

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

Sugar, Grade 8

What is the goal of this unit?

Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to understand the impact that sugar production and trade had on the economic and social course of world history, including Louisiana.

What topics and skills is your eighth grader learning in this unit?

- Sugar production and trade
- Impact of sugar production and trade on economic world history
- Impact of sugar production and trade on social world history
- Determining text credibility
- Comparing and contrasting texts
- Research
- Argument writing
- Informational writing

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the prompt: *What is the author's purpose for writing Sugar Changed the World and how is their purpose conveyed through their word choice, organization, use of evidence, and development of a central idea?*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by conducting research on the role of sugar on nutrition and writing an argumentative essay that (1) makes a claim about the role of sugar, (2) argues what impact that role of sugar had on the world, and (3) defends the claim using evidence.

Your child will read these texts, listen to these audio clips, analyze this art, and watch these videos:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
<i>Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science</i>	Marc Aronson and Marina Budhos	Main text of the unit

<i>I is a Long-Memorial Woman</i>	Grace Nichols	Student text
"How Sugar Changed the World"	Heather Whipps from <i>LiveScience</i>	Student text
<i>Present</i>	Alfred Corn	Student text
"Sugar"	Anup Shah	Student text
<i>Cane Cutting Scene</i>	<i>Louisiana State Museum and KnowLA, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities</i>	Groups
Louisiana Sugarcane Farmer (Video)	America's Heartland	Read aloud

Ideas for discussing sugar production and trade and text credibility

- How was sugar produced?
- What do you use sugar for?
- What impact did sugar have on the world?
- How do you know something is true?
- How do you know something is made up?
- How do you know a source is credible?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
Your Food is Fooling You: How Your Brain is Hijacked by Sugar, Fat, and Salt	David A. Kessler
Sugar was My Best Food	Carol Antoinette Peacock and Adair Gregory
"With pineapple and sugar production gone, Hawaii weighs its agricultural future"	Brittany Lyte, Washington Post

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading. Before bedtime is a great time to read!
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss what you're reading. Ask questions like:
 - Tell me about what you read today.
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading?
 - How does what you've read connect to other things you've read?