Formative Assessment Unit Planning Tool – ELA Grade 8

Name of Instructional Unit: Grade 8 Introduction to Plot and Characterization
Grade Level: 8
Content Area: English Language Arts

ELA Reading and Writing Benchmarks Bundle: R 8.1.4.1; R 8.1.4.3; W 8.2.2.1; W 8.2.4.2; W 8.2.5.1; W 8.2.5.2

Reading Standard 4: Read critically to comprehend, interpret, and analyze themes and central ideas in complex literary and informational texts.

- R 8.1.4.1 Cite textual evidence that most strongly supports conclusions of what a text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including analysis of what characters or individuals are saying in the text (dialogue and quotations); objectively summarize the text.
- R 8.1.4.3 Analyze the interactions or dialogue between complex characters and events to build plot or reveal aspects of a character in a literary text.
- (Possibly R 8.1.4.2 Determine multiple themes or central ideas of a single text and analyze its development over the course of the text.)

Writing Standard 2: Write routinely for various purposes and disciplines, representing one's own personal perspective, identity, and voice.

- W 8.2.2.1 Write routinely for a range of tasks (e.g., personal interest, enjoyment, academic tasks), purposes, and audiences . . .

Writing Standard 4: Write arguments to support claims and to persuade in an analysis of topics or texts, using valid reasoning and evidence while considering audience.

- W 8.2.4.2 Write to argue, clarifying the relationship among claims and evidence in both argument and counter-argument, building on skills from previous years.

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Writing Standard 5: Write informative or explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through use of informational and literary text, considering audience.

- W 8.2.5.1 Write to inform or explain, integrating factual information to convey understanding about a topic, incorporating correctly cited summary, paraphrase, and quotation . . .
- W 8.2.5.2 Write to respond to a literary text, demonstrating understanding of style, mood, and tone (e.g., writing personal reactions, analysis, and interpretation of text).

Goals of the Instructional Unit
Understanding Goals: *Students will understand that…*
U1: The basic plot of a story is the sequence of events in which characters are involved; development of characters in stories and their interactions range from basic to complex. R 8.1.4.3
U2: In stories, plot development structure is composed of exposition, rising action/conflict, climax, falling action, and resolution. R 8.1.4.3
U3: Characters in stories are developed and reveal change or lack of change through their thoughts, actions, and words. R 8.1.4.3
Knowledge Goals: *Students will know…*
K1: How to recognize elements of plot development structure in a story: exposition, rising action/conflict, climax, falling action, resolution (plot pyramid). R 8.1.4.3
K2: How to recognize main ideas and key details that provide the plot sequence of a story presented in straightforward chronological order. R 8.1.4.3; R 8.1.4.1 (possibly R 8.1.4.2)
K3: How to recognize the sequence and progression of thoughts, actions, and words that develop a character, and relationships between characters, in a story. R 8.1.4.3; R 8.1.4.1
K4: How to recognize the evolution/changes in characters and their relationships (e.g., static/flat vs. dynamic/round) by the time the denouement or resolution of a short story is reached. R 8.1.4.3; R 8.1.4.1 (possibly R 8.1.4.2)
Skill Goals: *Students will be skilled at…*
S1: Locating main ideas/events and key details that reveal essential chronological plot events of a story and writing the plot summary. R 8.1.4.1; R 8.1.4.3; W 8.2.2.1; W 8.2.5.2 (possibly R 8.1.4.2 and W 8.2.5.1)

Goals of the Instructional Unit	

S2: Locating and listing examples of what a character in the story thinks, says, and does that show what the character is like (general examples of characterization; basic questions on character; general character profile). R 8.1.4.1; R 8.1.4.3; W 8.2.2.1; W 8.2.5.1; W 8.2.5.2	
S3: Citing evidence of the character's(s') significant thoughts, actions, and words at different plot development stages: exposition, rising action/conflict, climax, falling action, and denouement/resolution. R 8.1.4.1; R 8.1.4.3; W 8.2.2.1; W 8.2.5.1; W 8.2.5.2	
S4: Describing and defending the character's(s') personal and/or relationship change/evolution from the exposition through the denouement/resolution of the story. R 8.1.4.1; R 8.1.4.3; W 8.2.2.1; W 8.2.5.1; W 8.2.5.2; W 8.2.4.2	

Learning Targets (Goals)	Success Criteria	Formative Assessment Ideas	Analyze Results and Differentiate Instruction	Provide feedback that engages students as owners of their learning
How will I communicate to students what they will be learning? (Students will be able to…)	*How will I communicate to students what they will be learning and what success looks like to learn it?*	*How will I use strategic questions and other formative assessment techniques to elicit evidence of learning and identify learning strengths/needs?*	*What are my next instructional moves **during** and **after** instruction based on the formative assessment results?*	*How will I provide students with actionable, descriptive, specific feedback about their progress related to the learning targets and success criteria so they know where they are going, where they are now, and what they need to do next?*

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Learning Targets (Goals)	Success Criteria	Formative Assessment Ideas	Analyze Results and Differentiate Instruction	Provide feedback that engages students as owners of their learning
Lesson 1 Learning Target: After reading a story with a strong plot arc and good character development, students will be able to locate main ideas and key details that reveal main chronological plot events of the story and write the plot summary.	**Success Criteria:** Locate and distinguish plot events within a story. Identify key details related to text (may also support central idea and theme R 8.1.4.2). Write the learning goal of locating details that reveal main plot points of a story. Share several examples of plot trajectories (possible examples).	**During instruction:** **Which events make up the main plot summary of the assigned story? Why are they important to include?** Students write a plot summary timeline (individual task). Students will share responses to plot summary timeline with classmates. **After instruction (end of lesson):** Collect responses to written plot summary timeline. Examine variations in important events selected for plot summary.	**During instruction:** Use a student roster checklist to query with students on perceptions of story's plot. Class dialogue on how events propel story. **After instruction:** Design a Google Form to allow students to survey most critical moments in story. Analyze results and share with class.	**During instruction:** Discuss with students how events are critical to moving plot or not. Utilize actual student feedback as part of discussion; students can recognize their own analysis and input (from Formative Assessment Ideas). **After instruction:** Highlight again how plot is one literary element.

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Learning Targets (Goals)	Success Criteria	Formative Assessment Ideas	Analyze Results and Differentiate Instruction	Provide feedback that engages students as owners of their learning
Lesson 2 Learning Target: Students will be able to locate and list examples of what a character in the story thinks, says, and does that show what the character is like (general examples of characterization; basic questions on character; general character profile).	**Success Criteria:** Identify methods of characterization (e.g., thoughts, actions, and dialogue/speech) in explicit text. Use general text evidence to make meaning. Explain/write out scope of character traits: words, thoughts, actions to recalling physical descriptors and motivations.	**During instruction:** **What are the basic methods of characterization?** Students will write a character profile of one character from the assigned story revealing basic methods of characterization. Consider physical, behavior, values/motivations, and words of characters. Collect responses in real-time: • Students hand in or use chat feature in online meeting platform. Students discuss and defend their answers. **After instruction (end of lesson):** Elicit student understanding and remaining questions: **How are the characters in the story different? What do they share?** Craft one-to-two minute essay (Edublog or Google Classroom).	**During instruction:** Follow up questions during group activity with asking students to explain their thinking. **After instruction:** Design a warm-up activity using Coggle to map character's traits, based on story.	**During instruction:** Feedback will be given orally when students explain their thinking live (virtual setting). **After Instruction:** Ask students to bring two-paragraph response on a character they believed was important and why to next lesson. Give written feedback to two-minute essay.

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Lesson 3	Success Criteria:	During instruction:	During instruction:	During instruction:
Learning Target: Students will be able to cite evidence of the character's significant thoughts, actions, and words at different plot development stages: exposition, rising action/conflict, climax, falling action, and resolution.	Understand literary elements in relationship to one another (e.g., how setting impacts conflict, how sequence of events shapes resolution, how setting and plot create mood). Use implicit textual evidence to justify interpretations of meaning. Identify relevant details that support conclusions from text. Show the example of the written plot summary timeline from Lesson 1 and then show that timeline of events on a plot pyramid (Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Denouement or Resolution).	Quick review of plot structure—plot pyramid. - **What is the difference between a plot timeline and the structure of the plot—the different stages?** - Discuss as a class. - **How is the main character developed within main stages of plot structure?** - Detailed discussion of how character develops within the stages of the plot. Students take notes on comments with which they agree. Survey collective responses in real-time: - Collect responses one stage at a time to get real-time measure of agreement on volunteer responses regarding each stage of development: Students use webcam (e.g., holding up paper/whiteboard with drawing) or Fist to Five in classroom. Survey and discuss one stage at a time. - During discussion, students will write down quoted sentences and/or implicit text evidence that illustrates key moments of	Take notes during discussion on class roster about which students show partial, lack, or full understanding. Monitor for who may need support during discussion: Fist to Five. **After instruction:** Review student responses on the question of how main character develops within plot and record: full/partial/lacking understanding of character development. Flexibly group students for the next day.	Provide oral feedback about drawings/whiteboards using virtual discussion. **After instruction:** Students will compare class discussion of development of the main character at main plot stages with their own description of character development at these points. Students will write their conclusions down to use in class tomorrow.

Learning Targets (Goals)	Success Criteria	Formative Assessment Ideas	Analyze Results and Differentiate Instruction	Provide feedback that engages students as owners of their learning
		main character's development at main stages of plot. They include the evidence as needed as they support their positions. **After instruction (end of lesson):** Create an exit ticket quiz using mentimeter, pollmaker, etc. to check for understanding.		

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| Lesson 4

Learning Target: Students will be able to describe the character's change (evolution) from the exposition to the resolution of the story. | Success Criteria: Understand literary elements in relationship to one another (e.g., how setting impacts conflict, how sequence of events shapes resolution, how setting and plot create mood).

Review/differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior, impact of setting, prediction of future actions, motivations, actions, and dialogue/speech). | During instruction: Review the concept that characters change from exposition (beginning) to resolution (end) of a story. Introduce the concept of static, flat, dynamic, and round characterization.

How does, or how much does, the main character change throughout the story?

With their conclusions about the main character's development from yesterday's lesson and today's opening discussion, students are placed in small breakout groups to discuss how/why they have charted the main character's development as they did. Group will write a description of how the main character changes from exposition to resolution.

Students will share insights from their groups and answer questions from peers in other groups submitted either through chat or raised hands. Each group reports out for about two minutes, explaining and defending their insights with evidence.

After instruction (end of lesson): Elicit student understanding and | During instruction: Drop in to breakout groups to observe and answer general questions.

After instruction: Gauge student comfort with combining story's plot and how it interacts with character development. Rate understanding: full, partial, or lacking. | During instruction: Provide oral feedback during group reports using virtual or in-person discussion with class.

After instruction: Teacher provides own report to students, pointing out similarities among all reports from groups. |

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Learning Targets (Goals)	Success Criteria	Formative Assessment Ideas	Analyze Results and Differentiate Instruction	Provide feedback that engages students as owners of their learning
		remaining questions/misconceptions using 3-2-1 reflections.		

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