



every child
is capable of
greatness



**WIT &
WISDOM**[®]

Getting Started Guide
Grade 8 Module 3

Getting Started

This Getting Started Guide provides contextual information as you review the sample *Wit & Wisdom*® lesson. Follow along as we explore the contents of the lesson and learn how students gain content knowledge and develop skills in reading texts, writing, speaking, and listening.

More Meaningful Language Arts Instruction

Wit & Wisdom is a knowledge-building K–8 curriculum that has transformed English language arts (ELA) instruction in classrooms across the nation. Great Minds® believes that classrooms are places where students and teachers encounter wit, wisdom, wonder, rigor, and knowledge, and that literature, history, art, and science all have a place in ELA instruction. *Wit & Wisdom* helps students build rich layers of knowledge. Our learning design inspires teachers and students to experience complex texts and ideas on a deeper level by fostering the questioning spirit that will shape the next generation of great writers, thinkers, and leaders.

Understanding *Wit & Wisdom*

The [Wit & Wisdom Implementation Guide](#) helps educators bring the curriculum into their classrooms. The guide provides a detailed map of the resources built into the curriculum and offers advice on how to prepare to teach each module. We'll highlight some of the information covered in the Implementation Guide to help you explore *Wit & Wisdom* Grade 8 Module 3.



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Guidance Built into Every Lesson

Our teacher-writers crafted *Wit & Wisdom* to provide students with a knowledge-building learning experience while giving teachers support in every module to facilitate the learning. Examples of supports include the following:

- Getting Started videos for teachers
- [The Teacher Resource Pack](#)
- Preparation Protocols
- Scaffold, extension, and differentiation notes
- Point-of-use Teacher Notes
- Multilingual Glossaries
- [Curriculum Overview for Families](#)
- Teacher Edition appendices resources

Building Knowledge Through Complex Texts

Wit & Wisdom teacher-writers identified texts and topics that will build students' knowledge of key topics in history/social studies, science, literature, and the arts. These topics and associated texts increase in complexity across the year and vertically across grade bands. Students build knowledge across diverse disciplines throughout each of the modules in Grade 8.

Grade 8 Module Topics and Texts



Module 1:
The Poetics and Power of Storytelling



Module 2:
The Great War



Module 3:
What is Love?



Module 4:
Teens as Change Agents

What students learn in one lesson, an arc of lessons, a module, and a grade level prepares them for the next lesson, arc of lessons, module, and grade level. Each experience builds on the previous one, so students establish strong background knowledge.

A Map to the *Learning*

Wit & Wisdom modules are organized around a compelling topic, an **Essential Question**, a curated set of texts, and a series of **Focusing Questions** that build students' knowledge and skills and prepare students for the module's culminating assessment—the End-of-Module (EOM) Task. Modules are written in a careful horizontal progression, each one building on the previous one through routines, content knowledge, skills, developmental appropriateness, and rigor. Each module is designed to support educators with the introductory Module Overview, which reviews the module's focus, organization, and elements.

For a snapshot of Grade 8 Module 3: *What is Love?*, head to the **Module Overview**. The overview sums up the student learning goals, provides insights on previous knowledge students will use in this module, shows where in the curriculum students will use this module's learning to build new layers of understanding and complex knowledge, lists the core texts and topics students will examine, and finally lists the standards this module will address.

Diving into a *Lesson*

Grade 8 Module 3: *What is Love?*, Lesson 6

The module we've selected invites students to examine a question that has vexed humans—and the world's most renowned literary authors for generations: what is love? Deceptively simple, this question requires students to analyze ideas about the roles of individual choice, fate, power, and social status in the development of seemingly personal relations. In your sampler you will find a copy of Shakespeare's eternally popular comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which love transforms characters in unexpected ways.

The image shows three overlapping screenshots of a digital curriculum interface. The leftmost screenshot displays the 'Module Summary' page, featuring a quote from Shakespeare: "The course of true love never did run smooth" (1.1.136). The middle screenshot shows the 'Lesson 6' page, which includes a 'Focusing Question' (What defines the experience of love?), a 'Text' (A Midsummer Night's Dream), and a 'Prepare' section. The rightmost screenshot shows a navigation menu with options like 'Module Overview', 'Lesson 6 Overview', 'Welcome/Launch', and 'Learn - Explore the Play within the Play'.

Achieving the *Standards*

Wit & Wisdom integrates practice with the reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills students need in Kindergarten through Grade 8 to prepare for the demands of future study and ultimately for college and their careers. All reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language standards appear as Focus Standards in one or more modules, where they are explicitly taught, repeatedly practiced, and formally assessed. You can see a full list of the Focus Standards and Continuing Standards under **Standards** in the **Module Overview**.

Art in *Context*

We recognize that visual art is a universal and essential form of expression and communication, accessible to all learners. Each *Wit & Wisdom* module provides multiple opportunities for students to engage with significant works of art, such as paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, architecture, and photographs. *Wit & Wisdom* teacher-writers chose each work to inspire students to grapple with broader concepts related to each module's knowledge story. In Module 3, students analyze the subject, setting, and figures in Jan van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Portrait* and consider the meanings of its depiction of love.



The Arnolfini Portrait, Jan van Eyck

Text-Dependent Questions

In all grades of *Wit & Wisdom*, students learn how to read, access, and analyze complex texts by working through a sequence of five Content Stages: Wonder, Organize, Reveal, Distill, and Know.

Each lesson begins and ends with a Content Framing Question that provides an overarching learning purpose for the text-dependent tasks and **text-dependent questions (TDQs)** in the lesson. The Content Framing Questions align with the Content Stages for close reading and follow a repeating structure. Framing each lesson with familiar questions helps students build the habits of mind they need to become independent close readers. The discussions, text-dependent tasks, and TDQs in each Content Stage serve a distinct purpose, illuminating key close-reading approaches.



WONDER: Students generate their own observations and questions, forming an initial impression of the text.



ORGANIZE: This stage ensures literal comprehension of the text's characters, events, and setting and the historical facts upon which it is based.



REVEAL: Readers focus intently on different and unique aspects of the text, such as language choice, literary devices, or structure and analyze how each element affects meaning.



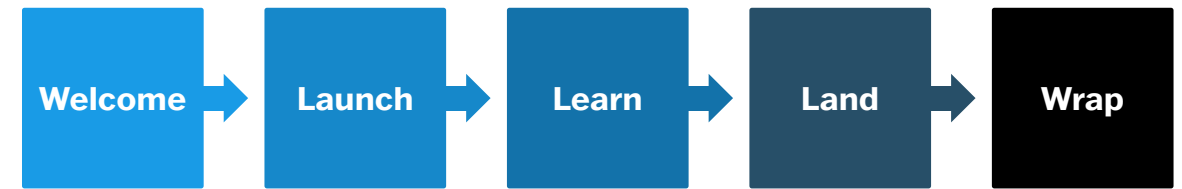
DISTILL: Students express the central ideas or themes of the text and determine how key aspects of the text support these ideas and themes.



KNOW: Students articulate how a text builds their knowledge, and they expand their knowledge by connecting the text to other texts and topics of study.

In Lesson 6, the Content Framing Question asks what's happening with the fairies in Act 2, Scene 1?

All *Wit & Wisdom* lessons organize student learning in the same five sections followed by a **Deep Dive**:



Grade 8 Module 3 Lesson 6

Lesson Section	Time	Description
Welcome	5 min.	Students will extend and deepen the line of inquiry from the first five lessons by examining the intriguing question of what defines the experience of love. They begin the lesson with an activity that encourages them to practice synthesizing evidence by leveraging what they previously wrote in their Response Journal.
Launch	10 min.	The teacher introduces the lesson's Content Framing Question : Organize: What's happening with the fairies in Act 2, Scene 1? In this lesson, students will enter the world of the fairies, examining how the characters and their conflicts drive the play's action. They will focus on the introduction of the fairies, exploring the experiences of love that surface in the beginning of Act 2.
Learn	55 min.	Through varied instructional routines and tasks, teachers support students as they engage in productive struggle with their peers. Students will summarize key details about Titania and Oberon and make inferences to explain each one's perception of the couple's problem. They will also context clues to predict the meaning of the word 'obscenely' and explain its impact in the scene.
Land	4 min.	The teacher facilitates student reflections on the Content Framing Question. Students are invited to have small group discussions about how Robin Goodfellow's mischievous character sets the scene for the fairies' conflict.
Wrap	1 min.	The teacher assigns students the task of reading Act 2, Scene 1, Lines 151-194 and annotating what they notice and wonder about. They are also asked to continue their fluency homework.
Deep Dive	15 min.	In this vocabulary deep dive, students will learn to use context to predict the meaning of a word, consult a glossary to clarify its precise meaning, and determine the intended word's meaning by using a dictionary.

Total Lesson Time = 90 min.

Volume of Reading

In addition to core and supplementary texts, the curriculum includes a list of Volume of Reading texts. These are literary and informational texts that teachers can use for additional classroom instruction and that students can select for independent reading. *Wit & Wisdom* Volume of Reading texts help students of all abilities expand their knowledge of each module topic. [View the full Volume of Reading titles for each grade.](#)

Multimedia Learning Approach

Great Minds gives students varied access points to learning in each module. Lessons include ways for teachers to incorporate media and create digital learning experiences to engage students in exploring module concepts. For example, in Module 3 Lesson 18, students screen the clip, [Globe On Screen 2014: A Midsummer Night's Dream](#) to more fully consider their roles as audience members by experiencing Shakespeare's drama in the context it was originally intended for: the stage.



Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

Wit & Wisdom provides five major types of assessments.

Assessment	Frequency	Type	What Does It Assess?
Check for Understanding	1+ per lesson	Formative	Lesson-level learning goal(s)
Focusing Question Task	3–6 per module	Formative or summative	Module learning goals for knowledge, reading, writing, speaking, and/or language
New-Read Assessment	2–3 per module	Formative or summative	Transfer of reading and/or language module learning goals to a new text or a portion of text focused on a topic that has been introduced
Socratic Seminar	2–3 per module	Formative or summative	Module learning goals for knowledge, speaking, and language
End-of-Module Task	1 per module	Summative	Module learning goals for knowledge, reading, writing, speaking, and/or language

For more information about the structure and design of major assessments in Grade 8 Module 3, look for the **Major Assessments** section under the **Module Overview**.

Major Assessments

Focusing Question Tasks	Elements that Support Success on the EDM Task	Standards
1. Write four informative/explanatory paragraphs that identify and explain one character's understanding of love from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . FQT 1 FQT 1 PDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize events from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>. Demonstrate an understanding of how a character from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> experiences love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1.b, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.8.8, W.8.9, W.8.10, W.8.11, W.8.12, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6
2. Write two informative/explanatory paragraphs that explain and evaluate Helen Fisher's argument in "In the Brain, Romantic Love Is Basically an Addiction." FQT 2 FQT 2 PDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delineate and evaluate an argument about love. Recognize strong evidence and various parts of an argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.8.8, W.8.9, W.8.10, W.8.11, W.8.12, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6
3. Write two informative/explanatory paragraphs that explain how the love triangle in Kurt Vonnegut's "EPICAC" draws on the complexities of love in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and also makes this pattern of events new. FQT 3 FQT 3 PDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of love. Organize evidence clearly and appropriately to demonstrate reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.8.8, W.8.9, W.8.10, W.8.11, W.8.12, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6
4. Write a one-paragraph argument about whether love is strange or true that is supported with reason, evidence and elaboration. FQT 4 FQT 4 PDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a claim and acknowledge an alternate or opposing claim. Elaborate and expand on evidence to support a claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.7, W.8.8, W.8.9, W.8.10, W.8.11, W.8.12, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, L.8.4, L.8.5, L.8.6

New-Read Assessments | Elements that Support Success on the EDM Task | Standards

Module Overview

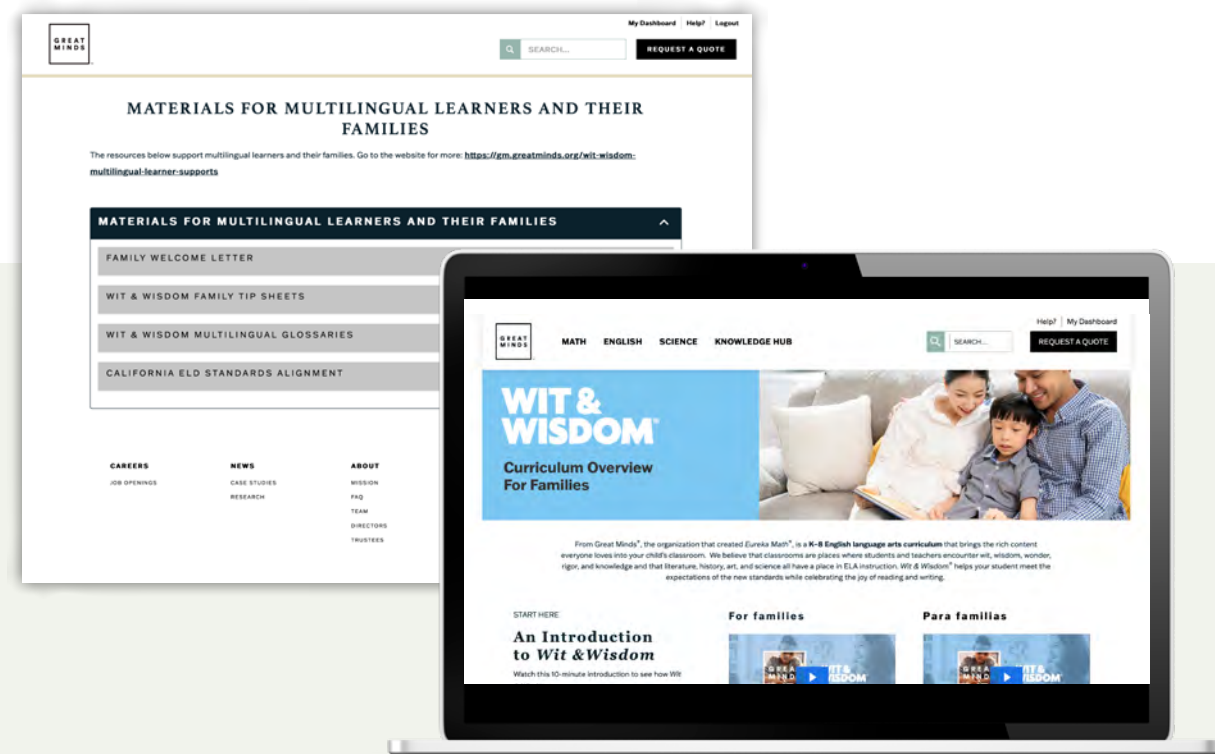
- Module Summary
- Essential Question
- Suggested Student Understandings
- Texts
- Module Learning Goals
- Module in Context
- Standards
- Major Assessments**

Enhanced Supports for Multilingual Learners

The Multilingual Learner Resources are research-aligned supports to boost grades K-5 multilingual learners' experience with *Wit & Wisdom* and can be found within the collection for each grade in the Digital Teacher Edition. Each resource includes:

- Multilingual Learner Resource Module Map, which lists the lessons and their supports in module sequence
- Overview of module learning and alignment to WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) and ELP (English Language Proficiency) standards
- Lesson-specific supports for each literacy strand: reading, writing, language, and speaking and listening; existing supports are listed first, followed by new recommendations.

The **Materials for Multilingual Learners and Their Families** resource found on the teacher dashboard invites families and caregivers of multilingual students to participate in their learning. Supports include multilingual glossaries for each grade, Welcome Letters, and Family Tip Sheets in multiple languages.



Engaging Learners and Boosting Literacy

At Great Minds, we strongly believe that every child is capable of greatness, especially when they're given access to engaging, knowledge-building instructional materials. For a deeper dive into the learning design behind *Wit & Wisdom*, check out the free Teacher Resource Pack or get in touch with your Great Minds representative.

Professional Learning From Trusted Colleagues

For schools and districts adopting *Wit & Wisdom*, we offer professional learning opportunities crafted by our team of teacher-writers. We've developed two tracks of learning, one for teachers and one for leaders. Our *Wit & Wisdom* Fellows, a cohort of seasoned *Wit & Wisdom* educators, also provide guidance and share their expertise on different platforms, from blogs and social media to digital and in-person training. Through ongoing support, we will help you effectively implement the curriculum and grow in confidence as you learn to lead your *Wit & Wisdom* classroom.



Please contact your Great Minds representative to access the digital *Wit & Wisdom* resources.