



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 8, Module 2A, Unit 3: Overview



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**Unit 3: Performance Task: Readers Theater: Taking a Stand in Maycomb**

In this third unit, students will analyze key quotes that reflect the overarching themes they studied in Units 1 and 2. Students will form small groups and be assigned one of the quotes as the basis of a Readers Theater script. Students will craft their script by selecting critical scenes from the novel that develop the theme in the quote. For the mid-unit assessment, students will write a short commentary that explains how the passage

develops the main idea of the anchor quote. For the end of unit assessment, students will write a commentary on how their script is a response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how it connects to and diverges from the novel. The final performance task will be a presentation of the Readers Theater script by the small group. This Readers Theater final performance task centers on NYSP12 ELA standards RL.2, RL.8.3, W.8.4, and W.8.11b.

**Guiding Questions And Big Ideas**

- **How does taking a stand in small ways show integrity?**
- **Is it worth taking a stand for one's self? For others?**
- *Authors use the structure of texts to create style and convey meaning.*
- *Authors use allusions to layer deeper meaning in the text.*

**Mid-Unit 3 Assessment**

**Readers Theater Scene Selection: Justification**

This assessment centers on NYSP12 ELA standards RL.8.1 and W.8.9a, and serves as a scaffold toward students' Readers Theater script. For the mid-unit assessment, students will write a short justification of why they chose the scene they did and explain how their passage develops the main idea of the anchor quote.

**End of Unit 3 Assessment**

**Readers Theater Commentary**

For the End of Unit 3 Assessment, students will write a commentary on how their individual script is a response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how it connects to and diverges from the novel. This assessment centers on RL.8.2, RL.8.3, and W.8.11 (Note that students are not formally assessed on their individual script itself, but only on their commentary.)



### Performance Task

#### **Readers Theater and Analytical Commentary: Taking a Stand in Maycomb**

After reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, students will analyze key quotes from the novel that reflect the overarching themes they studied in Units 1 and 2. Students then will form small groups and develop a Readers Theater script in which each student will select a different critical scene from the novel that develops the theme of their group's assigned quote. Their group Readers Theater script combines these individual scene selections and will be accompanied by two short written pieces that students will write on their own: a justification (students' Mid-Unit 3 Assessment) in which students justify and explain how the passage develops the main idea of their group's quote and a commentary (students' End of Unit 3 Assessment) in which they explain how their script is a response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how it connects to and diverges from the novel. The final performance task will be a presentation of the Readers Theater Script by the small group. This Readers Theater final performance task centers on **NYSP12 ELA Standards RL.8.2, RL.8.3, W.8.3, W.8.4, and W.8.11b.**

### Content Connections

Big ideas and guiding questions are informed by the New York State Common Core K–8 Social Studies Framework: Unifying Themes (pages 6 and 7).

Theme 1: Individual Development and Cultural Identity

- The role of social, political, and cultural interactions supports the development of identity.
- Personal identity is a function of an individual's culture, time, place, geography, interaction with groups, influences from institutions, and lived experiences.

Theme 5: Development and Transformation of Social Structures

- Role of social class, systems of stratification, social groups, and institutions
- Role of gender, race, ethnicity, education, class, age, and religion in defining social structures within a culture
- Social and political inequalities
- Expansion and access of rights through concepts of justice and human rights

### Text

1. Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (New York: Warner Books, 1982), ISBN: 978-0-446-31486-2.



**Unit 3 officially is five sessions of instruction.**

**Note, however, that Unit 2 Lessons 14, 15, and 19 in effect launch Unit 3.**

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
<b>Lesson 1</b>	Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Readers Theater Scene Selection Justification and Peer Critique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RL.8.1)</li> <li>With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed. (W.8.5)</li> <li>I can use evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.8.9a)</li> <li>I can create poetry, stories, and other literary forms. (W.8.11b)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can explain why I chose my scene from <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>.</li> <li>I can explain how my script develops the main idea of the key quote.</li> <li>I can use the rubric to provide feedback to my peers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Readers Theater Scene Selection: Justification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key Quotes anchor charts (from Unit 2, Lesson 8)</li> <li>Readers Theater Criteria anchor chart (from Unit 2, Lesson 14)</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 2</b>	Our Group Readers Theater: Managing the Sequence of Events in Our Script	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write narrative texts about real or imagined experiences using relevant details and event sequences that make sense. (W.8.3)</li> <li>I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can add transitional words and phrases to connect scenes in a script.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readers Theater script, draft with revisions and transitions</li> </ul>	
<b>Lesson 3</b>	Readers Theater: Writing a Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write narrative texts about real or imagined experiences using relevant details and event sequences that make sense. (W.8.3)</li> <li>I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can work with my group to write a conclusion to our script that summarizes the key events and draws the audience attention back to the key quote.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readers Theater script revisions</li> <li>Conclusion for group script</li> <li>Performance practice feedback</li> <li>Venn Diagram: Similarities and Differences between the Readers Theater Script and <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readers Theater Criteria anchor chart (from Unit 2, Lesson 14)</li> </ul>



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
<b>Lesson 4</b>	End of Unit 3 Assessment: Readers Theater Commentary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can determine a theme or the central ideas of literary text. (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can objectively summarize literary text. (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL.8.3)</li> <li>I can create a presentation, artwork, or text in response to a literary work with a commentary that identifies connections and explains divergences from the original. (W.8.11)</li> <li>I can create poetry, stories, and other literary forms. (W.8.11b)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can explain how our script is a response to <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>.</li> <li>I can explain how our script connects to the novel and how it diverges from it and why.</li> <li>I can use a rubric to provide kind, specific, and helpful feedback to my peers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End of Unit 3 Assessment: Readers Theater Commentary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key Quotes anchor charts (from Unit 2, Lesson 8)</li> <li>Readers Theater Criteria anchor chart (from Unit 2, Lesson 14)</li> </ul>



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
<b>Lesson 5</b>	Performance Task: Readers Theater Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can determine a theme or the central ideas of literary text. (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can objectively summarize literary text. (RL.8.2)</li> <li>I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL.8.3)</li> <li>I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4)</li> <li>I can create poetry, stories, and other literary forms. (W.8.11b)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can speak clearly and with expression for a performance.</li> <li>I can perform my Readers Theater script for an audience.</li> <li>I can ask questions that ask the audience to connect all of the individual scripts to understand the whole thing.</li> <li>I can respond</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Narrative Script</li> <li>Readers Theater performance</li> <li>Self-assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishbowl protocol</li> </ul>



### Optional: Experts, Fieldwork, And Service

#### Experts

- Invite in a play director or an actor to speak to students about the kinds of decisions he or she makes to improve the audience understanding of the message being communicated in a performance.

#### Fieldwork

- Take the class to a Readers Theater performance so students can see what it looks like in action.

#### Service

- N/A

### Preparation and Materials

This unit includes a routine that involves stand-alone documents.

### Independent Reading

This module introduces a more robust independent reading structure after students have finished reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* (i.e., at the start of Unit 3). Consider scheduling a week between Unit 2 and Unit 3 to launch independent reading. Alternatively, you could lengthen the time for Unit 3 and intersperse the independent reading lessons into the first part of the unit. See two separate stand-alone documents on EngageNY.org: “**The Importance of Increasing the Volume of Reading**” and “**Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan**,” which together provide the rationale and practical guidance for a robust independent reading program. Once students have all learned how to select books and complete the reading log, it takes less class time. After the launch period, the independent reading routine takes about half a class period per week, with an additional day near the end of a unit or module for students to review and share their books. Unit 3 includes time to maintain the independent reading routine (calendared into the lessons), but you may wish to review the independent reading materials now to give yourself time to gather texts and make a launch plan that meets your students’ needs.