

*Naperville Community
Unit School District 203*



*8th Grade
Project IDEA*

*Increase and Develop Excellence
In Academics*

<http://www.naperville203.org>

Project IDEA Literacy Curriculum

The delivery model for Grade 8 Project Idea is through a language arts block. Reading, writing, listening, speaking, and acquiring information are the core components of this class. Word study and grammar are two additional areas included in Project Idea Language Arts.

The school year is divided into three distinct trimesters. Each trimester is driven by a separate umbrella question which students strive to answer using a variety of challenging materials and activities that require advanced level thinking.

Students explore multiple genres of reading and writing. These experiences deepen understanding of the relationship between the two and the students' personal growth as readers and writers. First trimester focuses on the narrative mode of writing. Second trimester centers on the reading and writing of persuasive pieces. Expository writing is the area of concentration for third trimester.

The WordMasters Program is used to develop vocabulary and critical thinking skills. Students begin by becoming familiar with 25 words considerably above grade level to master each trimester. Students are then challenged to use these words in analogies which encourage them to think both analytically and metaphorically. The final assessment is a competition among students across the nation.

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Eighth Grade Project IDEA Goals:

Students will:

- ◆ Use the shared inquiry discussion model to search for answers to interpretive questions raised by a text. This process requires students to interact thoughtfully with a selection to deepen understanding and create new meaning.
- ◆ Use thinking skills to formulate multiple perspectives in relation to the umbrella question and provide evidence to support an issue or idea.
- ◆ Use supporting data and evidence to develop and defend a position. Students use active listening to evaluate the strength of an argument and the validity of a statement.
- ◆ Use the information literacy model when acquiring new information: defining purpose, listing possible sources, gathering sources, selecting and sorting information, and evaluating the process.

Trimester One

Students focus on the umbrella question, *How do our experiences influence who we are?* Students will reflect on their life experiences by choosing one that has influenced who they are. The goal of this trimester is to create a personal narrative that shows understanding of literary techniques and evidence of reflection.

Trimester Two

Students focus on the umbrella question, *How do people deal with conflict?* Students will convince their audience to accept their side of a societal issue. The challenge involves investigating the issue, developing a position, and presenting the argument through the delivery of a debate or speech accompanied by a written product. Students will also listen to other speakers, collect support, and evaluate the effectiveness of the presentations.

Trimester Three

Students focus on the umbrella question, *How can we empower ourselves through decision-making?* Students will investigate the alternatives and weigh the consequences within the topic in order to arrive at an educated decision. This decision is presented in a visual/oral product. Through self-evaluation, students reflect on their decision-making process and product.

