



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 4: Unit 1: Lesson 1

Building Background Knowledge: What IS the Omnivore's Dilemma Anyway?



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Building Background Knowledge:
What IS the Omnivore’s Dilemma Anyway?

Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

- I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1)
- I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2)
- I can read grade-level literary texts proficiently and independently. (RI.8.10)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can find the gist of pages 1–4 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*.
- I can use context clues to determine the meaning of “omnivore’s dilemma.”
- I can participate in discussions about the text with a partner, small group, and the whole class.

Ongoing Assessment

- Gist annotated on sticky notes
- Answers to text-dependent questions
- Exit ticket



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Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Entrance Ticket: Please Place Your Order (5 minutes)</p> <p>B. Unpacking Learning Targets and Reviewing Things Close Readers Do Anchor Chart (5 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Discussion: What Was Your Meal Decision Based On? (5 minutes)</p> <p>B. Reading for Gist: Introduction of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (Pages 1-4) (10 minutes)</p> <p>C. Answering Text-Dependent Questions: Introduction of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (Pages 1-4) (15 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Exit Ticket: What Is the Omnivore’s Dilemma Anyway? (5 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Read pages 4–6 and 9–25 (“Introducing Corn”) of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. Use the strongest evidence from the text to answer these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Which of Michael Pollan’s food chains does the meal you chose at the beginning of the lesson best match? * Why do you think that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This first lesson is designed to hook students into the book <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. • Please note that this book is just one point of view on this topic, so students should be made aware throughout the unit that Michael Pollan is trying to persuade us to believe what he believes, but that there are opposing points of view on this topic. Remind students that they are not to read this book and believe that everything Michael Pollan says is true; they are to read it through the lens of how Pollan tries to convince the reader of what he says. • The lesson begins with students entering the classroom to see that it has been set up like a restaurant. You can decide how to frame this, but some suggestions are as follows: You could stand at the door and seat students in groups as they arrive; and you could set up the tables with napkins, plastic knives and forks, paper placemats, and tablecloths. • Students then choose one of four meals to order from the “Specials Board.” The meals on the Specials Board are the four meals that Michael Pollan eats in <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. In the book, each meal represents one of the four food chains—which serve as the book’s organizing principle. It is important to emphasize to students that they are not really going to be served food; it’s just a simulation. By choosing a meal and thinking about how they made that choice, students are beginning to think about what factors go into deciding what to eat. These factors will be explored in greater detail throughout the module. • Do not explain the food chains to students in this lesson; they will be introduced to them for homework. • In advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Specials Board meal charts for the Gallery Walk. You may want to have three sets of the meal charts and assign different sections of the class to visit each set. (Ex: “Everyone at the back two tables should visit the set of meal posters on the back wall.”) • Read pages 1–4 of the Introduction to <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>, considering the gist of each paragraph and the answers to the text-dependent questions students will be asked (see supporting materials). • Create triads, groups of three students that will work together to read, think, talk, and write about <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. Use intentional grouping. Heterogeneous groups support students in discussing texts and answering questions about texts. • Review: Gallery Walk protocol (see Appendix); Teammates Consult protocol (see supporting materials). • Post: Learning targets; Things Close Readers Do anchor chart (from Module 1, Unit 1, Lesson 14).



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Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
gist; omnivore, dilemma, modern, food chain (1), feedlot, bellying, trough (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrance Ticket: Please Place Your Order (one per student)• Specials Board for the Gallery Walk (new; teacher-created; see supporting materials)• <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i>, Young Readers Edition by Michael Pollan (book; one per student)• Things Close Readers Do anchor chart (from Module 1, Unit 1, Lesson 14; or create a new copy if needed)• Sticky notes (at least 10 per student)• Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 1–4 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (one per student)• Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 1–4 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (answers, for teacher reference)• Teammates Consult protocol (for teacher reference)• Exit Ticket: What Is The Omnivore's Dilemma Anyway? (one per student)• Homework: Which of Michael Pollan's Food Chains Does the Meal You Chose at the Beginning of the Lesson Best Match? (one per student)



Building Background Knowledge:
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Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Entrance Ticket: Please Place Your Order (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute the Entrance Ticket: Please Place Your Order and welcome students to your “restaurant.” Explain the process for “ordering food” and for the Gallery Walk protocol:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In a moment, you will be invited to get up to read the Specials Board, where four meal choices are posted.2. As you read all four meals, decide which meal you would like to order.3. After you make your decision, return to your seat and place your order by completing your entrance ticket.• You might need to coach your students about your expectations for safe movement and quiet voices. For example: “As you move from meal to meal, there is no need to engage in side conversations. I expect ‘zero’ voice levels during this time. Also, please move carefully, taking care not to bump into one another.”• Invite students to walk over to the Specials Board for the Gallery Walk. Once students have viewed the meal charts for 3 minutes, ask them to return to their seats and silently place their order by completing their entrance ticket.• Inform students that they will share their orders after they have unpacked the learning targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using entrance/exit tickets gives you a quick check for understanding of the learning target so that instruction can be adjusted or tailored to students’ needs during the lesson or before the next lesson. Pairing entrance tickets with exit tickets allows both teachers and students to track progress from the beginning to the end of the lesson.



Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Unpacking Learning Targets and Reviewing Things Close Readers Do Anchor Chart (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind students that learning targets help students know the learning, thinking, and skills that will be the focus of the lesson, and that the learning targets will always be reviewed and checked at the end of the lesson. • Invite students to read the first learning target with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can find the gist of pages 1–4 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>.” • Circle the word <i>gist</i> and ask students to remind a partner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What does it mean to read for the gist?” • Cold call students for their responses and listen for them to say that reading for the gist means figuring out what the text is mostly about. • Invite students to read the second learning target with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can use context clues to determine the meaning of ‘omnivore’s dilemma.’” • Tell students that the text for this module is a nonfiction book called <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> by Michael Pollan. • Read the last learning target aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I can participate in discussions about the text with a partner, small group, and the whole class.” • Explain that reading a difficult text requires a lot of thinking and talking with others. Students will be talking in triads using a new protocol called Teammates Consult. Remind students to be respectful of others by listening to what they have to say, asking polite questions to clarify understanding, and participating in the discussions by offering thoughtful ideas and questions. • Tell students <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> is a complex text with difficult vocabulary words. They will need to use all of their strategies for close reading throughout this module. • Review the Things Close Readers Do anchor chart by having students read the items out loud. • Explain that today they will focus on getting the gist, rereading, and talking with others about the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, especially challenged learners. • Posting learning targets allows students to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity. • Reviewing academic vocabulary words benefits all students developing academic language.



Building Background Knowledge:
What IS the Omnivore’s Dilemma Anyway?

Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. . Discussion: What Was your Meal Decision Based On? (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to turn and talk to a partner:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “Which meal did you choose at the beginning of the lesson? Why?”• Cold call students to share how they made their decision.• Students may have any number of reasons for why they chose their meal—emphasize that there is no right or wrong answer here. Students may have chosen based on what they like the taste of, or what foods they were familiar with, or because they wanted to try something new.• Ask students to Think-Pair-Share:<ul style="list-style-type: none">*“What other things might we think about, besides taste, when we decide what to eat or what our family eats?”• Select volunteers to share their responses and record the responses on the board. Examples will vary from student to student and might include: taste, cost, how healthy it is, and where the food comes from.• Distribute <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. Explain that how we make decisions about what we eat is an important idea in this book, an idea that we will return to repeatedly throughout the unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider partnering ELL students who speak the same home language when discussion of complex content is required. This can allow students to have more meaningful discussions and clarify points in their native language.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Reading for Gist: Introduction of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (Pages 1–4) (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell students that they are going to read pages 1–4 of the Introduction for the gist. Ask them to read along silently as you read the first paragraph aloud. As with other read-alouds, remember that the purpose is to read the text slowly, fluently, and without interruption. Don't stop to address comprehension or vocabulary issues, as these will be addressed later and stopping would interrupt the flow of the text.• Ask students to reread the first paragraph and to Think-Pair-Share: * "What is the gist of the first paragraph? What is this paragraph mostly about?"• Listen for them to explain that Michael Pollan didn't think or worry about where his food came from before he began writing this book.• Model annotating the paragraph on a sticky note and sticking it in the margin.• Pair students up and invite them to work together to reread each paragraph and discuss the gist with their partner before recording the gist of the paragraph on a sticky note. Tell students that in pairs they will find the gist of the rest of the paragraphs up to the end of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> section on page 4.• Circulate and support students as they read. For those who need more support, ask them to practice telling you the gist of a section before they write it on their sticky note.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hearing a complex text read slowly, fluently, and without interruption or explanation promotes fluency for students: They are hearing a strong reader read the text aloud with accuracy and expression, and are simultaneously looking at and thinking about the words on the printed page. Be sure to set clear expectations that students read along silently in their heads as you read the text aloud.• Inviting students to say the gist aloud to a partner or the teacher before writing can give them the confidence to record their ideas and ensure they know what to write.



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Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>C. Answering Text-Dependent Questions: Introduction of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (Pages 1–4) (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students they are now going to dig deeper into this section of the text to understand it fully. • Post the triads and invite students to get with the rest of their triad. Display and distribute Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 1–4 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. • Tell students that they will be using a new protocol called Teammates Consult to help them share their thinking. The protocol makes sure that everyone in the group contributes ideas and holds all students accountable for answering the questions. Make it clear that students are to leave their pencils in the pot in the center of their table until they are told to take them out to write, as this is a key part of the protocol. • Read the first question out loud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How did the author, Michael Pollan, make decisions about what to eat before he began working on this book? How do you know?” • Explain that now students are going to do a Teammates Consult protocol which involves rereading the appropriate section of the text, thinking about what the answer is, and discussing it with their group for 3 minutes to come to an agreement about how to best answer the question. • After 3 minutes, cold call a few groups to share their answer. Explain that after the first question, groups won’t be sharing their answers with the whole class. The first one is being done together to make sure everyone knows what to do. • Listen for students to say that Pollan decided what to eat based on what tasted good and that the last line of the first paragraph says just that. • Explain that when you say, “Teammates, write,” all students are to remove their pencils from the cup and write the answer to the question in their own words on their own paper. As you say, “Teammates, write,” model writing the answer on the displayed handout. • Repeat the process for each question, but after the first question you don’t need to model recording the answer each time on the displayed copy, as students should understand how to fill out the organizer after it has been modeled with the first question. • Circulate to assist students in answering the questions (refer to Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 1–4 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (answers, for teacher reference)). Ask questions to encourage students to refer to the text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How did you come to that answer? Can you use a detail from the text to support your answer? Can you point out to that answer in the text?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-dependent questions can be answered only by referring explicitly to the text being read. This encourages students to reread the text for further analysis and allows for a deeper understanding. • Some students may benefit from having access to “hint cards”: small slips of paper or index cards that they turn over for hints about how/where to find the answers to text-dependent questions. For example, a hint card might say, “Check back in the third paragraph on page 2.”



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Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refocus the group. Ask students to discuss this question in their triads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What do you think the word <i>dilemma</i> means?” • Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for students to say that a dilemma is a problem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What kind of problem might a dilemma might be?” • Cold call students for their responses. Listen for them to say that it is a problem that requires a choice; it is a problem with a complicated solution. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does Pollan define <i>omnivore</i> in the text?” • Listen for them to explain that being an omnivore means eating “plants, meat, mushrooms—just about anything.” • Tell students that the word <i>omnivore</i> has the root “vore,” which means “one who eats,” and the prefix “omni,” which means “all,” so an omnivore is “one who eats everything.” Tell students that a carnivore is “one who eats meat.” • Ask students to discuss in triads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What do you think ‘herbivore’ means?” • Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for them to explain that a herbivore is “one who eats plants.” • Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What is the meaning of the title of the book, <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>?” • Cold call students to share their thinking with the whole group. Listen for them to say that because we are omnivores, we can eat anything, plants or meat or anything in the supermarket. Since we can eat anything, our dilemma is that we have to figure out what to eat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of protocols (like Teammates Consult) allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students to practice their speaking and listening skills. • Allow students to grapple with a complex text before explicit teaching of vocabulary.



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Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Exit Ticket: What Is the Omnivore’s Dilemma Anyway? (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reread the second learning target out loud. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can use context clues to determine the meaning of ‘omnivore’s dilemma.’” • Distribute the Exit Ticket: What Is The Omnivore’s Dilemma Anyway? and ask students to answer the question. • Collect these exit tickets to assess students’ understanding of the book’s title. • Distribute Homework: Which of Michael Pollan’s Food Chains Does the Meal you Chose at the Beginning of the Lesson Best Match? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using exit tickets allows you to get a quick check for understanding of the learning target so that instruction can be adjusted or tailored to students’ needs during the lesson or before the next lesson.
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 4–6 and 9–25 (“Introducing Corn”) of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. Use the strongest evidence from the text to answer the questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Which of Michael Pollan’s food chains does the meal you chose at the beginning of the lesson best match? * Why do you think that? 	



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Supporting Materials



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Entrance Ticket: Please Place Your Order

Name:

Date:

Directions: Order one of the four meals posted on the Specials Board by checking the box next to the meal's number. Then explain why you chose this meal.

- Meal 1
- Meal 2
- Meal 3
- Meal 4

Why did you choose this meal?



Specials Board for the Gallery Walk (for Teacher Reference)

Directions: On 12 pieces of chart paper, create three separate charts of each of the four meals.

Meal 1

McDonald's cheeseburger

Large fries

Large Coke

Meal 2

Roasted organic chicken

Roasted organic veggies (yellow potatoes, purple kale, and red winter squash)

Steamed organic asparagus

Spring mix salad

Organic ice cream with organic blackberries

Meal 3

Brined and applewood-smoked barbecue chicken

Roasted sweet corn

Rocket (arugula) salad

Chocolate soufflé

Meal 4

Fava bean toasts and Sonoma boar pâté

Egg fettuccine with power fire morels, braised leg, and grilled loin of wild Sonoma pig

Wild East Bay yeast levain

Local garden salad



Text-Dependent Questions:
Pages 1–4 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*

Name: _____

Date: _____

I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text.
(RI.8.1)

Questions	Notes
1. How did the author, Michael Pollan, make decisions about what to eat before he began working on this book? How do you know?	
2. In Paragraph 2, the author states that he decided what to eat based on what tasted good until he “had the chance to peer behind the curtain of the <i>modern American food chain</i> .” Based on what you can figure out about these key vocabulary words, explain what he means.	
3. Cite specific details from the text that describe the potato farm.	
4. In the first paragraph on page 3, the author writes: “I was driving through a <i>feedlot</i> , with tens of thousands of animals <i>bellying</i> up to a concrete <i>trough</i> that ran along the side of the highway for what seemed like miles.” Using context clues, what do these words mean? What do these words help the reader understand about where hamburgers come from?	



Text-Dependent Questions:
Pages 1–4 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*

Questions	Notes
5. At the top of page 4, it says: “That’s the <i>dilemma</i> —we can eat anything, but how do we know what to eat?” Based on context clues, what do you think this word means? What does the author’s use of the word help us to understand about the book’s title?	
6. In the last paragraph on page 3, Pollan says that an <i>omnivore</i> eats “plants, meat, mushrooms—just about anything.” Based on the context clues in this paragraph and the following paragraph, what is <i>the omnivore’s dilemma</i> ?	
7. What can you infer about Pollan’s purpose in writing this book? What makes you think so?	



Text-Dependent Questions:

Pages 1–4 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* (Answers, for Teacher Reference)

Questions	Notes
1. How did the author, Michael Pollan, make decisions about what to eat before he began working on this book? How do you know?	<i>He decided what to eat based on what tasted good. He says this in the last line of the paragraph.</i>
2. In Paragraph 2, the author states that he decided what to eat based on what tasted good until he “had the chance to peer behind the curtain of the <i>modern American food chain</i> .” Based on what you can figure out about these key vocabulary words, explain what he means.	<i>He investigated where food comes from in our country today.</i>
3. Cite specific details from the text that describe the potato farm.	<i>The potato farm: Is 15,000 acres Is divided into circles each with an irrigation machine to give water, fertilizer and pesticides to the plants The machines were controlled by computers in a control room. There is a shed where potatoes are stored until the chemicals in them fade so that they are safe to eat.</i>



Questions	Notes
<p>4. In the first paragraph on page 3, the author writes: “I was driving through a <i>feedlot</i>, with tens of thousands of animals <i>bellying</i> up to a concrete <i>trough</i> that ran along the side of the highway for what seemed like miles.” Using context clues, what do these words mean? What do these words help the reader understand about where hamburgers come from?</p>	<p><i>A feedlot is where many animals like cows are fed. Bellying means moving toward. A trough is something that holds food.</i></p> <p><i>This sentence helps the reader understand that cows used to make hamburgers are kept in a very large, crowded space called a feedlot.</i></p>
<p>5. At the top of page 4, it says: “That’s the <i>dilemma</i>—we can eat anything, but how do we know what to eat?” Based on context clues, what do you think this word means? What does the author’s use of the word help us to understand about the book’s title?</p>	<p><i>Based on context clues, it sounds like a dilemma is a problem. Maybe the title means that we have a problem about deciding what to eat. He wants to figure out how we should solve the dilemma and figure out what to eat.</i></p>
<p>6. In the last paragraph on page 3, Pollan says that an <i>omnivore</i> eats “plants, meat, mushrooms—just about anything.” Based on the context clues in this paragraph and the following paragraph, what is <i>the omnivore’s dilemma</i>?</p>	<p><i>Because we are omnivores, we can eat anything: plants or meat or anything in the supermarket. Since we can eat anything, our dilemma is that we have to figure out what to eat.</i></p>
<p>7. What can you infer about Pollan’s purpose in writing this book? What makes you think so?</p>	<p><i>Pollan wrote the book to “solve the omnivore’s dilemma” by telling people where food comes from so they can make good decisions about what to eat. I think this because he talks about the food we eat, where it comes from, and how to make decisions about what to eat.</i></p>



Teammates Consult Protocol (for Teacher Reference)

1. Students sit facing each other in triads.
2. A cup is placed in the center of each team's work space. Students begin by placing their pencils/pens in the cup.
3. The teacher reads the first question and says:
 - * "Teammates, consult."
4. With the pencils still in the cup, students reread the appropriate section of text and take turns sharing their ideas and answers to the question. Students discuss the answers and then come to consensus on the answer to the question.
5. After 3–5 minutes of discussion (decide how much time is needed based on the complexity of the question and your observations while circulating), the teacher says:
 - "Teammates, write."
6. At this point, all students remove their pencils from the cup and write the answer to the question in their own words on their own paper.
7. When the students are finished recording their answers, the steps are repeated with the remaining questions.

