

# GRADE 8 ELA UPDATE

"Today a reader; tomorrow a leader." - Margaret Fuller

February 2017

## FEBRUARY'S CLASSROOM FOCUS

If there is ever a life-time skill that all people should learn, it is how to verify the credibility and accuracy of information we receive. In today's world of social media, people are bombarded with Tweets, posts, articles, and memes that report many different claims supported by evidence. How reliable is that evidence? How do we check information for its truthfulness before believing it?

This month, students will continue to research and write arguments. As they write, they will also learn strategies to vet evidence to ensure its credibility and accuracy. Our writers will analyze authentic texts that present conflicting information on the same topic to determine if the author's use of evidence is credible or not. Then, they will take what

they have learned and review their own evidence by the standards they have learned. This is a life-long skill that enables a society to be educated and informed consumers.



## EXTENDING THE LEARNING AT HOME

With your child, find a topic that is interesting and relevant to both of you. video games? politics? sports? the environment? Scan the internet for articles that offer different views on your chosen topic. Then, use the following information to vet it:

**Information may be unreliable if...**

- you receive it through a social media post or a meme?
- the website contains ".lo" ".com.co" ".biz" or ".info" in the domain name
- the article has poor grammar, misspellings, excessive use of punctuation, or uses ALL CAPS?
- it does not have an author's name or complete contact information attached to it.

**Websites that may help you further verify the credibility of information:**

- [www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org)
- [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com)
- [www.truthorfiction.com](http://www.truthorfiction.com)
- [www.politiofact.com](http://www.politiofact.com)

### Reading Recommendations

<i>Percy Jackson's Greek Gods</i> by Rick Riordan	Gr 6
<i>The Thing about Jellyfish</i> by Ali Benjamin	Gr 7
<i>I am Malala</i> by Malala Yousafzai	Gr 8

**\*February: MA ELA State Standards**

- RI.8.9. Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
- W.8.1b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- W.8.8. Assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of the others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

\*Other ELA/Reading standards are addressed during the month of February as well.

If you have any questions about WPS' ELA/Reading Curriculum, please contact Chris Tolpa, Supervisor of Humanities:

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