



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

## Grade 8: Module 4:



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In this module, students analyze arguments and the evidence used to support arguments to determine whether sufficient evidence has been used and whether the evidence is relevant in support of the claim an author or speaker is making. They then research to gather evidence to make their own spoken and written arguments. Students will read Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (930L), a literary non-fiction text about where food comes from and about making decisions about what food to buy and eat. They build background knowledge about what happens to food before it gets to the consumer, and the different choices the consumer can make when buying food while analyzing Michael Pollan's arguments and the evidence he uses to support his claims. In Unit 2, students engage in a robust research project in which they further investigate the consequences of each of the food chains and the stakeholders affected in those food

chains. To help students grapple with this issue, they use a decision-making process called "Stakeholder Consequences Decision-Making" (see the end of this document for details). This process will help students understand the implications of various choices, and will scaffold their ability to determine, based on evidence and their own values, to take a position on which food chain they would choose if they were trying to feed everyone in the US. Students finish the module by writing a position paper explaining which of Michael Pollan's food chain they would choose to feed the US and why, and creating a poster stating their position. **This task addresses NYSP12 ELA Standards RI.8.1, W.8.1, W.8.1a, W.8.1b, W.8.1c, W.8.1d, W.8.1e and W.8.9.**

#### Guiding Questions And Big Ideas

- **Which of Michael Pollan's food supply chains would best feed the US?**
- **How do we make decisions about what we eat?**
- **What journey does food take before it gets to your plate?**
- **Has the author or speaker used sufficient relevant evidence and sound reasoning to support his or her claim?**
- *The food we buy comes to us from various different routes and processes. We can make more informed decisions about what food to buy when we understand those processes and the stakeholders affected by the food choices we make.*

#### Performance Task

This performance task gives students a chance to share their best reading, writing, and thinking about the question: "Which of Michael Pollan's food supply chains would best feed the United States?" Students will use a powerful excerpt of their position paper, visual components, and text features to create a poster that shows their claim as well as the evidence they used to support their claim. These posters will be displayed around the classroom, with students having the opportunity to do a Gallery Walk of one another's work. **This task addresses NYSP12 ELA Standards RI.8.1, W.8.1, W.8.9, and W.8.9b.**



### Content Connections

This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards as students read literature and informational text about the Second Sudanese Civil War. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies Practices and Themes to support potential interdisciplinary connections to this compelling content. These intentional connections are described below.

**Big ideas and guiding questions are informed by the New York State Common Core K-8 Social Studies Framework:**

#### **Unifying Themes (pages 6–7)**

- Theme 4: Geography, Humans, and the Environment: The relationship between human populations and the physical world (people, places, and environments); impact of human activities on the environment; interactions between regions, locations, places, people, and environments.
- Theme 9: Science, Technology, and Innovation: Applications of science and innovations in transportation, communication, military agriculture and industrialization. technolo

#### **Social Studies Practices, Geographic Reasoning, Grades 5–8:**

- Descriptor 2: Describe the relationships between people and environments and the connections between people and places (page 58).
- Descriptor 3: Identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationship between the environment and human activities, how the physical environment is modified by human activities, and how human activities are also influenced by Earth's physical features and processes.

#### **Social Studies Practices, Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence, Grades 5-8:**

- Descriptor 1: Define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live and use evidence to answer these questions.
- Descriptor 2: Identify, describe, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources).
- Descriptor 4: Describe and analyze arguments of others.
- Descriptor 6: Recognize an argument and identify evidence that supports the argument; examine arguments related to a specific social studies topic from multiple perspectives; deconstruct arguments, recognizing the perspective of the argument and identifying evidence used to support that perspective.



CCS Standards: Reading—Informational Texts	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI.8.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Self-select text to develop personal preferences.</li> <li>b. Establish and use criteria to classify, select, and evaluate texts to make informed judgments about the quality of pieces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text.</p> <p>I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to supporting ideas).</p> <p>I can objectively summarize informational text.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings).</li> <li>I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone (analogies or allusions).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI.8.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in informational text.</li> <li>I can analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI.8.8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can identify the argument and specific claims in a text.</li> <li>I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims).</li> <li>I can identify when irrelevant evidence is used.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI.8.9a. Read, annotate, and analyze informational texts on topics related to diverse and non-traditional cultures and viewpoints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can read, annotate, and analyze informational texts on topics related to diverse and non-traditional cultures and viewpoints.</li> </ul>



CCS Standards: Writing	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.8.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. I can introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>b. I can support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>c. I can use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>d. I can establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>e. I can provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question).</li> <li>I can use several sources in my research.</li> <li>I can generate additional research questions for further exploration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.8.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can gather relevant information from a variety of sources.</li> </ul>



<p>and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use search terms effectively.</li> <li>• I can evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source.</li> <li>• I can quote and paraphrase others' work while avoiding plagiarism.</li> <li>• I can use a standard format for citation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W.8.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.]</li> <li>b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced").</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.</li> </ul>

CCS Standards: Speaking and Listening	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL.8.2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use their experience and their knowledge of language and logic, as well as culture, to think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can analyze the purpose of information presented in different media and formats.</li> <li>• I can evaluate the motives behind a presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. I can use their experience and their knowledge of language and logic, as well as culture, to think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL.8.3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can determine a speaker's argument and specific claims.</li> <li>• I can evaluate the reasoning and evidence presented for soundness and relevance.</li> <li>• I can identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL.8.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can present claims and findings in a focused, coherent manner (use relevant evidence, sound reasoning and well-chosen details).</li> <li>• I can use effective speaking techniques (appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation).</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL.8.5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can integrate multimedia components and visual displays in a presentation to clarify information, strengthen claims and to add emphasis.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL.8.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can adapt my speech for a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when indicated or appropriate.</li> </ul>

CCS Standards: Language	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L.8.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).</li> <li>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</li> <li>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L.8.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can accurately use 8<sup>th</sup> grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas.</li> <li>• I can use resources to build my vocabulary.</li> </ul>

Central Texts
1. Michael Pollan, Young Readers Edition: <i>The Omnivores Dilemma</i> (New York: The Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 2009), ISBN: 978-0-8037-3500-2.
2. Students conduct internet research. See Unit 2 overview for details.



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
<b>Unit 1: Analyzing Author's Purpose and Evaluating Claims in <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i></b>			
<b>Weeks 1-3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i></li> <li>• Analyze <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> for author's purpose and for how the author responds to conflicting viewpoints and evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text (RI.8.2)</li> <li>• I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4)</li> <li>• I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in informational text. (RI.8.6)</li> <li>• I can analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. (RI.8.6)</li> <li>• I can analyze the purpose of information presented in different media and formats. (SL.8.2)</li> <li>• I can evaluate the motives behind a presentation. (SL.8.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-Unit Assessment: Analyzing Author's Purpose in Speech and Text (RI.8.6, SL.8.2)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate Michael Pollan's claims in <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> for sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</li> <li>• Practice advocating persuasively and speaking and listening skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text (RI.8.2)</li> <li>• I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4)</li> <li>• I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in informational text. (RI.8.6)</li> <li>• I can analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. (RI.8.6)</li> <li>• I can identify the argument and specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of Unit 1 Assessment: Evaluating Claims and Advocating Persuasively (RI.8.8, RI.8.9a, W.8.9b, SL.8.2, SL.8.3)</li> </ul>





		<p>claims in a text. (RI.8.8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims). (RI.8.8)</li><li>• I can identify when irrelevant evidence is used. (RI.8.8)</li><li>• I can read, annotate, and analyze informational texts on topics related to diverse and nontraditional cultures and viewpoints (RI.8.9a)</li><li>• I can apply <i>grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”) (W.8.9a)</li><li>• I can think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively (SL.8.2a)</li><li>• I can determine a speaker’s argument and specific claims. (SL.8.3)</li><li>• I can evaluate the reasoning and evidence presented for soundness and relevance. (SL.8.3)</li><li>• I can identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (SL.8.3)</li></ul>	
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Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
<b>Unit 2: Research</b>			
<b>Weeks 3-5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze each of Michael Pollan's food chains for consequences.</li> <li>Research further the consequences of each of Michael Pollan's food chains using other resources than The Omnivore's Dilemma and determine the stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question). (W.8.7)</li> <li>I can use several sources in my research. (W.8.7)</li> <li>I can generate additional research questions for further exploration. (W.8.7)</li> <li>I can gather relevant information from a variety of sources. (W.8.8)</li> <li>I can use search terms effectively. (W.8.8)</li> <li>I can evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source. (W.8.8)</li> <li>I can quote and paraphrase others' work while avoiding plagiarism. (W.8.8)</li> <li>I can use a standard format for citation. (W.8.8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-Unit 2 Assessment: Research Simulation (W.8.7, W.8.8)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice speaking and listening skills in preparation for a presentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can present claims and findings in a focused, coherent manner (use relevant evidence, sound reasoning and well-chosen details). (SL.8.4)</li> <li>I can use effective speaking techniques (appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation). (SL.8.4)</li> <li>I can integrate multimedia components and visual displays in a presentation to clarify information, strengthen claims and to add emphasis. (SL.8.5)</li> <li>I can adapt my speech for a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when indicated or appropriate. (SL.8.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End of Unit 2 Assessment: Position Speech: Which of Michael Pollan's four food chains would best feed the United States? (SL.8.4, SL.8.5, SL.8.6)</li> </ul>



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
<b>Unit 3: Writing a Position Paper: Which of Michael Pollan's Food Chains Would You Choose to Feed the US?</b>			
<b>Weeks 6-8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing a model position paper to determine criteria.</li> <li>Building a draft position paper, piece by piece, in which a claim is made to answer the question: Which of Michael Pollan's food chains would you choose to feed the US?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, artistically and ethically by making connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. I can self-select text to develop personal preferences.</li> <li>d. I can establish and use criteria to classify, select, and evaluate texts to make informed judgments about the quality of pieces.</li> </ul> </li> <li>I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of an informational text. (RI.8.1)</li> <li>I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text (RI.8.2)</li> <li>I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.8.1)</li> <li>I can introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. (W.8.1a)</li> <li>I can support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (W.8.1b)</li> <li>I can provide a concluding statement or</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-Unit Assessment: Draft Position Paper (RI.8.1, W.8.1, W.8.1a, W.8.1b, W.8.1e, W.8.9, L.8.4, L.8.4b, L.8.4c, L8.4d)</li> </ul>



		<p>section that follows from and supports the argument presented. (W.8.1e)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience. (W.8.4)</li><li>• With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed. (W.8.5)</li><li>• I can gather relevant information from a variety of sources. (W.8.8)</li><li>• I can use search terms effectively.</li><li>• I can evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source. (W.8.8)</li><li>• I can quote and paraphrase others' work while avoiding plagiarism. (W.8.8)</li><li>• I can use a standard format for citation. (W.8.8)</li><li>• I can use evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.8.9)</li><li>• I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.8.4)</li><li>• I can use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). (L.8.4b)</li><li>• I can consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and</li></ul>	
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		<p>digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. (L.8.4c)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). (L.8.4d)</li> <li>• I can accurately use 8<sup>th</sup> grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.8.6)</li> <li>• I can use resources to build my vocabulary. (L.8.6)</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise and edit draft position paper ready to publish.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of an informational text. (RI.8.1)</li> <li>• I can use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. (W.8.1c)</li> <li>• I can establish and maintain a formal style. (W.8.1d)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of Unit 3 Assessment: Final Draft of Position Paper and Reflection on Writing the Position Paper (RI.8.1, W.8.1c, W.8.1d)</li> <li>• Final Performance Task: Published Position Paper: Which of Michael Pollan's food chains would you choose to feed the US? Why? (RI.8.1, W.8.1, W.8.1a, W.8.1b, W.8.1c, W.8.1d, W.8.1e, W.8.9).</li> </ul>

### Preparation and Materials

In advance, read the article about the SCDM (Stakeholder Consequences Decision-Making) process to build your own background knowledge about it. You can download the article, "Learning to Make Systematic Decisions," at the following URL:

[http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/media/learning-make-systematicdecisions/?ar\\_a=1](http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/media/learning-make-systematicdecisions/?ar_a=1)

This article is not used with students during the module, but it provides some examples of how students have used this process in a science curriculum. Also, note that in this module students are not using the entire SCDM process; they will be learning only the Cascading Consequences and Stakeholders charts.