Grade 8 - Unit 5 - Interpreting Dystopian Novels

Unit Focus

The literary genre of Dystopian, while not new, has made a significant resurgence in young adult literature. In this warped version of a utopia, the structure of a government-designed society is the antagonist in the story. As students enter into these dark worlds where the protagonists must struggle for physical and/or moral survival, they will explore the way authors alter our world to create the strange new world of dystopian texts. Through their interpretation of how the setting affects the characters, students will examine the social commentary the author is making while they also uncover universal themes.

Throughout this unit, students will be using information from the text to support their analysis of how the specific dystopian setting affects the story and how the author's message is delivered to readers to make some kind of social commentary. Finally, students will make connections among our world, the world the author has created, and history to demonstrate an understanding of the social issues the author is highlighting in the text.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

Standards

- Common Core
  - *English Language Arts: 8*
    - Reading Literature
    - Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1)*
    - 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2)*
    - 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3)*
    - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.9)*
    - Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new"). *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.9.A)*
    - 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1)*
    - 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.A)*

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

T1 Use strategies to comprehend and engage with a variety of increasingly complex texts to become independent, critical, and reflective thinkers.
T2 Evaluate the author's message, identify the author's purpose, and cite text evidence to support conclusions.
T3 Compare and contrast literary patterns across texts.

Meaning

Understanding(s)

Students will understand that...

U1 Readers make inferences about a text by using text evidence to support their thinking.
U2 Great literature is intentionally crafted to explore enduring human themes transferable across time and place.
U3 Readers ask and answer questions to deepen understanding and promote further thinking.
U4 Readers and writers engage in respectful discourse to consider multiple perspectives and become independent thinkers, all while suspending judgment.

Essential Question(s)

Students will keep considering...

Q1 How do I support and prove my thinking?
Q2 How does this text challenge my thinking about this topic? How should I read it?
Q3 How do people/characters, events, and ideas develop within the text?
Q4 How do readers and writers collaborate to come to a new understanding or position about a topic?

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.B)*
- Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.C)*
- Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.D)*
- 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4)*
- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.A)*
- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.B)*
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5)*
- Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.A)*
- Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.B)*
- Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute). *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5.C)*
- Language
- 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. *(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.6)*

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- Inquiry: Posing, pursuing, and refining significant questions to deepen understanding about a topic or issue. *(POG.1.1)*
- Analyzing: Examining information/data/evidence from multiple sources to identify possible underlying assumptions, patterns, and relationships in order to make inferences. *(POG.1.2)*

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge	Skill(s)
Students will know... **K1** Dystopian literature has specific elements and structure. **K2** Dystopian literature has specific elements that help readers interpret the text. **K3** Dystopian literature often reflects real world problems, conflicts, or social issues. **K4** Morphemes: Ced, ceed, cess; Volv, volu, volut; Cap, capt, cept, ceive; Fer, lat; ject	*Students will be skilled at...* **S1** Identifying the elements of dystopian literature across multiple texts. **S2** Using the elements of dystopian literature to make inferences. **S3** Analyzing dystopian literature for the purpose of building connections to the real world. **S4** Recognizing morphemes hold their own individual meaning.