**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

*Ensuring a bright future for every child*

MISSISSIPPI

# EXEMPLAR
## Units & Lessons

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**Grade 8**

## Lesson 1: Unit Orientation

**Focus Standard(s):** SL.8.1a-c

**Additional Standard(s):** W.8.5, W.8.7

**Estimated Time:** 1-2 days

**Resources and Materials:**
- Teacher Resource: Read the article at Culturally Responsive Teaching for justification on completing a problem- and project-based unit.
- Handout 1.1: Unit Introduction Activity
- Handout 1.2: Performance Task Motivation Questionnaire
- Handout 1.3: Learning Targets for the Unit
- Handout 1.4: Performance Task Planning Sheet
- Handout 1.5: Investigation Notes- Model
- Handout 1.6: Investigation Notes- Student Copy
- Student copies of the Rubric for the Performance Task
- Optional: Student copies of Performance Task
- Before class, print copies (if necessary) and individually post/place the following items in separate sections/stations around your classroom:
    - A device for students to watch *Oktopodi* (Consider replacing this short film with a short film about motivation that your students may connect with more.)
    - Lyrics to "Stand by Me", Ben E. King (Consider replacing this song with a song about motivation that your students may connect with more.)
    - Lyrics to "We are the Champions", Queen (Consider replacing this song with a song about motivation that your students may connect with more.)
    - A device for students to watch "The Lord of the Rings - Samwise the Brave - I Can't do this Sam" (Consider replacing this movie clip with a movie clip about motivation that your students may connect with more.)
    - A device for students to watch He Touched the Butt! - Finding Nemo HD (Consider replacing this movie clip with a

movie clip about motivation that your students may connect with more.)

- This image:



**Lesson Target(s):**
- Students understand the expectations for the learning targets and the performance task for the unit.
- Students self-reflect to determine their areas of need to study more and create a checklist to depict those areas of need.
- Students decide which performance task to complete and brainstorm ideas.

**Guiding Question(s):**
- What are my expectations for the unit?
- What areas of need must I focus on during my independent or group study time?
- What complex problem about motivation (at my school, in my local community, or in a larger community) do I want to investigate?

## Vocabulary

| **Academic Vocabulary:** Have students identify other the words on Handout 1.3, the performance task, and the rubric that they do not understand. Make a list of those words and complete multiple activities listed in the "Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary" section directly to the right in order to enhance their understanding. These words should be placed on a word wall and interacted with daily to support understanding. | **Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary:** |
|---|---|
| | ☐ Introduce words with student-friendly definition and pictures |
| | ☐ Model how to use the words in writing/discussion |
| | ☐ Read and discuss the meaning of word in multiple contexts |
| | ☐ Students create pictures/symbols to represent words |
| | ☐ Students write/discuss using the words |
| | ☐ Students act out the words or attach movements to the words |
| | ☐ Pull Words Off the Page to Promote Learning |
| | ☐ Place words on a word wall and interact with it daily. |
| | ☐ Categorize by concepts |

| Symbol | Type of Text and Interpretation of Symbol |
|---|---|
| | Instructional support and/or extension suggestions for students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level and/or for students who and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level |
| ✓ | Assessment (Pre-assessment, Formative, Self, or Summative) |

## Instructional Plan

**Anticipatory Set/Introduction to the Lesson**

**Note:** Before class, print copies (if necessary) and individually post the following documents or in separate sections/stations in your classroom:

1. Oktopodi
2. Lyrics to "Stand by Me", Ben E. King
3. Lyrics to "We are the Champions", Queen
4. A device for students to watch "The Lord of the Rings - Samwise the Brave - I Can't do this Sam"
5. He Touched the Butt! - Finding Nemo HD
6. This image:
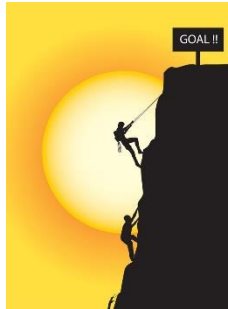


Display these questions: What drives these individuals despite all the hardships they face? What keeps them motivated even when times get tough? What motivates them to keep going?

As students arrive, instruct them to stand in front of/near of the displayed articles with a writing instrument and their individual copy of **Handout 1.1: Unit Introduction Activity**.

**Note:** Monitor the amount of students in each group. Direct students to not populate an area after they see a certain amount (3-5

people, depending on your class size) of people in an area.

Once students have populated their areas, explain that they will rotate clockwise around the room (unless another direction or order is more suitable for your classroom), but only when the timer rings. Students are to complete **Handout 1.1: Unit Introduction Activity** as they rotate to each new section posted. Have students rotate clockwise each time the timer rings until they are back at their starting positions. At that point, they are to remain until further instructed.

After each student has returned their starting positions, direct them to find someone not in their original rotation group and share their findings. Have them revise or add information, as necessary.

Have a whole-class discussion about **Handout 1.1: Unit Introduction Activity**. If students do not eventually do so, be sure to guide the conversation, at some point, to discuss how each one of the stories shows how the following motivates people: love, desire, friendship/relationships, proving a point, being independent, doing the right thing, helping others, contributing to something "bigger" than them, being a part of something important, a goal, etc.

Have students discuss the messages (themes) each one of these stories are sending about motivation. Possible answers may include the following:
1. People are motivated to keep going in tough situations when they feel that they are contributing to something "bigger" than them.
2. People can be motivated when they have a goal in sight.
3. Love motivates people and makes them endure hardships for those that they love.
4. Feeling independent/proving a point motivates people.

Be sure students understand that these are themes.

Optional: Have students draw/sketch an image or write a poem about the specific things that motivate them.

**Understanding Lesson Purpose and Student Outcomes**
Review the lesson targets and guiding questions with the students briefly.

**Activity 1: Introduce the Unit Targets and the Performance Task**

T: For this unit, you will work with your peers and attempt to solve a real-world problem that is relevant to your school, community, or a larger community concerning motivation. To help you solve this real-world problem, you will practice and improve upon several valuable skills and develop worthwhile understandings about reading, writing, speaking/listening, and language. We will periodically stop to check our progress through reflective activities. You will work towards meeting these targets throughout the unit by completing several activities (both written and oral).

Display or provide students with a copy of **Handout 1.3: Learning Targets for the Unit**.
**Note:** You may direct students to start a unit booklet/folder to keep up with documents for this unit.

Have students read through and identify the words on **Handout 1.3** that they do not understand. Make a list of those words and complete multiple activities listed in the "Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary" section to enhance their understanding of the words.

T: Your learning targets will prepare you for completing the performance task, and your performance task will be the final way that you show me and yourself if you have met those targets. Let's take a look at the performance task.

Display the following key for students to read:
?- Information or terms you do not understand/need more information about
!- Information you understand
☺- What you are excited about
☹- What you are not excited about
**Note:** Students could do the same activity with different-colored highlighters instead of using the identified symbols.

Display or provide students a copy of the performance task directions. Provide students with a copy of **Handout 1.5: Investigation Notes- Model**. Read to students or have students read the performance task directions. Have students place a question mark (?) beside information they do not understand/need more information about, an exclamation mark (!) beside information that they understand, a smiley face (☺) beside what they are excited about, and a sad face (☹) beside what they are not excited about.

For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level:

- Break the activity into smaller chunks, having students read and summarize one or two steps at a time.

Extensions and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level:

- Have students suggest any changes they would make to the performance task to make it more meaningful or more engaging for them. Consider the changes and discuss reasons for accepting or not accepting the changes.

Have students share out their marks. Allow students time to ask questions and clarify their understandings. Use **Handout 1.5** in reference to the performance task directions to clarify and verify their understandings and questions. Have discussions about how the **Handout 1.5** is not what the final product will look like, but the contents of this handout will be within an audiovisual presentation. Have students share out ideas of how this could look in different types of audiovisual formats.

**Activity 2: Brain Dump**
T: Let's lighten your load now. Turn and talk to your partner about what you just learned. Then, complete a Brain Dump activity where you dump all your thoughts on paper, in any way you want (e.g., pictures, words, a combination of pictures and words), about what we just learned.

**Activity 3: Understand the Performance Task Rubric**
Distribute one copy of the Rubric for the Performance Task and one copy of **Handout 1.5** to each student. Have students read each component on the rubric one at a time and place a question mark (?) beside information they do not understand/need more information about and an exclamation mark (!) beside information that they understand.

Have students share out their answers. Allow students time to ask questions and clarify their understandings. Be sure students identify the words within the performance task that they do not understand. Make a list of those words and complete multiple activities listed in the "Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary" section to enhance their understanding of the words.
    T: Retrieve your performance task directions, the rubric, and **Handout 1.5**. Reread them, if necessary, and work with a partner or a small group to answer the following guiding questions about the rubric:
    1. Analyze the Key Ideas and Details section of the rubric and analyze the task directions. From what types of sources

(documents or people) will you locate information for the "descriptions, facts, details, and examples to support claims and findings"? (In other words, in what sources will you find the information you need to complete your task?)

2. Analyze the Organization section of the rubric and the task itself. How may you best organize the information so that it is logical and you cover all the expected areas? Brainstorm and list some ideas that you may change later.
3. In the Voice section of the rubric, what does it mean to speak "appropriately for the context, task, and audience…"?
4. In the Multimedia section, discuss how you may need to incorporate "audio/visual aids or media" to support your presentation? Discuss what format (PowerPoint, video, website, interactive Word document, Prezi, etc.) that you may need to employ to present your information.
5. How do you individually (not as a group) want to present your self-reflections to me at each checkpoint? (e.g., written, poetry form, email, recordings guiding me through evidence, video recordings, etc.)

**Note:** If or when possible, consider adding an activity in which student compare the rubric to a teacher-created or previous student samples so that students have an opportunity to see what the criteria looks like in an actual sample.

> **For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level:**
> - For EL students (depending on their level of language proficiency), provide them with a rubric and the performance task in their native language and in the English.
> - Refer to the contents in **Handout 1.5** as a model for Questions 1-5.
>
> **Extensions and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level:**
> - Have high-performing students who are interested coordinate and offer tutorial times during enrichment times, during class, or after school through technology or housed at school to provide assistance in their area of expertise. This service can be offered to students who need extra

**Activity 4: Determining a Motivation Task to Complete**

T: Now that you understand your expectations, you begin thinking about how you want to complete your task and the small group you want to complete it with.

Have students work in their groups to determine
- Roles (based on strengths) and

- Individual checklists of the criteria each student in the group needs to do and by what date.

Have students share out ideas and record their initial plans **Handout 1.4: Performance Task Planning Sheet**.
- ✓ Monitor to check for misunderstandings and understandings. Correct misunderstandings. Praise students for great ideas.

> **For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level:**
> - For students struggling to complete the Question section on **Handout 1.4**, guide them with the following questions:
>   - o What problem about motivation are you trying to solve? (Direct students to the performance task)
>   - o How would we state we put that as a question?
> - For students struggling to complete the Additional Questions or Resources and Sources sections on **Handout 1.4**, guide them with the same questions asked in Activity 3.

**Reflection and Closing**

T: I want to gauge your motivation for the completion of this unit. When researchers want to determine motivation, they often use a questionnaire with a Likert scale. (Explain Likert scale.) By collecting this information, I can use the data to better understand your level of motivation and determine possible solutions or interventions for motivating you. Please anonymously complete **Handout 1.2: Performance Task Motivation Questionnaire.** I am asking you to anonymously complete the questionnaire so that I can get accurate responses. Why do you think anonymous questionnaires yield more accurate responses? (Provide time for students to respond.) I am asking you to identify yourself as male or female, but that information won't allow me to determine whose paper it is. Why do you think I want to know this information? (Possible response: to determine if the motivation depends on the person's sex.)
- ✓ Analyze students' responses. Based on the results, determine additional questions to ask students in the next lesson. For example, if a high percentage of students choose 1s for Question 3: "I have the capability to successfully complete the performance task.", you would want to follow-up with questions about what may make a student feel incapable of successfully completing this task.

## Homework

Discuss the performance task, the student-generated checklist for his/her specific to-do list, and the initial problem question on with a parent/guardian. Have the parent or guardian email or write a short letter to the teacher stating that he/she
1) had the discussion with the student and
2) does/does not have questions about the performance task.

The letter should be emailed or returned through the student the next day.

**Handout 1.1: Unit Introduction Activity**

| Station Title | What drives these individuals despite all the hardships they face? What keeps them motivated even when times get tough? |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Handout 1.2: Performance Task Motivation Questionnaire**

What is your gender?         ___ Female         ___ Male         ___ Prefer not to say

Circle one of the numbers below each statement to reflect the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

1.  I will successfully complete the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

2.  The planned activities will help me successfully complete the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

3.  I have the capability to successfully complete the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

4.  I feel in control of how I complete the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

5.  I feel in control of what I complete in the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

6.  The performance task is important and worth completing.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

7.  The skills I will learn/improve upon in my performance task are relevant and applicable to another area of my life.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

8.  Circle what all areas: future career, current job, current situation/problem you are experiencing, home, college, social relationships, parental relationship,

_____

(Add an area if the area is not listed.)

9.  I am important to my group's successful completion of the performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

10. My teacher makes me feel that I am an important part to the successful completion of this performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

11. My peers make me feel that I am an important part to the successful completion of this performance task.

1 – I completely disagree.         2 – I disagree.     3 – I agree.     4 – I completely agree.

**Handout 1.3: Learning Targets for the Unit**

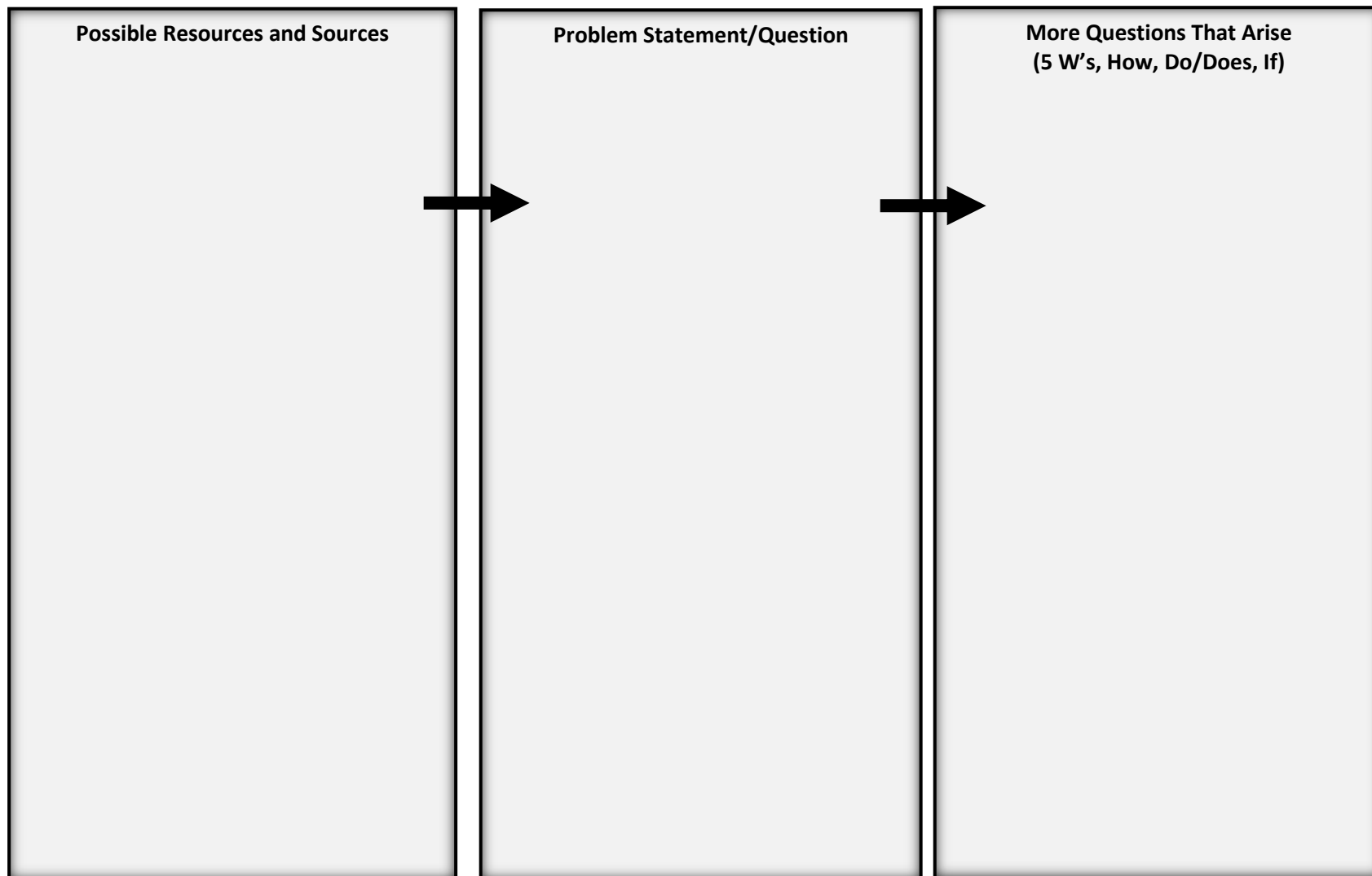| Standard | I will understand | I will |
|---|---|---|
| **How an Author Makes Connections**<br><br>**RI.8.3** Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).<br><br>What does the comparison in Paragraph __ reveal?<br><br>How does the author develop the idea that…?<br><br>What quote from the text supports <a connection made in the text>?<br><br>How does the author (what technique does the author employ) develop a connection between _____ and _____?<br><br>What idea is developed when the author connects | ❑ Authors develop connections and distinctions to help deliver a message and achieve a purpose.<br>❑ These connections and distinctions can be between or among ideas, people, and events.<br>❑ These connections can be inferred or directly stated.<br>❑ Authors use techniques (e.g., transitions, analogies, allusions/references, anecdotes [first/personal, second, or third person], scenarios, examples, associations, supporting quotes/evidence/data/statistics, comparisons, and categories) to create the connections.<br>❑ Authors use visual aids and text features (e.g., charts, graphs, images, models, etc.) to further enhance the techniques and aid in comprehension.<br>❑ Authors often use different types of <u>relationships or interactions</u> (i.e., cause and effect, problem and solution, sequence/procedure, compare and/or contrast, explanation, description, emphasis, enumerative/extended definition, evidence/support, whole-to-part or part-to-whole, cycle, hierarchy, expert on the topic, etc.) to make connections between or among ideas, people, and/or events. Many of these relationships or interactions also are text structures.<br>❑ Developing connections between ideas, people, and events can aid in comprehension, shift perspectives, and add interest.<br>   o Authors sometimes create weak or fallacious connections between ideas, or sometimes the technique used is weak or fallacious. Therefore, readers must be conscious of the possibility of weak or flawed reasoning.<br>❑ Determining the connections between the ideas, people, and/or events will help determine the central idea and the author's purpose. | ❑ Ask and answer (in a written or verbal manner) these questions when analyzing a text:<br>o What is the main subject, content, or focus of this text? Identify the person/people, event(s), and/or idea(s).<br>o What other person/people, event(s), and/or idea(s) are mentioned in the text?<br>o What connection or distinction is the author trying to make in this text?<br>o What techniques does the author use to make the connection or distinction between different elements?<br>o What is the relationship developed in these connections?<br>o What is the purpose of the connection: to aid comprehension, add interest, and/or shift perspective?<br>o What is the impact of the connection on the reader?<br>o What idea is developed from the connection?<br>o What does this connection reveal about the author?<br>❑ Extended analysis questions:<br>o How appropriate is the connection?<br>o Is it flawed?<br>o Could a better connection or |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ____ with ____?<br><br>What is the impact of the analogy on the reader? | ❑ The way in which the author connects ideas, people, and/or events are directly related to the purpose, audience, task, and discipline. For example, if a doctor wants to explain a virus to a person infected, they may use this metaphor: "Viruses are zombies. They are just "undead" cells that can't live without infecting and indwelling their host. Then that infected cell bites the next cell and it also becomes a zombie. I remind my patients that for the vast majority of zombie movies/viruses, there is no cure for the undead. They just have to be contained and kill themselves off. Eventually they die out without human intervention. Antibiotics ARE NOT the cure! There is no cure for zombies. Just give it time to run its course." | distinction be made?<br>o Could a better technique be used to make the connection or distinction?<br>o How well does the visual aid enhance comprehension and add interest?<br>❑ If no visual aid, what visual aid can be added to enhance comprehension and add interest? |
| **Informational Writing**<br><br>**W.8.2** Write informative/ explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. | ❑ The background knowledge and potential concerns of the audience should influence the writer's decisions.<br>❑ Organizational structure helps to clarify and connect complex ideas, concepts, and information.<br>❑ Ideas are developed through examples, anecdotes/scenarios/ accounts, statistics, descriptions, quotes, analogies, allusions, and illustrations (and other text features).<br>❑ Ideas, concepts, and supporting information are connected and relevant to the topic.<br>❑ False statements and fallacious reasoning (reasoning contrary to fact), whether accidental or purposeful, weaken even the most appealing information.<br>❑ Words, phrases, and clauses can strengthen the connection between the major sections of a text, make a text more unified or cohesive, and clarify the relationship between elements of a text.<br>❑ The standard format and appropriate style guide (MLA, APA, Turabian, etc.) for citations will differ based on the discipline.<br>❑ Each discipline (i.e. mathematics, science, etc.) has specific norms and conventions for writing, including (but not limited to) headings, subheadings, numbered lists, charts/graphs, illustrations, and maps. | ❑ Write an introductory section that presents the topic and central idea.<br>❑ Utilize formatting (e.g., headings), graphics, and multimedia to aid in comprehension.<br>❑ Anticipate the audience's knowledge level to provide adequate background.<br>❑ Group and synthesize the main points of the research into categories (versus simply a summary of the articles individually, one by one).<br>❑ Utilize the appropriate discipline-specific style and tone.<br>❑ Supply sufficient reliable and relevant evidence (e.g., facts, details, examples, and quotations) from multiple sources.<br>❑ Supply valid reasoning, void of fallacy, to strengthen the evidence and central idea(s).<br>❑ Utilize a valid, reliable, and ethical data-collection method. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | ❑ Whether the author uses the appropriate discipline-specific style, tone, and organization can be an indicator of the reliability of the information.<br>❑ Appropriately using and giving credit to others' information prevents plagiarism.<br>❑ Providing strengths and limitations of the information (if possible) makes the information more reliable.<br>❑ A conclusion gives closure to an argument by providing future implications/consequences for actions or non-actions regarding the use of this information and/or expressing a final thought or opinion about the information.<br>❑ Effective consumers of information continuously trace and assess the central ideas, reasoning, evidence, and rhetoric in an argument.<br>❑ Assessing others' informational texts can help to learn techniques and strategies that will strengthen your own writing. | ❑ Present the limitations, if applicable.<br>❑ Conclude with a statement or section which includes future implications/ consequences for actions or non-actions regarding the use of the research and/or expresses a final thought or opinion.<br>❑ Include appropriate and varied transitions to link ideas and sentences within a text.<br>❑ Use appropriate and varied transitions to link major sections of a text to promote cohesion.<br>❑ Group and synthesize information into sections that flow naturally, build upon one another, and are discipline-specific. |

| Research Projects to Solve a Problem<br>**W.8.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. | ❑ Research is conducted primarily to solve problems or answer a question in order to improve our quality of life.<br>❑ Sometimes, one problem reveals another problem or question to answer.<br>❑ Researchers may have to reframe/revise their questions/problem statements to ensure they are investigating the actual problem.<br>❑ A research topic or question can be altered/revised based on the information available, narrowed if too much information is available, broadened if too little information is available.<br>❑ Not all sources are reliable.<br>❑ Not all information is valid.<br>❑ Both primary and secondary sources can help a researcher solve a problem or answer a question.<br>❑ Researchers must make connections between and among various sources of information.<br>❑ Successful writers "weave" a variety of research materials (interview responses, information from charts, primary data, etc.) into a text to provide a thorough discussion of the topic. | ❑ Generate and refine research questions and/or problems.<br>❑ Conduct research to answer a question or solve a problem.<br>❑ Evaluate the reliability and validity of sources and instruments used to collect information.<br>❑ Evaluate sources to avoid collecting false information or bias that makes the information unreliable.<br>❑ Make connections between and among various sources of information.<br>❑ Interpret recorded data/information to create new understandings and knowledge to support/reinforce the central idea(s) in an ethical manner.<br>❑ Incorporate and synthesize a variety of information and data from multiple sources (both primary and secondary sources) into writing. |
|---|---|---|

| Effective Presentations | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Effective Presentations**<br>**SL.8.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.<br><br>**SL.8.5** Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. | ❑ Though you may collect a lot of information, effective presenters/researchers determine which important points and evidence to emphasize.<br>❑ Effective presenters/researchers present valid reasoning, and well-chosen details.<br>❑ Effective presenters/researchers use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.<br>❑ Effective presenters/researchers present information in various forms, such as charts, graphics, audio, and art, other than written text.<br>❑ Effective presenters/researchers integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. | ❑ Create a presentation that emphasizes important points in a focused, clear manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details;<br>❑ Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.<br>❑ Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. |
| **Language** | ❑ **Write your understandings based on the mini-lessons in Lessons 3 and 4:** | ❑ **Write what mastery should look like based on the mini-lessons in Lessons 3 and 4:** |

**Handout 1.4: Performance Task Planning Sheet**

| Possible Resources and Sources | Problem Statement/Question | More Questions That Arise (5 W's, How, Do/Does, If) |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

**Handout 1.5: Investigation Notes- Model**

**Questions:**
- **How do <mark>candy rewards</mark> impact <mark>students' motivation to turn in schoolwork on time</mark>?**
- **Why do <mark>candy rewards</mark> impact <mark>students' motivation to turn in schoolwork in that manner</mark>?**

| Parts of Your Presentation | Notes/Information |
|---|---|
| **Introduction** | Analogy between the carrot and stick and candy and teacher.<br>Quotes from expert<br>Claim about the investigation questions and the task explanation.<br>(Use the texts about student motivation that we will study as examples.) |
| **Literature Review**<br>(May be combined with introduction.) | Record quotes or paraphrased information learned from texts about motivation.<br>Included teacher-provided data about how many students (not which ones) turned in the last writing assignment late.<br><br>Here is an example of one way that it can look:<br>**Note:** This information is fabricated for the sample.<br><br>According to several English teachers' gradebook records of their last writing assignment, 35% of 8th grade students turned in the last assignment late or not at all. This problem has possible explanations from experts in the field of student motivation. Ryan (2010) argues that comprehension of the text students are supposed to write about is the cause of students not turning in their work on time. After repeated disappointments when attempting to understand the text, students simply give up. Linder and Wilson (2011), authors of "Motivating Students to Write" assert that students willingly acknowledge a need for deeper processing when reading to write about what they have learned, but that their efforts to apply processing strategies "may not yield better comprehension of the text materials" (p. 14). According to this information, students who view tasks as too difficult are not as motivated to turn in their work on time or at all.<br><br>Conversely, several experts assert that enjoyment, meaningfulness, and usefulness contribute to student's motivation. cultural anthropologist Stacy Jacobs (2005) links low levels of reading comprehension and completion of writing tasks to a student's lack of interest or enjoyment in what they are reading and writing about (p. 111). A National Endowment for the Arts report (2012) reinforces Jacob's hypothesis: students spend significantly more time on assignments in which they find enjoyment and meaning (p. 8). According to "Make School Meaningful" by John Atoms, students are more likely to enjoy school when they perceive the information to be meaningful/useful to them outside of school.<br><br>Paulo (2009) offers yet another perspective… |

| **Hypothesis** | Candy rewards somewhat impact students' motivation to turn in assignments on time. |
|---|---|
| | • Candy rewards for turning in work on time impact students if students' friends want the candy too. |
| | • Candy rewards for turning in work on time impact students if they perceive the assignment as worthwhile |
| | • Candy rewards for turning in work on time impact students if they view the task as easy/not difficult. |
| | • Candy rewards for turning in work on time impact students who enjoy candy. |
| **Method** | Because each 8th grade student is enrolled in one of the three history classes, the history teachers volunteered to pass out the survey at the beginning of each class for students to take.<br><br>Participants were 100 randomly-chosen 8th grade students. 48% identified themselves as females, and 52% identified as males.<br><br>Students were asked to respond to the following statement by placing checkmarks in the blanks that best represents their response to the survey statement.<br><br>Select one: ___ Male     ___ Female     ___ Choose not to identify.<br><br>Place a checkmark beside "yes" or "no" below and place as many checkmarks in the blanks below your "yes" or "no" choice to best represent your response to the following statement: **Candy motivates me to turn in my work on time.**<br><br>❑ Yes, candy motivates me to turn in my schoolwork on time:<br>  ❑ because I like candy.<br>  ❑ because candy makes me feel rewarded for my schoolwork.<br>  ❑ if my friends or others also want candy.<br>  ❑ if the work is easy/not too difficult.<br>  ❑ if the schoolwork is enjoyable.<br>  ❑ if the schoolwork is worthwhile/meaningful to me.<br>  ❑ if I like the teacher.<br>  ❑ if I feel like my teacher will be proud of me.<br>  ❑ if I can give/share it to other students who enjoy candy.<br>  ❑ if I enjoy the class or subject.<br>  ❑ if I have enough time to complete the schoolwork.<br>  ❑ if I know that being punished for not turning it in on time is the only other option.<br>  ❑ because of another reason: _____<br><br>❑ No, candy does not motivate me to turn in my schoolwork on time:<br>  ❑ because I do not like candy.<br>  ❑ because candy does not make feel rewarded for my schoolwork.<br>  ❑ because my friends did not want candy.<br>  ❑ because schoolwork is not easy/too difficult.<br>  ❑ because schoolwork is not enjoyable.<br>  ❑ because schoolwork is not worthwhile/meaningful.<br>  ❑ because I do not like my teacher(s).<br>  ❑ because I feel like my teacher(s) do not like me.<br>  ❑ because I cannot give/share it to other students who enjoy candy.<br>  ❑ because I do not enjoy any or most classes or subjects. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ❑ because I usually need extra time to complete my schoolwork.<br>❑ because the thought of being punished for not completing my work is what motivates me.<br>❑ because of another reason: _____ |
| **Results** | 51% (50 total) Yes, candy motivates me to turn in my schoolwork on time<br>        12 total- because I like candy.<br>        9 total- because candy makes me feel rewarded for my schoolwork.<br>        17 total- if my friends or others also want candy.<br>        22 total- if the work is easy/not too difficult.<br>        19 total- if the schoolwork is enjoyable.<br>        18 total- if the schoolwork is worthwhile/meaningful to me.<br>        0 total- if I like the teacher.<br>        2 total- if I feel like my teacher will be proud of me.<br>        15 total- if I can give/share it to other students who enjoy candy.<br>        2 total- if I enjoy the class or subject.<br>        2 total- if I have enough time to complete the schoolwork.<br>        2 If I know that being punished for not turning it in on time is the only other option.<br>        0 total- because of another reason: _____<br><br><br>49% (49 total) No, candy does not motivate me to turn in my schoolwork on time<br>        2 total- because I do not like candy.<br>        14 total- because candy does not make feel rewarded for my schoolwork.<br>        9 total- because my friends did not want candy.<br>        11 total- because schoolwork is not easy/too difficult.<br>        22 total- because schoolwork is not enjoyable.<br>        19 total- because schoolwork is not worthwhile/meaningful.<br>        2 total- because I do not like my teacher(s).<br>        0 total- because I feel like my teacher(s) do not like me.<br>        1 total- because I cannot give/share it to other students who enjoy candy.<br>        1 total- because I do not enjoy any or most classes or subjects.<br>        5 total- because I usually need extra time to complete my schoolwork.<br>        4 total- because the thought of being punished for not completing my work is what motivates me.<br><br>        2 total- because of another reason: _____<br><br>Many students placed checkmarks besides multiple "because" or "if" statements below the "yes" or "no" option they selected.<br><br>Any survey that had both "yes" and "no" selected would have been removed. No student chose both "yes" and "no."<br><br>Forty-eight total males completed the survey. 52 total females completed the survey. Thirty-two males chose "no" and 16 chose "yes."<br><br>Thirty-two students of the 49 total students who placed a checkmark beside "no" were males. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Discussion**<br>(This may be combined with the results section.) | Of the 100 students surveyed, only 12 percent (12 total) of students indicated that candy motivates them to turn in work on time with no other conditions. Most students selected "no," indicating that candy did not motivate them for a particular reason, or they selected "yes", candy motivated if there was another condition.<br><br>Seventeen percent of the total students indicated that their motivation to turn in work on time for candy depended on "if my friends or others also want candy." This agrees with \<name the person or title of text\>, who/which states that… Therefore, this suggests that candy as a motivator is not as effective unless there is a "buy-in" from other students who are friends. Because it is difficult to control conditions such as these, this also suggests that this is not likely to motivate and that our school may want to find a different motivator. Or…<br><br>Most students who chose "no" selected one of the following choices as their reason:<br>• 14 total- because candy does not make feel rewarded for my schoolwork.<br>• 11 total- because schoolwork is not easy/too difficult.<br>• 22 total- because schoolwork is not enjoyable.<br>• 19 total- because schoolwork is not worthwhile/meaningful.<br><br>All 32 of the males who chose "no" indicated that their reason for choosing no was based on another unlisted reason. 31 of the 32 males who chose "no" also chose one of the following reasons:<br>• because schoolwork is not easy/too difficult.<br>• because schoolwork is not enjoyable.<br>• because schoolwork is not worthwhile/meaningful.<br>One male male writing in his own reason: "I would rather do other things." This data agrees with \<name the person or title of text\> and \<another source\>, who/which states that… Therefore, this suggests that candy is not a strong motivator for males, especially if the assignment does not seem easy, enjoyable, or worthwhile to them. This suggests that instead of offering candy as a reward, teachers and administrators should… |
| **Conclusion** | Based on this study and the background information from the texts about student motivation, teachers should not rely on candy to motivate students to turn in their work on time. This suggestion is especially important for male students. Instead, teachers should focus on motivating factors that involve making the work or helping students perceive the work as easy, enjoyable, and/or worthwhile/meaningful. This suggestion also is especially important for male students.<br><br>Additionally, a follow-up study is suggested to determine what types of work seem easy, enjoyable, and/or worthwhile to students would be helpful. |

**Handout 6.1: Investigation Notes- Student Copy**

## Question:

| Parts of Your Presentation | Notes/Information |
|---|---|
| **Introduction** | |
| **Literature Review** (May be combined with introduction.) | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hypothesis** | |
| **Method** | |

| Results | |
|---|---|
| | |

| Discussion | |
|---|---|
| **Conclusion** | |

For training or questions regarding this unit,
please contact:

[exemplarunit@mdek12.org](mailto:exemplarunit@mdek12.org)