

Highlights of Grade 11, Unit 1

Writing Freedom: Words That Shaped a Nation

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will investigate the meaning of freedom. They will consider famous historical figures' views on the subject, beginning with the founders of the American nation. Students will read a variety of texts and view media as they discuss the Essential Question for the unit.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

As a class, as well as in small groups and independently, students will work to answer this question: *What is the meaning of freedom?* Give your student the opportunity to continue the discussion at home.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- What are some of the ways you could answer the question *What is the meaning of freedom?*
- Is there a tradeoff between freedom and safety or is safety a type of freedom?
- Why do you think freedom is such a crucial value for the American public?
- What is the most interesting aspect of freedom that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will need to answer the question *What are the most effective tools for establishing and preserving freedom?* He or she will write an argument.

STANDARDS

Activities and assignments in Unit 1 will help your student meet the following objectives for reading literature and informational texts, writing, as well as speaking and listening. Here are some key standards students will work toward in this unit:

Reading

- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Writing

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate

information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation including footnotes and endnotes.

Speaking and Listening

- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective and a logical argument, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks. Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Thank you for your continuing support!