

# Unit 1

## Flowers for Algernon: Guidebook 3.0 Unit

Grade 8

ELA

### Unit Length and Description:

12 Weeks

Students read literary and informational texts about knowledge and intelligence to understand what happens when humans try to manipulate the minds of others and how our understanding of intelligence has evolved over time. Students express their understanding of these ideas by exploring how authors draw on traditional stories and develop characters and themes to teach us about ourselves and others.

### Standards:

#### Reading Literature:

2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
6. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

#### Reading Informational Text:

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.
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.

#### Writing:

1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
  - a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
  - b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
  - d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
  - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
    - a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
    - b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
    - c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
    - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
    - e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
    - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
  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.

### **Speaking and Listening:**

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
  - b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
  - c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
  - d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
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.

### **Language:**

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
  - a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
  - b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
  - c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
  - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.
  - b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
  - c. Spell correctly.
3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

**Enduring Understandings:**

- Students understand what happens when humans try to manipulate the minds of others and how our understanding of intelligence has evolved over time.
- Students understand how authors draw on traditional stories and develop characters and themes to teach us about ourselves and others.

**Essential Questions:**

- Consider how Charlie has changed from the beginning of "Flowers for Algernon." How does the surgery improve or worsen his quality of life?
- What are 2 different theories of intelligence?
- Are these theories accepted today? Why or why not?