

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

Tell-Tale Heart, Grade 8

What is the goal of this unit?

Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to understand the role of the narrator and point of view as well as how the narrative voice of a text can blur the line between fact and fiction.

What topics and skills is your eighth grader learning in this unit?

- Narrator
- Point of view
- Narrative voice
- Fact v. Fiction
- Compare and contrast
- Narrative writing
- Research
- Reliable sources
- Persuasive techniques

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the prompt: *Rewrite “The Tell-Tale Heart” from a new perspective. Then compare and contrast the original version and a rewritten version to determine which version has more impact and why.*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by evaluating perspective in real-world situations to determine whether information is reliable. She will select a specific topic to research and then deliver a multimedia report that explains persuasive techniques and the advantages and disadvantages of different mediums.

Your child will read these texts and watch these videos:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
“The Tell-Tale Heart”	Edgar Allan Poe	Main text of the unit
<i>Nothing But the Truth</i>	Avi	Student text

<i>Monster</i>	Walter Dean Myers	Student text
<i>The Republic</i>	Plato	Groups
<i>The Things They Carried</i>	Tim O'Brien	Groups
"A Million Little Pieces Revisited: Can the Truth Ever Set James Frey Free?"	Daniel Honan from <i>Big Think</i>	Groups
"Narrative Point of View: Some Considerations"	John Lye from Brock University Department of English Language & Literature	Student text
"Best-Selling Memoir Draws Scrutiny"	Edward Wyatt from The New York Times	Student text
<i>The Treachery of Images</i> (This is not a pipe)	Rene Magritte	Read aloud
"The Ransom of Red Chief"	O. Henry	Student text
"By the Waters of Babylon"	Stephen Vincent Benet	Student text
"Deconstructing a Television Commercial: Media Literacy"	Frank Baker	Read aloud
Facebook Commercial		Read aloud

Ideas for discussing narrative voice, point of view, fact v. fiction

- What is the role of a narrator?
- How does a story change based on who is telling the story?
- Think about a recent fun experience you've had with a family member or a friend.
 - What happened from your point of view?
 - Now ask your family member or friend - what happened from their point of view?
 - Did the story change?
 - What were the differences and similarities?
 - Why do you think there were differences in the story?
- How do you know something is true?
- How do you know something is made up?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
Caramelo	Sandra Cisneros
Eyes Wide Open: Going Behind the Environmental Headlines	Paul Fleischman
Everything you need to Know about Fake News and Propaganda	Carol Hand

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading. Before bedtime is a great time to read!
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss what you're reading. Ask questions like:
 - Tell me about what you read today.
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading?
 - How does what you've read connect to other things you've read?