

# CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

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## Language Arts 800 Supplement



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## Language Arts 800 Supplement Course Overview

Language Arts 800 is a survey of literature that explores the work of various writers of different time periods through a historical lens. Students should enter this course with a foundation in analyzing, through a close study, various genres of literature and making connections with historical perspectives and the arts. In this course, students will build on these skills by studying a range of classic and contemporary literature to convey themes of American history, natural history, world civilization, and air and space. Students will also develop writing skills while producing informative, argumentative, and narrative compositions. Supported by a balance of fictional and informational texts, students will learn and practice close reading, modeled reading, writing, speaking, and listening strategies.

To become critical consumers of text, students will be exposed to increasingly more complex texts to apply those skills. In English language arts, that critical content is both rigorous and relevant and includes high-quality contemporary works as well as the classics of literature. The content includes high-quality contemporary works, the classics of American literature, and the timeless dramas of Shakespeare. Students will be enriched as they expand their skills and confidence in English language arts through a comprehensive study that includes the following units:

- **Unit 1 - Skills Workshop:** In this unit, students will review skills learned in previous courses while demonstrating a grasp of literary analysis at the seventh-grade level. Students will also have the opportunity to refresh knowledge of writing, research, and content-area vocabulary.
- **Unit 2 – American History Collection:** This unit focuses on the study of America’s early history, from the heroic battle for independence through the turbulent Civil War. The anchor piece for this unit is Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*. In this novel, students will encounter themes of family, sacrifice, and individuality as they journey with the March sisters in this coming-of-age story. Students will also read a selection of poetry and nonfiction that will cause them to consider the values of America’s first citizens and the will that drove them to fight for freedom.
- **Unit 3 – Display of Natural History:** In this unit, students will encounter work from authors in Europe and America through an exploration into what captures the imagination of a society. Anchoring this study is Jules Verne’s *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Written during a time period when much of Europe hungered for stories of new explorations and adventure, Verne’s science-fiction tale takes readers on a perilous journey into undiscovered territory. Students will also be exposed to a collection that includes the short stories of French author Guy de Maupassant and American writers Edgar Allen Poe and Shirley Jackson.
- **Unit 4 – World Civilization:** In this unit, students will explore the literature and culture of ancient civilizations in Egypt, Greece, and Japan. During this unit, students will have an opportunity to synthesize information from various texts to uncover universal themes within literature. Students will also examine the role of historical context in literary analysis. In the short stories included in this unit, students will be encouraged to evaluate the link between the past and present as they view the world around them through the eyes of ancient societies.
- **Unit 5 – Fine Art Gallery:** The focus of this unit highlights the connection between the themes and experiences expressed in the art and literature of a society. Anchoring this unit is *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters Sculptors and Architects*, by Giorgio Vasari. In this biography, students will encounter the struggle of a determined artist who was driven by a need to communicate his passions on canvas. In addition to a study of various nonfiction texts, students will encounter a collection of poetry that will allow them to explore the conversation between literature and the visual arts.
- **Unit 6 – Air & Space Mezzanine:** This unit will take students on a journey with the Wright Brothers as they work tenaciously toward the goal of building a flying machine. In the autobiographical memoir *The Early History of the Airplane*, students will consider how these pioneers overcame failure and setbacks and, eventually, went on to make history. Students will link themes from this text to other writings as they engage in a study of the innovations that have changed the society that we live in. Throughout this collection of fiction and nonfiction works, students will explore themes of destiny, determination, and vision.

Unit 1: Skills Workshop	
Assignments	
1.	Course Overview

  

Language Arts 800 Supplement	Unit 2: Fine Art Gallery	
	Assignments	
	1.	Giotto: Critical Reading
	2.	Ghiberti: Analysis of Structure and Evidence
	3.	Project: Research Brunelleschi and Analyze Sources
	4.	Donatello: Summarizing and Visual Literacy
	5.	Friar Angelico: Evidence and Claims
	6.	Botticelli: Conducting Research for Informative Writing
	7.	Leonardo da Vinci: Mood and Tone
	8.	Leonardo da Vinci: Analysis and Research
	9.	Friar Bartolomeo: Paraphrase and Quote
	10.	Raphael: Refection Essay
	11.	Michelangelo: Argument and Ellipsis
	12.	Michelangelo: Close Reading and Figurative Language
	13.	Giorgio Vasari: Writing an Autobiography