### Grade 8

#### Description / Big Ideas

**Unit 1:**
**Through the Storyteller’s Eyes: The Power of an Engaging Narrative**
- **Targeted Standards:** RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.6, W.8.3
- **Description:** In this unit, students explore the narrative techniques employed by authors to engage readers. Students will read multiple short texts of fiction and non-fiction as well as a novel-length work and focus on the development of dramatic irony and point of view through characterization and dialogue.

**Big Idea:** Authors use literary techniques, such as theme, character, and point of view to develop powerful and engaging narratives that evoke emotion from readers.

**Text Options for Whole Novels:**
- *Refugee* by Alan Gratz
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech

**Essential Question:**
- *What is the power of an engaging narrative?*
- *How do writers develop characters and themes to engage a reader's emotions?*
- *How does point of view impact the reader’s interaction with text?*

**End of Unit Assessment:**
- **Narrative Technique** – Students will choose one story and complete a graphic organizer showing how differences in the points of view of the characters and/or reader helped to create impact and meaning. They will compose an additional scene for the text in the form of a prequel, sequel, deleted scene, or alternate ending. The original work should reflect structured event sequences and effective narrative technique to develop the characters and create humor and/or suspense.

#### Unit 2:
**Who I Am, Where I Am: The Power of Diversity**
- **Targeted Standards:** RI.8.2, RI.8.5, RI.8.7, W.8.2
- **Supported Standards:** RI.8.3
- **Description:** In this unit, students will consider and celebrate the diversity in their communities while exploring the challenges faced by people from different cultures as they work to develop a sense of belonging in the community in which they live. Students will read and analyze informational articles, as well as other texts including poetry, short stories, and personal memoirs. Students will also evaluate sources by analyzing the structure of the text as well as the central ideas. They will read novel-length text to support their study of unit themes and essential questions.

**Big Idea:** Authors use various strategies and mediums to present multiple perspectives that reveal their purpose, central idea, or conflicting points of view.

**Text Options for Whole Novels:**
- *I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai
- *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep

**Essential Question:**
- *How are communities empowered by cultural diversity?*
- *How do people maintain their identity and develop a sense of belonging within a new culture?*
- *How do various forms of media serve different informational purposes?*

**End of Unit Assessment:**
- **Evaluate, Propose, and Explain** – Students will evaluate several sources presented in different formats as if they are reviewing them for a new course being created by the Baltimore County Offices of Immigration Services designed to assist immigrant and American born teenagers with understanding and respecting each other's cultures. They will offer revision and modification suggestions based on their evaluation to improve the source for use in the course.
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### Unit 3: Enduring Tumultuous Times: The Power of Craft and Structure

**Targeted Standards:** RI.8.4, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, W.8.2

**Description / Big Ideas:** In this unit, students read a variety of text sets, both fiction and non-fiction, to compare and contrast the development of central ideas with a focus on word choice and structure. Students will also read a novel-length work to support study of the unit’s essential question.

**Big Idea:** An author’s voice is heard through the use of structural and stylistic choices to develop tone and create deeper meaning.

**Text Options for Whole Novels:**
- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei
- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne and James Houston
- *Projekt 1065* by Alan Gratz
- *Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli

**Essential Question:**
- What is the impact of structure and word choice on meaning?
- How are perspectives shaped by conflict?
- What is revealed about humanity in times of trouble?

**End of Unit Assessment:** Analysis Essay – Students will closely read a narrative and a poem and annotate each text examining how each author conveys similar ideas in different ways. Students will compose an analytical essay explaining how the structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

### Unit 4: Approaching Adulthood: The Power of Responsibility

**Targeted Standards:** RI.8.6, RI.8.8, W.8.1

**Description:** In this unit, students will explore issues related with moving away from childhood toward mature, responsible adulthood. They will read a variety of texts with an emphasis on informational articles, essays, and opinions as well as read other, shorter works of fiction and poetry. Students will also read a novel-length work to support study of the unit’s essential questions.

**Big Idea:** The strength of an author’s argument lies in the development of their claim by using clear reasoning and evidence that is relevant and sufficient to support the claim.

**Text Options:**
- *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor
- *We Beat the Street* by Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, Rameck Hunt, and Sharon Draper
- *The Stars Beneath our Feet* by David Moore
- *Miles Morales: Spiderman* by Jason Reynolds

**Essential Question:**
- What experiences help develop a teenager into a mature, responsible adult?
- How can understanding the perspectives of others influence our personal views as we grow and mature?
- How do writers communicate their own views while acknowledging the perspectives of others?

**End of Unit Assessment:** Development of a Claim: Argument – Students will compose an argument to support their claim about when kids become adults with clear reasons and relevant evidence gathered from various sources. Students will debate their position to defend their personal views on the experiences that develop teenagers on their pathway to becoming adults.