

**GREAT  
MINDS**

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*

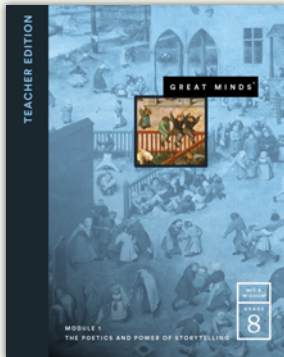
Our teacher-writers crafted *Wit & Wisdom* to provide students with a knowledge-building learning experience while giving teachers support in every module to facilitate the learning. Examples of supports include the following:

- Getting Started videos for teachers
- [Free Teacher Resources](#)
- 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



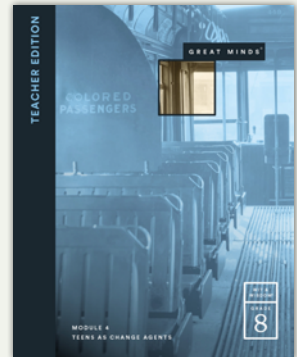
**Module 1:**  
*The Poetics and Power of Storytelling*



**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.

Grade 8 > Module 3

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## Module Summary

"The course of true love never did run smooth." (3.1.138).

—William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1600

In this module, students 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 examine ideas about the roles of individual choice, fate, power, and social status in the development of seemingly personal relations. Their primary testing ground will be Shakespeare's eternally popular comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which love transforms characters in unexpected ways.

This module challenges the idea that love is a strictly emotional and personal experience, removed from social attitudes, scientific definition, and forces beyond an individual's control. This study doesn't negate the personal importance of falling in love or being crushed by heartache; rather, it situates those experiences in larger contexts to ask about the motivations for love and whether we have the freedom to choose whom we love or even understand what love is. The module's questions compel students to combine intellectual and creative thinking, as they gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of love. They come to discover that love has never been simple or static but nonetheless remains a powerful force in our lives. The meaning of love is the perfect topic to introduce students to argument writing and claim-making, which they practice in written and oral formats.

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* offers a compelling and humorous way for students to think about love. Shakespeare's characters introduce multiple, conflicting perspectives about love and about its purpose, power, and agency, and students see how love weaves through the action and fiction of those at love's mercy in the play. Through this work, students discover the comedy and conflict that erupts when love takes unexpected turns. Magic and confusion abound as the fairies interfere with the human activities in the play. In addition to mirth, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* offers opportunities for deep reading and commenting on the rules of social norms, agency, and fate in the relationships between men and women. Numerous instances of figurative language and wordplay contribute to the density and complexity of this Shakespearean comedy, and they prompt an investigation of the power of figurative language and symbols to communicate humans' experiences of love.

The human experience of love is considered from a dramatically different perspective in a neuroscientific argument that provides provocative and groundbreaking information on the state of being in love. This is a challenging article, but the scientific point of view provides an excellent counterpart to Shakespeare's canonical comedy that, in some ways, seems to support similar claims about the power of love to overtake the individual. Furthermore, the article offers an outstanding example of an argument, as it clearly states a claim, counterclaim, and reasoning. Students also read the modern short story "EPICAC" by Kurt Vonnegut, which, although comedic, raises ethical questions about the actions undertaken in the name of love. Finally, students examine two compelling paintings, *The Arnolfini Portrait*, painted in 1434 by Jan Van Eyck, and *Birthdays*, painted

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Grade 8 > Module 3 > Lesson 6

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## Lesson 6: At a Glance

### AGENDA

**Welcome (5 min.)**  
Synthesize Evidence

**Launch (10 min.)**

**Learn (55 min.)**  
Explore the Play-within-a-Play (10 min.)  
Analyze a Character's Description and Role (15 min.)  
Examine Characters in Conflict (20 min.)  
Examine Argument Structure (10 min.)

**Land (4 min.)**  
Answer the Content Framing Question

**Wrap (1 min.)**  
Assign Homework

**Vocabulary Deep Dive: Explore Academic Vocabulary: Aggravate, obscenely (15 min.)**

### STANDARDS ADDRESSED

The full text of ELA Standards can be found in the Module Overview.

**Reading**  
• RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.3, RI.8.4

**Writing**  
• W.8.1a, W.8.1b, W.8.1c, W.8.2b, W.8.3b

**Speaking and Listening**  
• SL.8.1, SL.8.3

**Language**  
• L.8.4c  
• L.8.4a, L.8.4c, L.8.4d

**MATERIALS**  
• Handout 3b: Exemplar Argument Essay  
• Handout 6A: Character Description

### Learning Goals

Summarize key details about Titania and Oberon, and make inferences to explain each one's perception of the couple's problem (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.3, W.8.1b).

Write a summary that describes Oberon and Titania and explains how each character understands their conflict.

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 (L.8.4a, L.8.4c, L.8.4d).

Use context clues to predict the meaning of the word *obscenely*, and explain its impact in the scene.

Check for Understanding

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## 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.

W

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

O

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

R

**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.

D

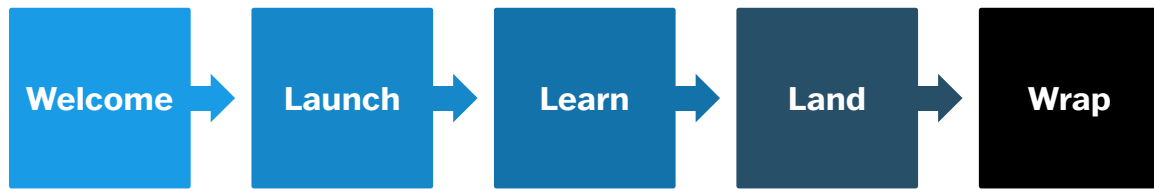
**DISTILL:** Students express the central ideas or themes of the text and determine how key aspects of the text support these ideas and themes.

K

**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 <b>Content Framing Question</b> : 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.
<b>Total Lesson Time = 90 min.</b>		

## 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.

## 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**.

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GB > Module 3

# Major Assessments

Focusing Question Task	Elements That Support Success on the EOM 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> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize events from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>.</li> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of how a character from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> experiences love.</li> </ul>	RL.8.1, 8.2, 8.4; W.8.2.b, 8.4, 8.9.a; L.8.2.a, 8.5.a
2. Write two informative/explanatory paragraphs that explain and evaluate Helen Fisher's argument in "In the Brain, Romantic Love Is Basically an Addiction."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delineate and evaluate an argument about love.</li> <li>Recognize strong evidence and various parts of an argument.</li> </ul>	RI.8.1, 8.8, W.8.2.a, b, c, d, e, 8.9.b; L.8.1.c, 8.1.d
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 makes this pattern of events new.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of love.</li> <li>Organize evidence clearly and appropriately to demonstrate reasons.</li> </ul>	RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.9, W.8.2.a, W.8.2.b, W.8.2.c, W.8.2.d, W.8.9.a; L.8.1.c, L.8.1.d
4. Write a one-paragraph argument about whether love is strange or true that is supported with reason, evidence, and elaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a claim and acknowledge an alternate or opposing claim.</li> <li>Elaborate and expand on evidence to support a claim.</li> </ul>	RL.8.1, RL.8.2; W.8.1.a, W.8.1.b, W.8.1.c, W.8.1.d, W.8.1.e, L.8.1.d, L.8.2.c

New-Read Assessment	Elements That Support Success on the EOM Task	Standards
1. Read an excerpt from Act 2, Scene 2, of <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . Respond to multiple-choice questions, and then write two paragraphs: the first translating Shakespeare, the second explaining the final incident in Scene 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze a specific incident in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>.</li> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of Shakespearean language and the action of the play.</li> </ul>	RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.4; W.8.10, L.8.4.a, L.8.5.a, L.8.5.c
2. Read a new informational article, "What Is Love? Five Theories on the Greatest Emotion of All." Respond to multiple-choice questions, and then write two short-answer responses that explain aspects of arguments in the article.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a claim, including the strongest evidence to support a claim.</li> <li>Analyze different qualities of love.</li> </ul>	RI.8.1, RI.8.3, RI.8.4, RI.8.8, W.8.10; L.8.4.a, L.8.5.c
3. Read an excerpt from Act 3, Scene 2, of <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . Respond to multiple-choice questions, and then write two paragraphs analyzing dramatic irony and Robin Goodfellow's actions in the whole portion of Act 3, Scene 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply an understanding of a particular character's experience in the play.</li> <li>Summarize an understanding of a large portion of <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>.</li> </ul>	RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.4, RL.8.6; W.8.10; L.8.4.a, L.8.4.c, L.8.5.a

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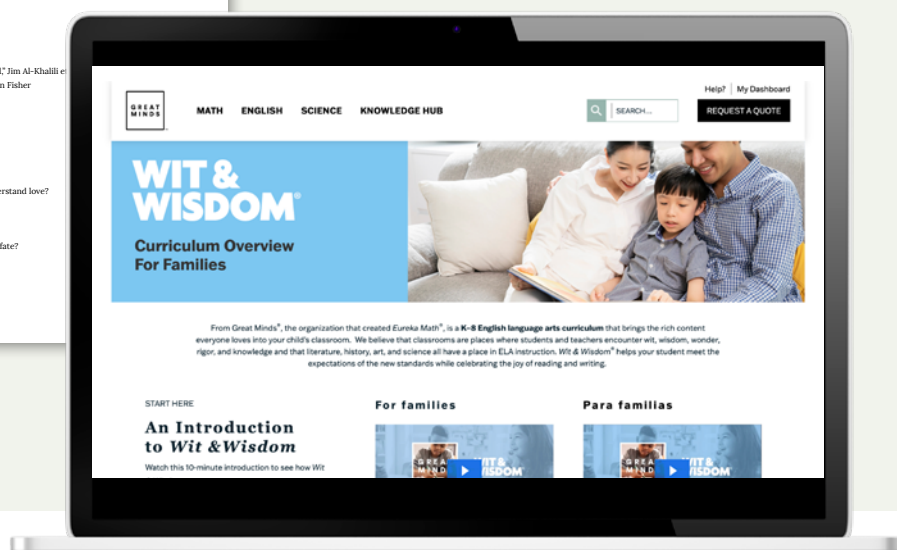
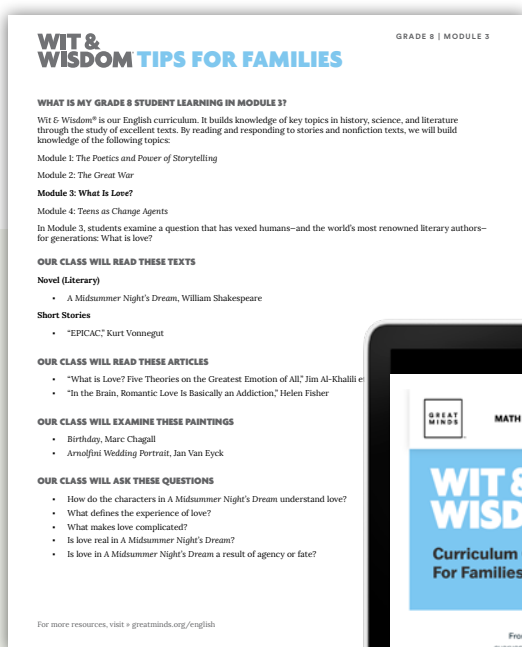
# Enhanced Supports for *Multilingual Learners*

**Wit & Wisdom Prologue™** supplements *Wit & Wisdom* instruction for Grades 6–8 **multilingual learners** by allowing them to preview core lesson content as they develop and strengthen their knowledge of oral language, vocabulary, and syntax. Through targeted scaffolds, *Prologue* ensures that multilingual learners have the same access to high-quality grade-level materials as their peers.

*Prologue* resources include:

- twelve lesson plans spread out through each module,
- a teacher guide for each grade,
- downloadable handouts and answer keys,
- a glossary available in English or English/Spanish, and
- free, on-demand training resources to support implementation.

The **Family Engagement Resources** invite 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 our free teacher resources 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. 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.