

EVIDENCE-BASED READING & WRITING 9

Grade 9 Syllabus

Students will build advanced literary analysis and nonfiction writing skills through the study of core novels, poetry, and informational texts. Emphasis shifts from foundational reading and writing to complex textual analysis, structured argumentation, and the grammar and rhetorical skills needed for both academic writing and standardized testing (PSAT/SAT-style conventions of English). Students will write TEA-structured literary essays, CER-structured research paragraphs, and a novel + poetry comparison essay.

Weekly Assessments

1. Weekly grammar quiz (PSAT/College Board-style: Standard English Conventions + Expression of Ideas)
2. Vocabulary (high-frequency SAT words)
3. Reading comprehension checks / discussion-based homework

Grammar Instruction runs in parallel across both units, shifting focus from foundational mechanics toward the specific conventions tested on the PSAT/SAT (College Board's Standard English Conventions and Expression of Ideas domains).

- Sentence structure and boundaries (fragments, run-ons, comma splices)
- Punctuation conventions
- Subject-verb agreement, pronoun clarity, and modifier placement
- Transitions and logical sequencing (Expression of Ideas)
- Concision and precision (wordiness, redundancy)

Unit 1: Literary Novel + Poetry Pairing

Novel 1 — *The Great Gatsby* (F. Scott Fitzgerald)

Paired poetry: selections linked to the American Dream, illusion vs. reality, and ambition.

Novel 2 — *Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley)

Paired poetry: selections linked to creation, responsibility, and the consequences of ambition.

SKILLS COVERED (BOTH NOVELS)

- TEA (Topic/Transition, Evidence, Analysis) paragraph and essay structure
- Literary devices: symbolism, motif, imagery, tone, allusion
- Characterization and thematic complexity
- Novel-to-poem comparative analysis
- Close reading and annotation strategies

Final Project: Novel + poetry comparison essay (TEA structured)

Unit 2: History + Argumentative Writing

Historical Topics

1. The Industrial Revolution: labor, economics, and technological change
2. The Roaring Twenties: consumerism, Prohibition, and the American Dream (also ties to Unit 1's *Gatsby*)
3. The Civil Rights Movement: rhetoric, primary-source testimony, and argumentative writing

SKILLS COVERED

- Crafting research questions
- CER (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning) paragraph structure
- Source evaluation and synthesis
- Essay organization for research-based argument
- Formal citation of evidence

Final Project: Research-based argumentative essay (CER structured)