizing a web-based bibliographic tool and proper format (MLA) to credit sources when paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting.
- e. Synthesize information from multiple sources by
 - analyzing the text and its information for reliability.
 - making connections between the credentials of the author and the information in the text.
 - evaluating the currency and relevance of the information in the text.
- f. Evaluate the Big6TM process.

Goal 4. The student will demonstrate the ability to compose oral, written, and visual presentations that express personal ideas, inform, and persuade.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Express ideas by experimenting with a variety of forms and techniques suited to the topic, audience, and purpose to develop a clear, intentional, and consistent voice and tone.
- b. Investigate the World of Work through an examination of the scientists who made discoveries about force and motion.
- c. Use suitable traditional and electronic resources to refine presentations and edit texts.
- d. *Synthesize information from two or more sources* to fulfill a self-selected or given purpose.
- e. Persuade by supporting, modifying, or disagreeing with a position, using effective rhetorical strategies.
- f. Use a recognized format to credit sources when paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting to avoid plagiarism.
- g. *Synthesize information from multiple sources* and present information in an oral, written or visual presentation.
- h. Consider the effectiveness of diction, audience appeal, and organization within his/her presentation.

Unit 3: Connecting the Past to the Present--Reading as a Historian

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze the forces behind the Westward Expansion in the United States and the concept of Manifest Destiny as depicted in fiction.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Examine the author’s perspective to explain the internal and external conflicts that motivated Americans to move West.
- b. Synthesize primary source accounts to explain the relationship between the Push/Pull Factors and immigration to the American Frontier.
- c. Analyze maps, print features, informational features, graphic aids and organizational features to heighten understanding of migration westward.
- d. Evaluate language features (poetic devices, figurative devices) to draw conclusions about the westward movement.
- e. Examine the author’s purpose to explain difficulties experienced by Native American Tribes during the spread of pioneers throughout the West.
- f. Analyze and interpret important ideas and messages across genres: poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.
- g. Identify and explain what is not directly stated in the text.
- h. Draw conclusions about the motivations of the American westward movement using a compilation of primary and literature-based sources.

Goal 2. The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze the societal growth of the early 19th century Industrial Movement to interpret *the American Spirit* as it relates to the lives of women and children of that era.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Analyze important ideas and messages in both literary and primary source texts to draw conclusions about theme.
- b. *Analyze works that create a universal theme.*
- c. Reevaluate initial opinions or interpretations about the time period.
- d. *Explain the implications of the text for the reader and society.*
- e. Make plausible predictions regarding the Industrial Revolution and future growth of the United States using prior knowledge.
- f. Defend personal ideas related to literary or informational text.
- g. Determine and explain the *American Spirit* through primary source document interpretation.

Goal 3. The student will demonstrate the ability to understand how the Civil War marked a turning point for the *American Spirit* of freedom for African Americans.

Objectives—The student will be able to:

- a. Analyze population growth in specific regions of the United States using newspapers, maps and other primary sources.
- b. Distinguish the differences in population growth based on region of origin.
- c. *Analyze specific word choices that create, change, or contribute to meaning.*
- d. Define and differentiate among facts, opinions, assumptions, and inferences.
- e. Evaluate and judge the historical accuracy of a text.
- f. Draw conclusions about societal growth in the 19th century using a compilation of resources in combination with prior knowledge by
 - *identifying and explaining the main idea.*
 - *paraphrasing the main idea.*
- g. *Analyze the actions of characters that advance the plot.*
- h. *Analyze and determine the credibility of relationships between and among characters.*