English 3 & 4 Independent Project

Hello Students,

This resource packet includes a project that you can work on independently at home. You should also have project packets for some of the other courses you are enrolled in. Each project can be completed over multiple days, and the projects can be completed in any order. These projects are standards-aligned and designed to meet the Remote Learning instructional minutes guidelines by grade band.

High school project packets are available for the following courses:

- English 1
- Algebra
- Biology
- US History
- English 2
- Geometry
- Chemistry
- World Studies
- English 3
- Algebra 2
- Physics
- Civics
- English 4

Additional enrichment activities are also available and organized into Read, Write, Move, Design, and Solve categories to engage you in learning in many different ways while at home. Please be sure to also pick up an enrichment packet for access to these activities.

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11th-12th Grade Literacy Project: Delivering Central Ideas

Read  Write  Move  Design  Solve
11th-12th Grade Literacy Project: Delivering Central Ideas

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<th>Estimated Time</th>
<th>225 minutes of project time for each course</th>
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| Grade Level Standard(s) | RI/RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.  
RI.11-12.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.  
W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |

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<th>Caregiver Support Option</th>
<th>Discuss texts and student writing with student.</th>
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| Materials Needed | Paper  
|------------------|-----|
|                  | Pencil  
|                  | Pen |

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<th>Question to Explore</th>
<th>How do authors deliver central ideas in their texts?</th>
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<th>Student Directions</th>
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Activity 1: Understanding How Central Ideas Develop, Text 1

A Central Idea is a universal truth that the author wants you to remember most.

Most interviews we see on T.V. or news articles we read have a central idea that they want you to remember most.

The next time you are reading an article or watching the news, ask yourself:

- What is the topic?
- What is the speaker trying to get me to understand about the topic?
- What is the most important point the speaker wants me to remember about the topic?

Keep in mind that Central Idea is sometimes confused with Theme. Though they are similar, a theme is mostly seen in literary text and is most times an abstract idea (for example, love, hate, power) that teaches us a life lesson. It is also important to know that the Central Idea should be a complete sentence. **It is possible for an informational text to have more than one central idea just like a story can have more than one theme.**

A. Read the text. As you read, annotate to get the gist of the text, paying attention to identifying the central idea or ideas. **Note:** profound means very great or intense. On notebook paper, write down what you have identified as the author’s central idea or ideas.
B. For your second read, pay attention to how the central idea or ideas are developed by supporting details. An acronym you can use to help with supporting details is DRAPEs: Direct Quotes - Rhetorical Questions - Analogies - Personal Experiences - Examples - Statistics. Look for these elements as you read and annotate the text. Then, on notebook paper, give examples of these elements. You should find at least four.

C. Finally, write a paragraph using the rhetorical precis form to analyze both the what (central idea/s) and the delivery (how the writer develops the central idea/s - use your DRAPEs). Consider what the writer is saying about the topic of fear. Your precis can follow this outline: 

Who/What: Name of the author, title of work, a rhetorically accurate verb (such as “assert”, “argue”, “suggest”, “imply”, “claim”, etc), and a THAT clause containing the major assertion (argument/thesis/etc) of the work.

How: An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports this argument (strategies used; used your DRAPEs).

Why: A statement of the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order” phrase.

To whom: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

Use these sentences starters for additional support:

In his/her _____ (type of work), _____ (title of work), author _____ (name of author) _____(a rhetorically accurate verb--claims, asserts, argues, insists, etc) THAT _______________ (the author's assertion, argument, position, etc.).

_____ (the author) develops/supports this _____ (change rhetorical verb to noun) BY _______________(reveal author's technique(s)).

_____’s (author) purpose is to _____(reveal author’s purpose) IN ORDER TO (what the author wants reading audience to react to: feel and/or do).

_____ (author) uses _____ (description of tone and/or style) to appeal to _____.

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Fear Is Simple and Profound
By Julia Butterfly Hill 1999

Julia Butterfly Hill is an environmental activist. She wrote The Legacy of Luna and co-wrote One Makes the Difference. Hill founded Circle of Life, a non-profit organization dedicated to sustainability, restoration, and preservation of life.

When I think of how we’ve gotten to this place of being so separated from the earth and from each other and from our choices, it seems like there’s many prongs that have gotten us to this point.

I think one of the core elements, though, is actually quite simple, which is fear. And fear is simple and profound, just like love is simple and profound. And fear will drive us to make choices that our
hearts don't long to make, that our spirits don't long to make. Fear will shut down the voice of the heart and spirit and collapse us into beings without meaning and without value.

I see in this culture in particular how that manifests is our addiction to comfortability.\(^3\) We are birthing an addict society. I went through a time in my life where I was a major drug and alcohol addict, and so I know on a very real level what addiction is. And as a society, we are being birthed into an addiction culture where you need consumerism, you need comfortability, and you go through the same withdrawals and all these same things that you go through as a drug addict or an alcoholic. I see even the most conscious among us making the most unconscious choices out of our addiction to comfortability.

I love using the example of the caterpillar becoming the butterfly because the caterpillar's got a pretty cool life, you know? It's chill, it lives on its food source, doesn't have too many threats, it's usually camouflaged so that whatever birds or things might come after it, it's slightly safe, and then it has this weird calling that defies description that says, "There's something more for you." [Laughs] And there's no rationale or reasoning, and in many ways we are that caterpillar going, "Man, I don't want to leave this leaf. This is cool. I've got it made here."

And yet there's this deeper calling that tells the caterpillar, "There's something more for you." And then the caterpillar has to trust this great unknown, this great mystery. And fear keeps us from trusting the great mystery within ourselves.

For me the divine is the great mystery, that we are all manifestations of this great mystery. I take a breath, and I am amazed at the great mystery that just allowed me to breathe and everything that happened for that magic to happen.

But this caterpillar follows the great mystery. And then it pulls the cocoon from within itself. It goes into its deepest depths and pulls this cocoon out and then wraps itself in it. And we are afraid of what's inside of ourselves.

When something comes up that we don't like, click on the television, go out to eat, go party with friends, go shopping, whatever it is that we don't have to take a good, hard look at what's inside of ourselves. But the caterpillar knows that there's something more, even though there's no reason for it and goes, "Okay, I'm going to do this work. It's uncomfortable, but I'm going to do this work." And then it wraps itself in there, and it's tight and it's dark, and there's nowhere to run and there's no way to sidetrack itself. It's just dealing with its innermost depths. And that process liquefies it. That's not a comfortable, touchy-feely kind of thing. [Laughs] That's not like, ohm, and it's all going to be better. That's some hardcore work.

There's the point, though, where that cocoon gets comfortable too. It might be a little cramped and dark in there, and I see that happening in our evolution as people. It gets a little cramped and dark in there, but it's also comfortable and safe now. We've created this little world around us that we can just call ourselves enlightened and stay there versus taking that enlightenment and having the courage to take it out into a world that's not like anything we can imagine.
The last thing that happens after the caterpillar begins to liquefy is its head pops off. And then its head absorbs into this liquid being that it’s becoming. And if you take a cell from that liquid before its head pops off, it only reproduces part of a butterfly. After its head incorporates into its entire soupy being, you can take any cell and it recreates an entire new butterfly.

Then the caterpillar has to push through the barriers of comfortability again and trust that whatever is outside that space is going to be a magical world. And then it takes a moment of grace to fan its wings, and then it takes a leap.

I think that our fear consistently keeps us from that process, whether it’s at the leaf stage or in the cocoon stage or where we get out and we flap our wings and say, “That edge looks a little scary. I’m just going to chill here.” [Laughs]

**Activity 2: Understanding How Central Ideas Develop, Text 2**

A-C. Follow steps A-C from Activity 1 for the second text.

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**What Fear Can Teach Us**  
By Karen Thompson Walker 2013

Karen Thompson Walker is an American writer and the author of The Age of Miracles. In this TED Talk, Walker discusses the connection between stories and fear and explains how fear influences the decisions we make. Walker uses the experiences of the sailors on the whaleship Essex to further explore the effects of fear on decision-making.

One day in 1819, 3,000 miles off the coast of Chile, in one of the most remote regions of the Pacific Ocean, 20 American sailors watched their ship flood with seawater. They’d been struck by a sperm whale, which had ripped a catastrophic hole in the ship’s hull. As their ship began to sink beneath the swells, the men huddled together in three small whaleboats. These men were 10,000 miles from home, more than 1,000 miles from the nearest scrap of land. In their small boats, they carried only rudimentary Navigational equipment and limited supplies of food and water. These were the men of the whaleship Essex, whose story would later inspire parts of Moby Dick.

Even in today’s world, their situation would be really dire, but think about how much worse it would have been then. No one on land had any idea that anything had gone wrong. No search party was coming to look for these men. So most of us have never experienced a situation as frightening as the one in which these sailors found themselves, but we all know what it’s like to be afraid. We know how fear feels, but I’m not sure we spend enough time thinking about what our fears mean.

As we grow up, we’re often encouraged to think of fear as a weakness, just another childish thing to discard like baby teeth or roller skates. And I think it’s no accident that we think this way. Neuroscientists have actually shown that human beings are hard-wired to be optimists. So maybe
that’s why we think of fear, sometimes, as a danger in and of itself. “Don’t worry,” we like to say to one another. “Don’t panic.” In English, fear is something we conquer. It’s something we fight. It’s something we overcome. But what if we looked at fear in a fresh way? What if we thought of fear as an amazing act of the imagination, something that can be as profound and insightful as storytelling itself?

It’s easiest to see this link between fear and the imagination in young children, whose fears are often extraordinarily vivid. When I was a child, I lived in California, which is, you know, mostly a very nice place to live, but for me as a child, California could also be a little scary. I remember how frightening it was to see the chandelier that hung above our dining table swing back and forth during every minor earthquake, and I sometimes couldn’t sleep at night, terrified that the Big One might strike while we were sleeping. And what we say about kids who have fears like that is that they have a vivid imagination. But at a certain point, most of us learn to leave these kinds of visions behind and grow up. We learn that there are no monsters hiding under the bed, and not every earthquake brings buildings down. But maybe it’s no coincidence that some of our most creative minds fail to leave these kinds of fears behind as adults. The same incredible imaginations that produced The Origin of Species, Jane Eyre and The Remembrance of Things Past, also generated intense worries that haunted the adult lives of Charles Darwin, Charlotte Brontë and Marcel Proust. So the question is, what can the rest of us learn about fear from visionaries and young children?

Well let’s return to the year 1819 for a moment, to the situation facing the crew of the whaleship Essex. Let’s take a look at the fears that their imaginations were generating as they drifted in the middle of the Pacific. 24 hours had now passed since the capsizing of the ship. The time had come for the men to make a plan, but they had very few options. In his fascinating account of the disaster, Nathaniel Philbrick wrote that these men were just about as far from land as it was possible to be anywhere on Earth. The men knew that the nearest islands they could reach were the Marquesas Islands, 1,200 miles away. But they’d heard some frightening rumors. They’d been told that these islands, and several others nearby, were populated by cannibals. So the men pictured coming ashore only to be murdered and eaten for dinner. Another possible destination was Hawaii, but given the season, the captain was afraid they’d be struck by severe storms. Now the last option was the longest, and the most difficult: to sail 1,500 miles due south in hopes of reaching a certain band of winds that could eventually push them toward the coast of South America. But they knew that the sheer length of this journey would stretch their supplies of food and water. To be eaten by cannibals, to be battered by storms, to starve to death before reaching land. These were the fears that danced in the imaginations of these poor men, and as it turned out, the fear they chose to listen to would govern whether they lived or died.

Now we might just as easily call these fears by a different name. What if instead of calling them fears, we called them stories? Because that’s really what fear is, if you think about it. It’s a kind of unintentional storytelling that we are all born knowing how to do. And fears and storytelling have the same components. They have the same architecture. Like all stories, fears have characters. In our fears, the characters are us. Fears also have plots. They have beginnings and middles and ends. You board the plane. The plane takes off. The engine fails. Our fears also tend to contain imagery
that can be every bit as vivid as what you might find in the pages of a novel. Picture a cannibal, human teeth sinking into human skin, human flesh roasting over a fire. Fears also have suspense. If I’ve done my job as a storyteller today, you should be wondering what happened to the men of the whaleship Essex. Our fears provoke in us a very similar form of suspense. Just like all great stories, our fears focus our attention on a question that is as important in life as it is in literature: What will happen next? In other words, our fears make us think about the future. And humans, by the way, are the only creatures capable of thinking about the future in this way, of projecting ourselves forward in time, and this mental time travel is just one more thing that fears have in common with storytelling.

As a writer, I can tell you that a big part of writing fiction is learning to predict how one event in a story will affect all the other events, and fear works in that same way. In fear, just like in fiction, one thing always leads to another. When I was writing my first novel, *The Age Of Miracles*, I spent months trying to figure out what would happen if the rotation of the Earth suddenly began to slow down. What would happen to our days? What would happen to our crops? What would happen to our minds? And then it was only later that I realized how very similar these questions were to the ones I used to ask myself as a child frightened in the night. If an earthquake strikes tonight, I used to worry, what will happen to our house? What will happen to my family? And the answer to those questions always took the form of a story. So if we think of our fears as more than just fears but as stories, we should think of ourselves as the authors of those stories. But just as importantly, we need to think of ourselves as the readers of our fears, and how we choose to read our fears can have a profound effect on our lives.

Now, some of us naturally read our fears more closely than others. I read about a study recently of successful entrepreneurs. The author found that these people shared a habit that he called “productive paranoia,” which meant that these people, instead of dismissing their fears, these people read them closely, they studied them, and then they translated that fear into preparation and action. So that way, if their worst fears came true, their businesses were ready.

And sometimes, of course, our worst fears do come true. That’s one of the things that is so extraordinary about fear. Once in a while, our fears can predict the future. But we can’t possibly prepare for all of the fears that our imaginations concoct. So how can we tell the difference between the fears worth listening to and all the others? I think the end of the story of the whaleship Essex offers an illuminating, if tragic, example. After much deliberation, the men finally made a decision. Terrified of cannibals, they decided to forgo the closest islands and instead embarked on the longer and much more difficult route to South America. After more than two months at sea, the men ran out of food as they knew they might, and they were still quite far from land. When the last of the survivors were finally picked up by two passing ships, less than half of the men were left alive, and some of them had resorted to their own form of cannibalism. Herman Melville, who used this story as research for *Moby Dick*, wrote years later, and from dry land, quote, “All the sufferings of these miserable men of the Essex might in all human probability have been avoided had they, immediately after leaving the wreck, steered straight for Tahiti. But," as Melville put it, “they dreaded cannibals."
So the question is, why did these men dread cannibals so much more than the extreme likelihood of starvation? Why were they swayed by one story so much more than the other? Looked at from this angle, theirs becomes a story about reading. The novelist Vladimir Nabokov said that the best reader has a combination of two very different temperaments, the artistic and the scientific. A good reader has an artist’s passion, a willingness to get caught up in the story, but just as importantly, the reader also needs the coolness of judgment of a scientist, which acts to temper and complicate the reader’s intuitive reactions to the story. As we’ve seen, the men of the Essex had no trouble with the artistic part. They dreamed up a variety of horrifying scenarios. The problem was that they listened to the wrong story. Of all the narratives their fears wrote, they responded only to the most lurid, the most vivid, the one that was easiest for their imaginations to picture: cannibals. But perhaps if they’d been able to read their fears more like a scientist, with more coolness of judgment, they would have listened instead to the less violent but the more likely tale, the story of starvation, and headed for Tahiti, just as Melville’s sad commentary suggests.

Activity 3: Developing Your Own Ideas
A. You have now read two texts that have the same topic, and explored how these writers developed their central ideas.

B. Free write about the topic of fear, or choose your own topic that is similarly an abstract idea like love, hate, freedom, etc.

C. One way to state a strong central idea is to use the frame of “this and that. According to the book Beyond Literary Analysis, one way to make your writing more sophisticated is to show the many layers of an idea or text. It’s not just one thing It’s this and that. Try writing a “this and that” central idea. You can use one of the frames below if you like:

__________________________ is___________________________, but also ________________________.

Sometimes_________________________ but also ________________________________.

Even though, _______________________________ sometimes ________________________.

D. Once you have your claim, continue your response for at least three paragraphs, using some of the DRAPES details that you noted in your reading.

Activity 4: Reflection
After reading the articles and completing the activities in this project, reflect on your work. Consider the following questions as guides to help you write out your thoughts.

1. How does looking at how authors develop a central idea help you better understand a text?
2. What are the most effective ways to develop a central idea?
3. What are your strengths as a reader and writer?