



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 8: Module 4: Unit 1: Lesson 8**

## **Reading for Gist and Answering Text-Dependent Questions: Local Sustainable Food Chain**



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Reading for Gist and Answering Text-Dependent Questions:  
Local Sustainable Food Chain

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

I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2)

I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can find the gist of pages 161–166 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*.
- I can read closely to answer questions about pages 161–166 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Food Chain graphic organizer
- Gist annotated on sticky notes
- New vocabulary on word-catcher
- Answers to text-dependent questions



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| Agenda   | Teaching Notes   |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Engaging the Reader: Chapter 14 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (6 minutes)</p> <p>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Reading for the Gist: Pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (20 minutes)</p> <p>B. Text-Dependent Questions, Pages 161–166 (14 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Determining the Author’s Claim (3 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Reread pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> and identify the claim Michael Pollan makes and the evidence he uses to support his claim. Write the claim on a sticky note and use evidence flags to mark the claim and supporting evidence..</p> <p>B. Read Chapter 16 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> and continue to fill out your Food Chain graphic organizer for the local sustainable food chain. Remember to record any new vocabulary on your word-catcher.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the first in the two-lesson cycle in which students build background knowledge about Michael Pollan’s local sustainable food chain.</li> <li>• In this lesson, to gradually release students to work independently in preparation for the end of unit assessment, they work in pairs without any teacher modeling to find the gist and to answer text-dependent questions.</li> <li>• In advance: Read pages 161–166 (up to “Letting Chickens be Chickens”), considering the gist of each paragraph and the answers to the text-dependent questions students are asked (see supporting materials for answer key).</li> <li>• Post: Learning targets.</li> </ul> |



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| Lesson Vocabulary  | Materials  |
|--|--|
| <p>gist; interns, restoring, broiled, innovations, hitch, bison, egrets, larvae, sanitation, organism.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Chain graphic organizer (for the local sustainable food chain first distributed in Lesson 6)</li> <li>• <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i>, Young Readers Edition (book; one per student)</li> <li>• Reading Closely: Guiding Questions handout (one for display)</li> <li>• Sticky notes (at least 10 per student)</li> <li>• Word-catcher (from Lesson 2; students may need a new copy if they filled in the one they have)</li> <li>• Dictionaries (enough for students to reference them quickly while reading)</li> <li>• Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (one per student)</li> <li>• Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (answers, for teacher reference)</li> </ul> |

| Opening  | Meeting Students' Needs   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>A. Engaging the Reader: Chapter 14 of The Omnivore's Dilemma (6 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sure students have their text <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i>. Remind students they were to read Chapter 14 and continue adding to their <b>Food Chain graphic organizer</b> for the local sustainable food chain for homework.</li> <li>• Ask students to get into their triads to share what they recorded. Invite students to add to and revise their organizers where they think necessary based on the feedback they hear in their triad.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening the lesson by asking students to share their homework makes them accountable for completing homework. It also lets you monitor which students have not been completing their homework.</li> <li>• Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, especially challenged learners.</li> </ul> |



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| Opening (continued)  | Meeting Students' Needs  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite students to read the learning targets with you:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “I can find the gist of pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>.”</li> <li>* “I can read closely to answer questions about pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>Remind students they have already seen these learning targets in the previous lessons and of what the <i>gist</i> means.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>  |
| Work Time  | Meeting Students' Needs  |
| <p><b>A. Reading for the Gist and Unfamiliar Vocabulary: Pages 161–166 of The Omnivore’s Dilemma (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus students on the description of the local sustainable food chain on page 5 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>. Invite students to read that food chain again to refresh their memories.</li> <li>Tell students they are going to read pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> for the gist. Remind students that they should have already done a first read of these pages when they read Chapter 14 for homework.</li> <li>Remind students of the Topic, Information, and Ideas on the “Questioning Texts” row of the <b>Reading Closely: Guiding Questions</b> <b>handout</b>.</li> <li>Tell students that they are going to reread from the beginning of Chapter 14 on page 161 up to “Letting Chickens be Chickens” on page 166 for the gist.</li> <li>Remind students to write their annotations of the gist of each paragraph on <b>sticky notes</b> to stick in the margin of the book. Remind students to use their <b>word-catchers</b> to record any new vocabulary, and that if they aren’t sure what the word means after looking for context clues and looking in the <b>dictionary</b>, they should leave the definition column blank to be discussed with the whole group later on.</li> <li>Pair students and invite them to find the gist and record unfamiliar words on their word-catchers for pages 161–166.</li> <li>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 in the margin.</li> <li>Invite students to pair up with a different student to compare what they wrote for their gist statements and to help each other with any unfamiliar vocabulary they haven’t been able to figure out.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing academic vocabulary words benefits all students developing academic language. Consider allowing students to grapple with a complex text prior to explicit teaching of vocabulary. After students have read for the gist, they can identify challenging vocabulary for themselves. Teachers can address student-selected vocabulary as well as predetermined vocabulary upon subsequent encounters with the text. However, in some cases and with some students, pre-teaching selected vocabulary may be necessary.</li> </ul> |



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| Work Time (continued)   | Meeting Students' Needs  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refocus whole group and invite them to share any unfamiliar vocabulary words they found on pages 161–166, along with the definition. Encourage students to help each other find the definition. If no one knows what the word means, tell students what it means.</li> <li>• Be sure to address words students may struggle with here: <i>interns, restoring, broiled, innovations, hitch, bison, egrets, larvae, sanitation, organism.</i></li> <li>• Remind students to record new words on their word-catcher discussed with the whole group later on.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>B. Text-Dependent Questions, Pages 161–166 (14 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite students to get into the triads they have been working with in the previous lessons of this unit. Tell them now that they have the gist of pages 161–166, they will dig deeper into this section of the text to understand it fully.</li> <li>• Distribute Text-Dependent Questions: Pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i>.</li> <li>• Tell students they are going to work through the questions on this handout. Remind them of the Teammates Consult protocol in which they discuss the answer and come to an agreement in their triad before they all write the answer together.</li> <li>• Circulate to assist students. Ask questions to encourage them to refer to the text:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How did you come to that answer? Can you use a detail from the text to support your answer? Can you point out that answer in the text?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.”</li> <li>• 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 practice their speaking and listening skills.</li> </ul> |



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| Closing and Assessment  | Meeting Students' Needs |
|---|-------------------------|
| <p><b>A. Determining the Author's Claim (3 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to discuss in their triads:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What claim is Michael Pollan making on pages 161–166?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Remind students that they may not find this in a single sentence—it may be something that is implied throughout the text. Students who determine the claim can record it on a sticky note. As this is the homework, students who don't get that far can continue for homework.</li> </ul> |                         |
| Homework  | Meeting Students' Needs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reread pages 161–166 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> and identify the claim Michael Pollan makes and the evidence he uses to support his claim. Write the claim on a sticky note and use evidence flags to mark the claim and supporting evidence.</li> <li>• Read Chapter 16 of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> and continue to fill out your Food Chain graphic organizer for the local sustainable food chain. Remember to record any new vocabulary on your word-catcher.</li> </ul>  |                         |



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## Supporting Materials



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**Text-Dependent Questions:**  
Pages 161–166 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2)

I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4)

| Questions   | Notes |
|---|-------|
| 1. Why are the pens floorless?  |       |
| 2. Why are the pens moved 10 feet each day?   |       |
| 3. Why does Joel wait three or four days before moving the chickens to where his cattle have been?      |       |
| 4. Why does Joel think the “Eggmobile” would be worth it, even if the chickens never laid a single egg? |       |
| 5. Why does Joel not buy more chickens when the eggs bring in more money than anything else he sells?   |       |

Text-Dependent Questions:

Pages 161–166 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* (Answers, for Teacher Reference)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2)

I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4)

| Questions   | Notes  |
|---|--|
| 1. Why are the pens floorless?  | <i>“... to allow the birds to get at the grass.”</i>   |
| 2. Why are the pens moved 10 feet each day?   | <i>To give the chickens “twenty-four hours to eat the grass and fertilize it with their droppings, and then move them onto fresh ground.”</i><br><br><i>“The chicken manure fertilizes the grass, supplying all the nitrogen it needs. But left in one place, the chickens would eventually destroy the soil.”</i> |
| 3. Why does Joel wait three or four days before moving the chickens to where his cattle have been?      | <i>The chickens don’t seem to like fresh manure and it “gives the larvae a chance to fatten up nicely, the way the hens like them, but not quite long enough to hatch into flies.”</i>   |
| 4. Why does Joel think the “Eggmobile” would be worth it, even if the chickens never laid a single egg? | <i>“Because of the chickens, Joel doesn’t have to treat his cattle with toxic chemicals to get rid of parasites.”</i>  |
| 5. Why does Joel not buy more chickens when the eggs bring in more money than anything else he sells?   | <i>“Because it would throw the system off balance.”</i><br><i>Too much chicken manure would kill the grass, and Joel would have to buy more cows for the chickens to get their protein from the larvae in cow pats, and then he wouldn’t have enough grass to feed the cows.</i>                                   |