

An Educator's Guide to *Lost Girl Found*

written by Leah Bassoff and Laura DeLuca

An Educator's Guide for Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10

Prepared by We Love Children's Books

About the Book

When the war comes to Poni's small village in southern Sudan, there is only one thing for Poni to do. Run. Run for her life. Driven by the sheer will to survive and the hope that she can somehow make it to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, Poni sets out on a long, dusty trek across the East African countryside with thousands of refugees. In Kakuma she is almost overwhelmed by the misery that surrounds her. Poni realizes that she must leave the camp at any cost. Her destination is a compound in Nairobi. There, if she is lucky, she can continue her education and even one day convince authorities that she is worthy to go to the land of opportunity called America. In a heartbreaking final twist, she finds her mother just as she is about to leave Africa and must make the hardest decision of all.

As dramatic as the events of the story are, it is Poni's frank and single-minded personality that carries this novel and makes it one you won't soon forget.

About the Authors

Leah Bassoff is a writer and middle-school teacher and a former assistant editor at Penguin. She has written for the *Denver Voice* and the *Coloradan*. She lives in Denver.

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Laura DeLuca teaches anthropology at the University of Colorado in Boulder. She has done extensive fieldwork in East Africa and has written articles on her experiences with Sudanese refugees in *Anthropology News*, *Anthropology Matters* and *Journal of Refugee Studies*. She lives in Denver.

Leah and Laura met at a conference about Sudanese affairs and were compelled to combine their talents and expertise to give voice to this previously untold story.

Praise for the Book

"Many are familiar with the Lost Boys of Sudan, but these authors set out to tell the stories of the Lost Girls of Sudan, and have succeeded with flying colors. This short, quickly paced narrative will stay with readers for the rest of their lives." — *School Library Journal*, starred review

"Though Poni learns to distance herself emotionally from the atrocities she witnesses, reminders of home force her to make agonizing choices along the way. Readers will come away with clear pictures of gender roles in Poni's culture as well as the South Sudan conflict's devastating physical and psychological effects. . . . Moving and necessary."

— *Kirkus*, starred review

Pre-Reading Questions

The main character and narrator of this book is a teenage girl who is a Sudanese civil war refugee. She has a happy, normal life which comes to an end when her village is destroyed by soldiers, and her family scatters. Ask the class: How might these circumstances affect them, and change their attitudes towards life?

Review the timeline of the conflict in the Sudan, located at the back of the book. Have students heard of any of these events?

Have students locate Sudan on a world map and consult the maps at the beginning of the book. As they read the novel, keep track of the places Poni's travels take her.

Vocabulary

This book is set in Sudan and East Africa. It is a world very different from the one in which students live. As students read the novel, instruct them to keep a list of words and phrases that are unfamiliar. Have them write down what they believe the meaning of the word or phrase is from context. Then have them consult the glossary in the back of the book, as well as other reference materials, to identify the literal meaning.

Post-Reading Discussion Questions and Activities

Always Running

Many people in her life describe Poni as always running, always in a hurry. Have students review the text for references to her running and her haste. What does her tendency to run tell us about her character? How is this trait an advantage? How is it a disadvantage? How does Poni feel about this quality of her personality?

Character Maps

As a class, discuss the characters in the book. Which are major and which are minor? Work together to create a character map of Poni, using the following categories: her physical description, what she says, what she does and what others say about her. Using the character map of Poni as a guide, have each student create a character map of another major character in the story. Instruct students to cite specifics from the text. Break students into small groups to discuss their character maps. Then, come together as a class to review their work.

Poni's Mother

Poni learns many lessons from her mother about self-respect, education and more. She also learns how a woman is supposed to act in her culture. Have each student compile a list of the lessons Poni's mother taught her. Come together as a class to discuss. How does Poni feel about her mother as a person? How does she feel about her as a parent? Now, working as a class, read the pages describing the phone call Poni has with her mother near the end of the story. What does Poni do? How does her mother react? What is the significance of the exchange?

Main Theme

Begin by asking students to think about the main themes of this story and come together to discuss their answers. Then have students choose one of the themes and write an essay discussing it. This essay should include a brief summary of the text, emphasizing the role of the selected theme, and a discussion of how it develops over the course of the story. What is the relationship of this theme to the characters, setting and plot? Have students cite specific evidence from the text to support their analysis.

First Person Singular

Lost Girl Found is written in the first person with Poni as the point-of-view character. As a class, discuss the pros and cons of writing in first person, versus other points of view — third person, multiple viewpoints, etc. Have students re-write a passage or event from the book from a different point of view, such as from the point of view of a different character or in the third person. Working as a class, ask students to share and compare the re-written passages with the original text. How does the altered point of view change the way the story is told and read?

Pivot Points

There are many pivotal scenes in this book. Some are exciting or terrifying, and some are quieter. As a class, make a list of the pivotal scenes. Then have each student select one of these scenes and write an essay describing its significance. What purpose does this scene serve in the greater framework of the book? What changes happen in the course of this scene? How does it move the story forward? What does it reveal about the characters involved? Be sure to cite specifics from the text. Break students into pairs and have them share their essays, revising their work based on peer feedback.

School Days

Throughout this book, Poni's attitude towards school is consistent. In her village, she is one of the last girls to remain attending classes, and her thirst for education never dies. Poni finally does resume her education, when she lives and works with Sister Hannah. Break into small groups to discuss how school work takes on a different level of importance for Poni as opposed to the students who are reading the book. How does she view the opportunity to go to school? How does she take advantage of it? How is it a burden? Have students cite specifics from the text to support their answers. Come together as a class to share their insights.

Friendships

Poni becomes friends with Nyanath, a girl at the school in Nairobi. At the beginning of the book, we also see her friendship with Nadai, who is forced into an arranged marriage. Break students into pairs. Have one of the pair focus on the friendship between Poni and Nadai. Have the other student examine the friendship between Poni and Nyanath. Have each pair create a chart to compare and contrast these two friendships. What kind of person is Poni's friend? What happens to each friend in the course of the book? What lessons does Poni learn? What are the dynamics of their relationship? What roles do each serve in Poni's life? Come together as a class and ask students to share their insights on these two relationships. What major themes of this work and large issues in Poni's life are embodied in her friendships with each of these characters?

Survival

Lost Girl Found provides a realistic look at Poni's experiences as a refugee. Life in the Kakuma refugee camp is very hard, and there is not much hope for the residents. In this camp, however, she makes the best of her situation. What does she do to improve her situation in camp? Does she always follow the rules? How does she ultimately leave the camp? As a class, list the things she does to improve her lot and ultimately save her own life. Be sure to cite specifics from the text.

In Colorado

Ask students to pretend they attend college in Colorado and Poni is one of their classmates:

Write a letter home in which you describe what she is like, how she is different from you and what things you learn from her.

Authors' Notes

The authors' note for *Lost Girl Found* provides some background on the real-world circumstances that lead to this book. Have students review this section and come together as a class to discuss. Why did the authors feel compelled to tell this story? Why do students think the authors chose to write a novel instead of a nonfiction book? The authors discuss the disparity in the treatment of girls and boys in Sudan. Did that come through in the text?

Truth vs. Fiction

Have students conduct short research projects on a topic related to the book, using the internet and the extensive list of additional reading and viewing material at the back of the book. Assign specific topics to students or small groups. Have them write a brief paper summarizing their findings and present it to the class, using visual aids where appropriate to illustrate their points. Have students compare factual information to the descriptions found in the book. How is the historical view of events different from the one depicted in *Lost Girl Found*? How are they similar? Were there any surprises or new revelations?

Topics for further research could include: gender roles and arranged marriages in Sudanese society, the fate of the Lost Boys of Sudan, the forgotten Lost Girls of Sudan, Kakuma Refugee Camp, the role of the Red Cross in relief efforts, the Sudanese refugee population in major cities near your school (e.g., Chicago, Denver), terrain and climate in Southern Sudan and Northern Kenya, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, etc.

Although little has been written about the Lost Girls, there are a number of books, films and plays about the Lost Boys

A Great Wonder: Lost Children of Sudan. Bullfrog Films, 2004. A documentary directed by Kim Shelton, about two Lost Boys and one Lost Girl who are adjusting to their new life in Seattle.

Applegate, Katherine. *Home of the Brave*. New York: Feiwel and Friends, 2007. A novel in verse about Kek, a young Sudanese refugee who joins his aunt's family in Minnesota.

Benjamin and His Brother. 2002. A documentary by British filmmaker Arthur Howes, about Benjamin and William Deng, brothers in a Kenyan refugee camp who are separated when only one is accepted by a US resettlement program.

- Bixler, Mark. *The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005. A nonfiction book by a journalist about Lost Boys who moved to Atlanta.
- Bol, Aher Arop. *The Lost Boy: The True Story of a Young Boy's Flight from Sudan to South Africa*. Roggebaai, South Africa: Kwela, 2009. The autobiography of a Lost Boy who makes his way from Sudan through Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to South Africa.
- "Breach," *NCIS: Los Angeles*. Season 1. 2011. An episode that concerns a Sudanese refugee and his past links to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).
- Carter, Lonnie. *The Lost Boys of Sudan*. New York: Broadway Play Publishing, 2011. A play that takes place in the Kakuma Refugee Camp and in a high school in Fargo, Minnesota. First performed by Children's Theater Company, Minneapolis, in 2007.
- Childers, Sam. *Another Man's War: The True Story of One Man's Battle to Save Children in the Sudan*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009. A book about Childers' work with Sudanese war orphans in Africa. His story was also turned into a film, *Machine Gun Preacher*, 2011, directed by Marc Forster.
- Coates, Jan L. *A Hare in the Elephant's Trunk*. Markham, ON: Red Deer Press, 2010. A novel based on the life of Jacob Deng, now living in Nova Scotia.
- Dau, John Bul, and Michael Sweeney. *God Grew Tired of Us: A Memoir*. Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2007. The story of John Dau, also chronicled in the 2006 documentary directed by Christopher Dillon Quinn and Tom Walker, about three Lost Boys who migrated to the United States.
- Deng, Benson, Alephonsion Deng, Benjamin Ajak and Judy A. Bernstein. *They Poured Fire on Us From the Sky: The True Story of Three Lost Boys of Sudan*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2005. Told in their own words, the true story of the fourteen-year journey of three Lost Boys who came to the US in 2001 before 9/11.
- Dinka Diaries*. 2005. A documentary by Filmon Mebrahtu about Lost Boys in Philadelphia.
- Duk County: Peace Is in Sight in the New South Sudan*. 2013. A documentary about the efforts of now grown Lost Boy John Dau to provide a clinic, and the work of Dr. Geoff Tabin and Dr. Alan Crandall's work to restore eyesight to residents in the Dinka area of Duk County. Directed by Jordan Campbell.
- Eggers, Dave. *What Is the What: The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng*. San Francisco: McSweeney's, 2006. A novel based on the story of Valentino Achak Deng, now living in Atlanta. The novel documents the many struggles Achak faced both in the United States and in Sudan and Kenya.
- Hecht, Joan. *The Journey of the Lost Boys: A Story of Courage, Faith, and the Sheer Determination to Survive by a Group of Young Boys Called "The Lost Boys of Sudan."* Jacksonville, FL: Allswell Press, 2005. The book describes the epic journey taken by the Lost Boys, beginning in their rural villages of Southern Sudan and ending with their arrival as young men in the United States. The book is written by the boys' American mentor, "Mama Joan."
- Lomong, Lopez, and Mark Tabb. *Running for My Life: One Lost Boy's Journey from the Killing Fields of Sudan to the Olympic Games*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012. The autobiography of the US Olympian and former Lost Boy.
- Lost Boys of Sudan*. 2003. A documentary film directed by Jon Shenk and Megan Mylan, about two Lost Boys, Santino Majok Chuor and Peter Kon Dut, who came to the US. The film follows the Sudanese boys on their journey to Kakuma Refugee Camp and from there to the United States.

McMahon, Felicia R. *Not Just Child's Play: Emerging Tradition and the Lost Boys of Sudan*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. An anthropological analysis of the music, dance and folklore of the Didinga community living around Syracuse, New York.

Nhial, Abraham, and DiAnn Mills. *Lost Boy No More: A True Story of Survival and Salvation*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2004. The autobiography of Abraham Nhial, who fled to Ethiopia from Sudan.

Park, Linda Sue. *A Long Walk to Water*. New York: Clarion, 2010. This story follows the intersecting lives of a Lost Boy and a girl in Sudan.

Pipher, Mary. "African Stories," in *The Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt, 2002. Pipher describes the "transformation" of her quiet hometown — Lincoln, Nebraska — after it is chosen as a "preferred community" for refugees. Lincoln becomes "a richer curry of peoples" as newly arrived refugees, including Lost Boys, settle there.

Rebuilding Hope. 2009. A documentary, directed by Jen Marlowe, that follows three Lost Boys as they return to South Sudan after being resettled in the US.

War Child. 2008. A documentary, directed by C. Karim Chrobog, about the life of hip-hop musician and former child soldier Emmanuel Jal. Glossary

Yang, Daniel Cheng. *Kakuma Turkana: Dueling Struggles: Africa's Forgotten Peoples*. Saint Paul, MN: Pangaea, 2002. A photographic journal of Kakuma Refugee Camp and the indigenous Turkana peoples of northwest Kenya.

Skills and Subjects Used In This Guide

GRADE 7

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Writing*Text Types and Purposes*

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.

- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast and cause/ effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables) and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations or other information and examples.
- Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing and description, to develop experiences, events and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.

- e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”.
- e.g. “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”.

Range of Writing

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacherled) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines and define individual roles as needed.
- Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
- Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text or issue under study.

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

Language

Conventions of Standard English

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.
- Choose among simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.
- Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.*

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie but not He wore an old[,] green shirt).
- Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel).
- Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

GRADE 8**Reading***Key Ideas and Details*

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Writing*Text Types and Purposes*

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.

- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables) and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations or other information and examples.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description and reflection, to develop experiences, events and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another and show the relationships among experiences and events.

- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

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.

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Range of Writing

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacherled) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines and define individual roles as needed.
- Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations and ideas.
- Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

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.

Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence and add interest.

Language

Conventions of Standard English

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
- Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional and subjunctive mood.
- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
- Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
- Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
- Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

GRADES 9-10

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters and advance the plot or develop the theme

Craft and Structure

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence. - Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
- Use words, phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.

- Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables) and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events and/or characters.
- Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
- Use precise words and phrases, telling details and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting and/or characters.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Range of Writing

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences.

Speaking and Listening*Comprehension and Collaboration*

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines and individual roles as needed.
- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify or challenge ideas and conclusions.
- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance and style are appropriate to purpose, audience and task.

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning and evidence and to add interest.

Language

Conventions of Standard English

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- Use parallel structure.*
- Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.
- Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.
- Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9–10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy).

- Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech or its etymology.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).