

Grade Descriptions

Grade 3

When students enter third grade, they should be confident readers, able to sound out words, read with expression, and make meaning of what they read. They should be familiar with a repertoire of poems, stories, fables, folktales, myths, biographies, artistic and musical works, and historical and scientific texts. During this year, students continue to make connections between literature and other subjects. They read stories inspired by the sea while learning about oceans. They study myths from ancient Greece, learn about the branches of government in the United States, read about artists, musicians, and inventors, find common themes in trickster tales across many cultures, come to recognize the beauty of poetic language, and more. Throughout the units, they write reports, letters, stories, poems, and descriptions; they continue to work on grammar and punctuation. They participate in structured class discussions and learn how to take notes and conduct basic research. By the end of third grade, students should be ready to start writing simple essays and speeches. They are able to read on a range of topics and have background knowledge that will help them with the challenges of upper elementary school and beyond.

Grade 3 Units

- **UNIT 1** Stories Worth Telling Again and Again
- **UNIT 2** Inspired by the Sea
- **UNIT 3** Creative, Inventive, and Notable People
- **UNIT 4** The People, The Preamble, and the Presidents
- **UNIT 5** A Feast of Words on a Planet Called Earth and Beyond
- **UNIT 6** Fantastic Adventures with Dragons, Gods, and Giants

Grade 3 Unit 1**Stories Worth Telling Again and Again**

In this first six-week unit of third grade, students read stories that are worth telling and retelling.

Overview:

They read the tales of grandparents and they become familiar with the tradition of “trickster stories” across multiple cultures. They read a Langston Hughes poem, and review the parts of speech through Ruth Heller’s *World of Language* books. The students engage the texts in multiple ways: They write stories they want to preserve; and they build upon their knowledge of geographical settings of folktales from previous grades as they research the cultural backgrounds of the trickster tales. They also dramatically interpret a Hughes’ poem.

Essential Question:

Why do we hand stories from one generation to another?

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RL.3.2:** Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- **RL.3.3:** Describe how characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range or collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.1(c):** Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others.
- **W.3.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **L.3.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.3.1(a):** Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences.

Student Objectives:

- Tell stories from personal experiences and write narratives telling those stories.
- Revise and edit narratives with the help of peers and adults.
- Determine and analyze characters' traits motivations in realistic fiction such as *The Stories Julian Tells*.
- Distinguish nouns, pronouns, and verbs from each other, understanding the role of each in a sentence.
- Perform a Langston Hughes poem dramatically, with expression and appropriate phrasing for meaning.
- Compare and contrast two "grandparent" books, specifically, the characters and message of the books.
- Determine the trickster, the fool, the problem, and the solution in various cultures' trickster tales.
- Research one of the trickster tale's cultures, as part of responding to class-generated questions.
- Create a class book or a multi-media presentation based on the culture research.
- Discuss Paul Goble's artistic contribution to and reflection of the Native American culture.

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

Our stories:

- *The Stories Julian Tells* (Ann Cameron and Ann Strugnell) (E)
- *More Stories Julian Tells* (Ann Cameron and Ann Strugnell) (EA)
- *The Stories Huey Tells* (Ann Cameron and Roberta Smith) (EA)
- *Gloria's Way* (Ann Cameron and Lis Toft) (EA)

Grandparents' stories:

- *Grandfather's Journey* (Allen Say) (EA)
- *Tea with Milk* (Allen Say) (EA)
- *Song and Dance Man* (Karen Ackerman and Stephen Gammel)
- *Snowed in with Grandmother Silk* (Carol Fenner and Amanda Harvey)
- *Annie and the Old One* (Miska Miles and Peter Parnall)
- *Through Grandpa's Eyes* (Patricia Maclachlan and Deborah Kogan Ray) (EA)
- *Knots on a Counting Rope* (John Archambault, Ted Rand, and Bill Martin, Jr.)
- *The Memory String* (Eve Bunting and Ted Rand)

Cultural trickster stories:

- *Tops & Bottoms* (Janet Stevens) (E)

- *Bruh Rabbit and the Tar Baby Girl* (Virginia Hamilton and James Randome)
- *Love and Roast Chicken: A Trickster Tale from the Andes Mountains* (Barbara Knutson)
- *Iktomi and the Buzzard* (Paul Goble)
- *Iktomi and the Coyote* (Paul Goble)
- *Iktomi and the Boulder* (Paul Goble)
- *Iktomi and the Berries* (Paul Goble)
- *Iktomi Loses His Eyes* (Paul Goble)

Poems

- “Grandpa’s Stories” (Langston Hughes) (E)
- “Aunt Sue’s Stories” (Langston Hughes) (EA)
- “Mother to Son” (Langston Hughes) (EA)
- “By Myself” (Eloise Greenfield)

Stories (Read Aloud)

- *The Apple and the Arrow* (Mary Buff)
- *Sign of the Beaver* (Elizabeth Geroge Speare)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- “Your World” (Georgia Douglas Johnson) (E)
- “The Telephone” (Robert Frost) (EA)
- “Nani” (Alberto Rios)
- “You Are Old, Father William” (Lewis Carroll) (EA)
- “For want of a nail, the shoe was lost...” (Traditional)

Informational Texts

Students will do internet research on a culture related to a favorite trickster tale:

- African American slave culture
- European culture (choose specific country)
- Native American (Plains) culture
- Andes Mountain culture

Informational Text (Read Aloud)

- *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions Around the World* (Selby Beeler and G. Brian Karas) (E)
- *Merry-Go-Round: A Book About Nouns* (World of Language) (Ruth Heller)
- *Mine, All Mine: A Book About Pronouns* (World of Language) (Ruth Heller)
- *A Cache of Jewels and Other Collective Nouns* (World of Language) (Ruth Heller)
- *Kites Sail High: A Book About Verbs* (World of Language) (Ruth Heller)

Art, Music, and Media

Art

- Paul Goble, works (1933-present)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Teacher Notes: *This unit is a natural fit for inviting grandparents into the classroom to tell their own stories or to read the stories under the "grandparent story" section. At the beginning of the school year, you may see some unique opportunities to engage the grandparents with their own grandchildren's learning or to volunteer in the classroom. A Grandparents' Day would be a perfect celebration to include in this unit.*

Class Discussion / Literature

Introduce the unit by asking students if they have family stories they love to tell. Allow students to share favorite family stories for a few minutes. Introduce that day's new chapter book: *The Stories Julian Tells* (Ann Cameron and Ann Strugnell). As students read the first chapter of the book, "The Pudding Like a Night on the Sea," ask them to examine Julian as a character. You might post these leading questions and discuss their meaning by having your students ask you the questions as their new teacher: How would you describe Julian?

- What are his character traits?
- Why does he do what he does?

Read the chapter aloud to the students as they follow along. Continue reading the subsequent chapters in the days that follow, encouraging as much independent reading as possible. Continue to focus on character traits and motivation. As students finish this book, allow them to choose to move to other character stories in this series or to continue with Julian. This provides the opportunity to compare and contrast books and /or characters by the same author. (RL.3.3, SL.3.6, SL.3.1b, SL.3.4, RL.3.9)

Narrative Writing

Students have been sharing favorite family stories so shift the discussion to how stories are passed down from grandparents specifically. Then, assign the following: "Interview one of your family members (e.g., a parent, grandparent, or aunt) to learn a family story. Save the story by taking notes or by recording it digitally. Use the story you record to write a narrative." This writing project should be worked on over an extended period of time, revising and editing using the standards as guidance. (W.3.3, W.3.4, W.3.5, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Class Discussion / Language

Ruth Heller has written a series of informational books that teach parts of speech. Remind students they learned about "nouns" in second grade. As you read the book *Merry-Go-Round: A Book About Nouns* (Ruth Heller), have the students listen for more information about nouns. Pause as you read to allow the students to share what they are learning or to ask questions. Review nouns, pronouns, and verbs using the Ruth Heller series. Create word banks for each part of speech and add vocabulary from class work to reinforce the application. (RI.3.1, L.3.1a, L.3.1b, L.3.1c, L.3.1d, L.3.1e, L.3.1f)

Poetry Performance

Give the students this prompt: "Choose one of the Langston Hughes poems to memorize or read interpretively. Be sure to communicate the meaning of the poem in the way you recite or read it." Demonstrate fluent reading to the children, being sure to show how meaningful phrasing and expression guide the dramatic interpretation of a poem. (RF.3.4b)

Literary Response

After reading *Knots on a Counting Rope* (John Archambault, Ted Rand, and Bill Martin, Jr.), review the character traits of the boy and his grandfather. Have the students partner up and list three characteristics for each. Introduce another story that honors grandparents: *Through Grandpa's Eyes* (Patricia MacLachlan and Deborah Kogan Ray). As students finish reading the new book, have them work with the same partner to list at least three characteristics of each character in the new story.

- How are the grandparents similar and different?
- How are the grandchildren similar and different?
- What is the message of each book? What do you think the author might have wanted you to learn? (RL.3.3)

Literary Response

Lead a discussion with the students to introduce the genre of trickster tales, using questions such as these:

- One of the types of folk stories handed down in cultures is a "trickster tale." What root word do you hear in "trickster"?
- Have you ever played a trick on someone?
- Have you ever had a trick played on you?

Tell students that "trickster tales" are stories that involve playing tricks to solve problems, and to make them even more interesting, that they are from different cultures. As students read, encourage them to think about characters and their traits. Remind them that the story is not just in the text but also in the illustrations. The illustrations help to tell the story and to give hints about the culture or origin. Use the following questions to guide discussions after they (or you) read the trickster stories. Eventually require students to answer these questions independently.

- Who is the trickster?
- Who is the fool who gets tricked?
- What was the problem in the story?
- How did the trick solve the problem?
- Think about what the message of the story might be and why these stories have been told for hundreds of years. (RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.7)

Shared Research

Students have read a variety of trickster tales from various cultures. Now it is time to center on one of the cultures. You could, for example, choose to focus on the Plains Native American culture after reading the "Iktomi" tales by Paul Goble by assigning a short class research project on it. In small groups, have students brainstorm questions that can be answered about the culture. Assign each small group a question to answer. Use the internet, encyclopedias, and informational books to answer questions. When the students have finished their projects, create a class book or multimedia presentation to show what they have learned about the culture. When you are finished, ask "Why did the Plains Indians create trickster stories to tell to their

children?" This activity can be repeated with any of the cultures from which trickster stories came. (W.3.6, W.3.7, W.3.8)

Class Discussion / Art Appreciation

Paul Goble is a talented artist who though *not* a Native American, has been fascinated by Native American life for many years and has dedicated his much of his art to the culture. Read the following quote to the students:

"[Goble's] art is tremendous because he is able to recreate the traditional forms with great accuracy and detail. The designs he draws are completely authentic and his colors are the same ones that were used by the old-timers before the reservation days. He is able to recreate the spirit of the old stories with his illustrations and his words." —Joe Medicine Crow, Crow Tribal Historian, and oldest living member of the Crow Tribe.

Discuss the following questions with the students:

- What does this quote mean?
- How do you think this quote by a Native American made Paul Goble feel when he heard it for the first time? (SL.3.1c, RL.3.7)

Terminology:

- author
- illustrator
- noun
- verb
- collective noun
- pronoun
- verb tenses
- generational stories
- trickster tales
- the trickster
- the fool
- problem
- solution
- internet search
- shared research
- narrative writing
- revising
- editing
- character traits
- character motivation

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:

This unit teaches:

- **Art:** Artist as historian (e.g., Paul Goble)

- **Geography:** Cultures (e.g., Plains Indians and Andes Mountain tribes)

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **Music:** Music of featured cultures (e.g. spirituals and Quechua songs)
- **Geography:** U.S. geography (as related to Native Americans)
- **History:** Native American Nations (e.g., the Bering land bridge theory, Southwest, Eastern “Woodland”)

Grade 3 Unit 2

Inspired by the Sea

In this second six-week unit of third grade, students read stories, poetry, and informational texts that are inspired by a love of or curiosity with the sea.

Overview:

They read, for example, about a character who longs for the sea and characters who live near the sea. They become familiar with the wide range of informational text on the topic of oceans and water. They continue to review the parts of speech by comparing two poems written about oysters. The students engage the texts in multiple ways: They write stories modeled after the haystack scene in *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (Patricia MacLachlan), showing action, thoughts and feelings; and they build their knowledge of ocean animals as they research their favorite sea creature.

Essential Question: *Why does the sea inspire writers?*

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RI.3.2:** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- **RI.3.9:** Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.
- **RL.3.1:** Ask and answer such questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **L.3.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.3.1(a):** Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences.
- **W.3.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **W.3.3(b):** Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range or collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- **SL.3.1(a):** Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

Student Objectives:

- Cite textual evidence to support an interpretation of characters' motivations.
- Write imaginary narratives using dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings.
- Explain the function of adverbs and adjectives in speech, literature, and writing.
- Compare and contrast two poems written about oysters.
- Compare and contrast two informational books about a drop of water.
- Determine the main idea and supporting details of informational text.
- Research a favorite sea animal.
- Write a short informative piece about a favorite sea animal.

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

- *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (Patricia MacLachlan) (E)
- *The Storm* (The Lighthouse Family series) (Cynthia Rylant and Preston McDaniels) (E)
- *The Whale* (The Lighthouse Family series) (Cynthia Rylant) (EA)
- *The Raft* (Jim LaMarche) (E)
- *Amos & Boris* (William Steig) (E)
- *Canoe Days* (Gary and Ruth Wright Paulsen)
- *Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe* (Vera B. Williams)

Poems

- "At the Sea-side" (Robert Louis Stevenson) (EA)
- "Sleepy Pearl" (Frances Gorman Risser) "Do Oysters Sneeze?" (Jack Prelutsky)
- "Undersea" (Marchette Chute)
- "Beach Stones" (Lilian Moore)
- "The Waves" (Gertrude M. Jones)
- "A Sand Witch for a Sandwich" (Emily Sweeney)
- "A Wave" (Gussie Osborne)

Stories (Read Aloud)

- “The River Bank” in *The Wind in the Willows* (Kenneth Grahame)
- *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (Holling Clancy Holling)
- *Minn of the Mississippi* (Holling Clancy Holling)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- “The Jumblies” (Edward Lear) (E)
- “From the Shore” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
- “Seal Lullaby” (Rudyard Kipling) (EA)
- “Song of a Shell” (Violet L. Cuslidge)
- “The Barracuda” (John Gardner)

Informational Texts**Informational Text**

- *Whales* (Smithsonian) (Seymour Simon) (EA)
- *Life in a Kelp Forest* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Sea Turtles* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Partners in the Sea* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Octopuses and Squids* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Seahorses and Sea Dragons* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Disasters at Sea* (DK Readers) (Andrew Donkin)
- *Titanic: Disaster that Rocked the World* (DK Readers) (Mark Dubowski)
- *Journey of a Humpback Whale* (DK Readers) (Caryn Jenner)
- *Shark Attack!* (DK Readers) (Cathy East Dubowski)

Informational Text (Read Aloud)

- *A Drop of Water: A Book of Science and Wonder* (Walter Wick) (E)
- *A Drop Around the World*(Barbara Shaw McKinney and Michael S. Maydak)
- *John Muir: America's Naturalist* (Images of Conservationists) (Thomas Locker)
- *Rachel Carson: Preserving a Sense of Wonder* (Thomas Locker and Joseph Bruchac)
- *The Lamp, the Ice, and the Boat Called Fish: Based on a True Story*(Jacqueline Briggs Martin and Beth Krommes)
- *The Cod's Tale*(Mark Kurlansky and S.D. Schindler) excerpts, e.g., informative illustrations / text features)
- *Swimming with Hammerhead Sharks*(Kenneth Mallory)
- *Survival Secrets of Sea Animals* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Predators of the Sea* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Life on a Coral Reef* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Dolphins, Seals, and Other Sea Mammals* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Crabs* (Mary Jo Rhodes and David Hall)
- *Many Luscious Lollipops: A Book About Adjectives* (World of Language)(Ruth Heller)

- *Up, Up and Away: A Book About Adverbs* (World of Language) (Ruth Heller)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Teacher Notes: *This unit can be tailored to meet science or social studies standards. By filling your class library with books about food chains, ecosystems, and/or nature preservation, you have a rich science unit. By focusing on the geography of and people living near to lakes, rivers, and oceans, you have a strong social studies unit.*

Class Discussion / Literary

Review characters and character motivation from the first unit. Introduce the book *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (Patricia MacLachlan) as historical fiction: a fictional story from the days of settling the prairies. Introduce also the name of the unit: "Inspired by the Sea." As you read the first chapter of this book, challenge students to look for specific places in the text where they can prove that a character in the story is "inspired by the sea." Ask students to give you a "thumbs up" when they hear / see a line in the text that talks about a character "inspired by the sea." Students should easily detect Sarah as the character motivated by her love of the sea. One of her letters reads, "I have always loved to live by the sea." Create a chart and write down any evidence of Sarah's motivation. Discuss what motivates the other characters. Each day as students come together to discuss the reading, instruct students to be prepared to give textual evidence of Sarah's motivation and the motivation of at least one other character. (RL.3.3, RL.3.1, SL.3.4, SL.3.1a)

Narrative Writing / Literary Activity

Chapter 5 of *Sarah, Plain and Tall* contains a narrative about "haystacks." Prepare students to write well-developed narratives and guide a discussion of the way Patricia MacLachlan wrote the haystack section by asking them the following questions about the narrative in the chapter:

- How many of you wanted to try sliding down a haystack after reading that scene?
- What was it in her writing that made you feel like you were there?
- How did you know what the characters were feeling?
- How did the dialogue help you to "be there"?
- How did she communicate action? Thoughts? Feelings?
- How did she order the events?
- How did she close the scene?

Then give the students this prompt: "Imagine that you are in Massachusetts with your family. You are on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and you are allowed to ride down a sand dune. Write a story about your experience, showing the actions, your thoughts, and your feelings through dialogue and description." (RL.3.1, W.3.3, W.3.4, L.3.2c, W.3.5, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, W.3.10, L.3.6, L.3.3a)

Class Discussion / Language Activity

Many Luscious Lollipops (Ruth Heller) teaches about adjectives through several language lessons. Read this book to the class, covering a few pages a day so that students may incorporate what they learn each day into conversation and writing. Use the adjectives and adverbs (which are covered in another Heller book, *Up, Up and Away*) to build interesting sentences about the sea and in students' own narratives. Be sure students can explain the function of each part of speech (adjectives and adverbs) and its use in literature, speech, and writing. (L.3.1g, L.3.2d, L.3.5b)

Class Discussion / Poetry

Read two poems aloud that have similar topics such as: "Sleepy Pearl" (Frances Gorman Risser) and "Do Oysters Sneeze" (Jack Prelutsky) Ask the students the following questions:

- What do you think is the message of each poem? Cite evidence from the poem, by stanza and line, that hints at the meaning.
- How are these poems similar? How are they different?
- Which of the poems do you think is the best? Why? (RL.3.5, RL.3.9, SL.3.1a, SL.3.1d)

Class Discussion / Informational Text

Read aloud two books with similar topics, such as: *A Drop of Water: A Book of Science and Wonder* (Walter Wick) and *A Drop Around the World* (Barbara Shaw McKinney). As you read the books, discuss the following questions:

- What is the main idea of the book? Of each section?
- What are the key points used to create the main idea?
- How are the two books similar?
- How are they different?
- What are the text features used by the authors/illustrators to teach more about a drop of water?
- Do these books have the same purpose?
- Does one of the books teach more than the other?
- How could one of the books be improved? (SL.3.2, SL.3.1d, RI.3.2, RI.3.9, RI.3.6)

Informational Text

Choose a book that has good examples of text features (e.g., cross-section diagram, table) such as *The Cod's Tale*(Mark Kurlansky). Create a list of all the text features the students will see in the book. Display the text as you read, instructing students to look for text features as you turn each page. Give each student one Post-It. As they spot a text feature, have them write the page number on the Post-It and put it by the name of the text feature on the list. Discuss the purpose of each text feature in general and in the text you are reading. (RI.3.5)

Writing / Informational Text

Give the students this prompt: "You have read books about animals that live in the sea. Think about which animal has been most interesting to you. Write a paragraph about what you have learned about a specific sea animal: its habitat, its adaptations, and its diet. You may want to do more research on the Internet, in encyclopedias, or in a library book to add to your learning." (SL.3.1a, W.3.10, W.3.2, RI.3.2)

Language Activity

Choose an interesting sea animal from the books you have read together as a class. Ask the students to come up with five adjectives each to describe the animal. Generate a list of adjectives from the list of student ideas. Then have students come up with movements the animal makes and five adverbs to go with the movements. Create short sentences using the adjectives and adverbs (e.g., "Huge whales glide *gracefully*."). After students write several of the sentences on a chart, have them practice making new sentences with

comparative or superlative adjectives and adverbs (e.g., "This huge whale glides *more gracefully* than that one.") (L.3.1g, SL.3.6)

Terminology:

- adjectives
- adverbs
- author
- comma
- compare
- contrast
- dialogue
- illustrator
- inspire
- line
- motivation
- poem
- poet
- quotation marks
- stanza
- text evidence
- text features

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:

This unit teaches:

- **Geography:** Rivers of North America (e.g., the Mississippi River and the St. Lawrence River)
- **Science:** Aquatic life (e.g., animals, habitats, and environmental conservation)

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **Geography:** Exploration (e.g., Search for the Northwest Passage)
- **History:** Life on the prairie (e.g., related to *Sarah, Plain and Tall*)
- **Science:** Animal classifications (e.g., amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals) and ecology (e.g., interdependence, ecosystems, and environmental conservation)

Grade 3 Unit 3**Creative, Inventive, and Notable People**

In this third six-week unit of third grade, students read biographies about musicians, artists, and inventors of the early twentieth century.

Overview:

They read fiction that shows the passion of an artist and poetry that shows a different way of thinking, and biographies of creative people living and working in the same time period. They also read about conjunctions and use them while composing sentences that describe what they learned about the inventors. They create a Power Point presentation and build upon the conjunctions “word work” by writing an opinion piece about a favorite person in the unit. Finally, they record themselves fluently reading a poem, illustrate the poem, and post them together on the web for parents to enjoy.

Essential Question:

How are the words “creative” and “inventive” similar? How are they different?

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RI.3.3:** Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
- **RL.3.1:** Ask and answer such questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range or collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.1(a):** Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- **W.3.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **L3.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.3.1(h):** Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
- **L.3.1(i):** Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Student Objectives:

- Define and apply words such as “creative” and “inventive” to describe artists, musicians, and inventors in the early twentieth century.
- Work with base words to create new words by adding prefixes and suffixes.
- Ask and answer questions about a fiction book related to being an artist.
- Read biographies of artists, musicians, and inventors.
- Take simple research notes while reading those biographies.
- Design and create five slides for a Power Point presentation on an inventor.
- Learn about conjunctions and use them to create simple, compound, and complex sentences related to inventors.
- Write an opinion piece based on the three key words in this unit: creative, inventive, and notable.
- Record themselves reading a poem.
- Create an accompanying illustration that captures the poem’s meaning and display on a class web page.

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

- *Emma’s Rug* (Allen Say) (EA)
- *Rocks in His Head* (Carol Otis Hurst and James Stevenson)

Poems

- “Paper I” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
- “Paper II” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
- “The Folk Who Live in Backward Town” (Mary Ann Hoberman)
- “Jimmy Jet and his TV Set” (Shel Silverstein)

Stories (Read Aloud)

- *The Sign Painter* (Allen Say) (E)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- *The Pot That Juan Built* (Nancy Andrews-Goebel and David Diaz)
- *No One Saw: Ordinary Things Through the Eyes of an Artist* (Bob Raczka)

Informational Texts

Informational Text

- *My Name is Georgia: A Portrait* (Jeanette Winter)
- *Vincent van Gogh: Sunflowers and Swirly Stars* (Brad Bucks and Joan Holub)
- *The Yellow House: Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin Side by Side* (Susan Goldman Rubin)
- *Picasso and the Girl with a Ponytail* (Laurence Anholt)
- *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson* (Pam Munoz Ryan and Brian Selznick)
- *Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuoso* (Andrea Davis Pinkney)
- *Thomas Edison: A Brilliant Inventor* (*TIME For Kids* Biographies) (Editors of *TIME For Kids* with Lisa DeMauro)
- *Henry Ford: Putting the World on Wheels* (*TIME for Kids* Biographies) (Editors of *TIME For Kids* with Dina El Nabli)
- *Alexander Graham Bell: Inventor of the Telephone* (*TIME for Kids* Biographies) (Editors of *TIME For Kids* with John Micklos, Jr.)
- *Amelia and Eleanor Go For a Ride* (Pam Munoz Ryan and Brian Selznick)

Informational Text (Read Aloud)

- *The Museum Book: A Guide to Strange and Wonderful Collections* (Jan Mark and Richard Holland) (E)
- *Ah, Music!* (Aiki) (E)
- *Paul Gauguin* (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists) (Mike Venezia)
- *Van Gogh* (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists) (Mike Venezia)
- *Here's Looking at Me: How Artists See Themselves* (Bob Raczka)
- *Inventing the Future: A Photobiography of Thomas Alva Edison* (Marfe Ferguson Delano)
- *To Fly: The Story of the Wright Brothers* (Wendie Old and Robert Andrew Parker)
- *Hidden Worlds: Looking Through a Scientist's Microscope* (Stephen Kramer and Dennis Kunkel)
- *Fantastic! Wow! And Unreal!: A Book About Interjections and Conjunctions* (Ruth Heller)

Art, Music, and Media

Artists

- Pablo Picasso, *Gertrude Stein* (1906-1906)
- Pablo Picasso, *Self Portrait with Palette* (1901)
- Vincent van Gogh, *Self Portrait* (1887-1888)
- Alice Neel, *Faith Ringgold* (1976)

Musicians

- Richard Avedon, *Marian Anderson, Contralto, New York* (1955)
- World-Telegram staff photographer, *Louis Armstrong* (1953)
- Arnold Newman, *Igor Stravinsky* (1946)

Writers

- Winold Reiss, *Portrait of Langston Hughes* (no date)
- Edoardo Gelli, *The Last Portrait of Mark Twain* (1904)
- Artist Unknown, *Helen Keller with Anne Sullivan* (1888)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Teacher Notes: Although the fiction titles are more contemporary, the artists, musicians, and inventors are all from the twentieth century. You may want to study the artists and musicians in the first half of the unit and then spend the last three weeks on the inventors.

Class Discussion

Begin this new unit with a discussion of its title: "Creative, Inventive, and Notable People." Use the following questions to guide the conversation:

- What does it mean to be "creative"? (base word "create")
- Whom do you know that is creative?
- What other words can we make from the base word "create"? (Possible answers: creation, created, creating, recreate, uncreative, and recreation)
- What does it mean to be "inventive"? (base word "invent")
- Whom do you know that is inventive?
- What does it mean to be "notable"? (base word "note")
- Whom do you know that is notable?
- How are the words "creative" and "inventive" similar?
- How are they different? (RF.3.3c, L.3.5b, L.3.5c, L.3.4c, L.3.4b)

Class Discussion / Literary

Introduce *The Sign Painter*, written and illustrated by Allen Say (who also wrote *Grandfather's Journey* from unit two). In this book about a man and a boy who paint billboards, the illustrations play an important role in telling the story. While you read it aloud, challenge the students to question and think, and ask them to jot down questions. Read at a leisurely pace so that students have the opportunity to ask questions about specific illustrations, words, or pages of the book where they might lose focus or struggle with understanding the story. (RL.3.1)

Informational Reading / Note Taking

Reading biographies of artists and musicians provides an opportunity for students to focus on noting important information in the text. Tell students that while they are reading or listening to someone else read a biography, they should note the key events that occur in the subject's life. Have students recall and generate a list of the key question words to consider such as "who, where, when, why, what, and how." Divide students into small groups and assign each group a question stem. Have students create a chart with the questions down the left hand column of the chart. Then create a similar chart on the board or a notepad in the front of the room. Using the key question words to guide comprehension, read aloud a biography of a famous person such as the singer Marian Anderson. As students hear answers to their questions have them raise their hands. Write answers on a class chart and have the students write the information on their own charts. (RI.3.7, RI.3.1, RI.3.3, W.3.8, L.3.2a)

Research / Informative Writing

Have students choose an age-appropriate biography to read from a series, such as the *TIME for Kids* series of biographies. Instruct the students to note-take based on the key questions (as described in the previous activity) while reading the biographies. Then partner the students to share information and create a short series of PowerPoint slides to answer each of the questions (who, where, when, why, what, and how) as well as to highlight three to five key events in the person's life. Have students combine

several questions on one slide such as “where” and “when.” Limit each pair to a total of 5 slides, with the last slide showing the key events in the inventor’s life. Combine the slides into one presentation, and present it to an audience such as the students’ parents or another classroom. (SL.3.1a,SL.3.4,RI.3.3, W.3.8, W.3.2, W.3.5, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, W.3.10)

Research / Informational Text / Oral Presentation

Have each child choose an invention they love (e.g., an iPod or a bicycle). If students prefer, allow them to choose a painting by one of the featured artists or a song performed by one of the featured musicians (see Art, Music, and Media). Students will then research who invented the object. Have students create a presentation of the information they discover about the inventor of their favorite object. Allow students to photograph the object so that they can display an image of it while they tell about the history of their invention. If students picked a work of art or song, display a photograph or play a recording as the student shares their research. Require students to answer the guiding question stems (“who, where, when, why, what, and how”) in their presentations. (RI.3.5, W.3.7, W.3.8, SL.3.4)

Language Activity / Graphic Organizer

Using Ruth Heller’s book *Fantastic! Wow! And Unreal!: A Book About Interjections and Conjunctions*, teach the coordinating (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so) and subordinating conjunctions (after, before, when, while, since, until). Apply conjunctions by creating simple, compound, and complex sentences from a cause and effect graphic organizer. For example, consider the invention of the assembly line by Henry Ford.

- What caused him to invent it?
- What were the effects of the invention?

down. Look for the use of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions in their work. (L.3.1h, L.3.1i, RI.3.3)

Fluency / Poetry Activity

The poems in this unit show how poets look at the world in a different way. Students should choose one of the poems and then practice reciting it in the way that best exemplifies the meaning of the poem. With a video camera, record the students reading poems. Then, have students create an accompanying illustration to display while you play the recording of their poetry reading. Alternately, both the recording and the illustration could be put on the web for parents to listen to and see. (SL.3.5, RF.3.4b)

Reflective / Opinion Writing

Give the students this prompt: “You began this unit with a discussion about three words: creative, inventive, and notable. Choose the person from this unit that you believe to be the most creative, inventive and notable. Write about the person you choose, and give reasons how they are creative, inventive and notable.” (W.3.1, L.3.2)

Class Discussion / Art Connection

Select one work for a large group discussion. Discussion should focus on choices that the artist made to communicate the importance of the subject.

Contextual Research Activity / Art Connection

Have students select a work of art to view. While viewing the work, students will create a list of questions about the person seen in the work. Students will use these questions as inspiration for research on their subject. Students will use their research to write an essay on their artist, including their thoughts on why they believe that the person is considered creative, inventive, or notable.

Terminology:

- biographies
- complex sentence
- compound sentence
- coordinating conjunction
- note taking
- power point
- presentation
- research questions
- simple sentence
- subordinating conjunction

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:

This unit teaches:

- **Art:** Picasso, Alice Neel, and van Gogh
- **Music:** Jazz (e.g., Ella Fitzgerald) and opera (e.g., Marian Anderson)
- **History:** Inventors (e.g., Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell)
- **Science:** Inventions (e.g., the assembly line, light bulb, and telephone) and flight (e.g., the Wright Brothers and Amelia Earhart)

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **History:** Inventors (e.g., before and after the twentieth century)
- **Science:** Light/optics (e.g., light, reflection, and lenses), sound (e.g., sound waves, the human voice, and the human ear), and vision/hearing

Grade 3 Unit 4**The People, The Preamble, and the Presidents**

In this fourth six-week unit of third grade, students read about the people, the Preamble (to the Constitution), and the presidents of the United States.

Overview:

Building on knowledge of the notable people in the last unit, students read informational texts about the people who came to America and established a new government in the eighteenth century. They read about the lives of presidents, research one president of interest, and write a “bio-poem” (i.e., a biography in poem form). Finally, students create and perform a cumulative choral reading of the Preamble and memorize it for an oral recitation.

Essential Question:

Why is it important to choose words carefully for government documents?

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RI.3.8:** Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, [and] first/second/third in a sequence).
- **RI.3.4:** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.
- **SL.3.3:** Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
- **RF.3.4:** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- **RF.3.4(b):** Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, [at the] appropriate rate, and [with] expression on successive readings.
- **W.3.7:** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- **L.3.4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 3 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- **L.3.4(d):** Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

Student Objectives:

- Ask and answer questions of a speaker invited to discuss immigration.
- Sequence the events of *Coming to America: The Story of Immigration* (Betsy Maestro and Suzannah Ryan).
- Define key words in the Preamble to the Constitution.
- Create an acrostic poem for a key word in the Preamble, demonstrating study of the definition.
- Dramatically read the Preamble in collaboration with classmates through a cumulative choral reading.
- Orally recite the Preamble.
- Study the illustrations in *We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution* (David Catrow) to demonstrate the role of the illustrator in illuminating meaning of text.
- Compare and contrast two similar books on the presidents.
- Research a president and write a “bio-poem” with information gathered.

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

- *Woodrow for President: A Tail of Voting, Campaigns, and Elections* (Peter J. and Cheryl Shaw Barnes)
- *Arthur Meets the President: An Arthur Adventure* (Marc Brown)
- *Otto Runs for President* (Rosemary Wells)
- *The Garden on Green Street* (Meish Goldish)
- *Vote!* (Eileen Christelow)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- “The Star-Spangled Banner” (Francis Scott Key)
- *The Star-Spangled Banner* (Francis Scott Key)
- “The Flag Goes By” (H.H. Bennett)
- “George Washington” (Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet)
- “Washington Monument by Night” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
- “A Nation’s Strength” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Informational Texts

Informational Text

- *So You Want to Be President?* (Judith St. George and David Small) (E)

- *14 Cows for America* (Carmen Agra Deedy, Thomas Gonzalez, and Wilson Kimeli Naiyomah) (E)

Informational Texts (Read Aloud)

- *Coming to America: The Story of Immigration* (Betsy Maestro and Suzannah Ryan)
- *We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution* (David Catrow)
- *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution* (Jean Fritz and Tomie dePaola)
- *...If You Were There When They Signed The Constitution* (Elizabeth Levy and Joan Holub)
- *James Madison: Fourth President 1809-1817* (Mike Venezia)
- *The Presidency* (Scholastic, A True Book: Government) (Patricia Ryon Quiri)
- *The Presidency* (Scholastic, True Books) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
- *Lives of the Presidents: Fame, Shame (and What the Neighbors Thought)* (Kathleen Krull and Kathryn Hewitt)
- *Smart About the Presidents* (Smart About History) (Jon Buller, Susan Schade, Maryann Cocca-Leffler, Dana Regan, and Jill Weber)
- *Remember the Ladies: 100 Great American Women* (Cheryl Harness)

Art, Music, and Media

Art

Washington

- Emanuel Leutze, Washington Crossing the Delaware (1851)
- Gilbert Stuart, George Washington (1796)

Adams

- John Trumbull, John Adams (1792-1793)

Jefferson

- Jean Antoine Houdon, Bust of Thomas Jefferson (1789)

Lincoln

- Daniel Chester French, Lincoln Memorial (1922)

Kennedy

- Aaron Shikler, Oil Portrait of John F. Kennedy (Official Portrait) (1970)
- Robert Rauschenberg, Retroactive 1 (1964)

Reagan

- artist unknown, Reagan Inaugural Parade (1981)

Clinton

- Simmie Knox, Bill Clinton (Official Portrait) (2004)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Note: For the "people" part of this unit, bring in as many immigration stories, through texts and speakers (especially parents and grandparents), as you can to represent the students in your class. (SL.3.3)

Class Discussion / Language

Introduce the unit by writing the three key words on the board: “people,” “preamble,” and “presidency.” As you work through each word (possibly over a few days /class periods), give students a copy of a semantic map and display yours (on an overhead projector, document camera, or SMART Board, for example). Using dictionaries for reference, begin with the word “people.” To ensure full participation, require each student to “turn and talk” about each part of the map before filling in the spaces. Maps such as these create a richer understanding of a word they already know (e.g., “people”) by looking at parts of speech and the word’s synonyms. (L.3.1b, L.3.1c, L.3.4b, RF.3.3a, L.3.4d, L.3.6)

Language

Divide students into groups of three or four and give them one of the key words (“people,” “Preamble,” or “presidency”). Ask them to write the word on a poster in large bold print. Then have them use their semantic maps to create symbols, pictures, and words (synonyms) that illustrate the rich meaning of each word. Hang the posters around the room to refer to throughout the unit. (L.3.1b, L.3.1c, L.3.4b, RF.3.3a, L.3.4d, L.3.6)

Class Discussion / Literature

Introduce the book *Coming to America: The Story of Immigration* (Betsy Maestro and Suzannah Ryan) as telling the story of immigration. Tell students that America is unique because so many people have come from so many different backgrounds. To understand how all of these people groups came to the same place, challenge students to think about the sequence of events in America’s history. Define “chronological order” and relate it to something like your daily schedule or school calendar. As you read the book aloud, have students jot down important events on Post-Its, keeping them in “chronological order.” Ask them also to be thinking about why we might need to have rules to guide our government. (You can extend this lesson to discuss those government rules by pausing on page 14, where students will notice how many people were living together in the growing cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, Baltimore, and New Orleans. As the page turns, students will see how people started moving west and there was a need for different laws. Use this to launch a discussion of the need for a central government.) (RI.3.8, RI.3.4, SL.3.1, L.3.5b)

Dramatic Reading / Fluency

Divide the class into eight groups to perform a cumulative choral reading of the Preamble to the Constitution. Have the first group read to the comma, the second group read to the next comma, etc. Continue adding voices/phrases until the whole class is reading the Preamble. Students will quickly and naturally memorize the Preamble and can perform it independently as an oral recitation. (RF.3.3c, RF.3.4, RF.3.4b)

Language Activity / Acrostic Poem

Using the formatted Preamble text below, give students the following instructions: “Choose a key word (in bold) from the Preamble. Look up the meaning in the dictionary, practice using it in a sentence, and then create an acrostic poem showing what the word means. Include defining phrases, simple similes, or synonyms in the poems.” You may want to do one as a class example and then have the students work independently or put the students with partners to complete the task. (RI.3.4, W.3.10, L.3.2g, L.3.4d, W.3.2b, SL.3.1)

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect **Union**, establish **Justice**, insure domestic **Tranquility**, provide for the common **defense**, promote the general **Welfare**, and secure the Blessings of **Liberty** to ourselves and our **Posterity**, do ordain and establish this **Constitution** for the United States of America.*

Class Discussion / Literature

Using the book *We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution* (David Catrow) discuss the role of an illustrator in telling a story. Showing only the illustrations (by, for example, covering the text with Post-Its), have the students concoct a story aloud and together. After the students have created a story, show them that the text for the book is actually the Preamble to the Constitution. Together, read the book again to see how each illustration illustrates the meaning of a phrase. (RL.3.7, SL.3.1)

Class Discussion / Informational Text

Choose two books about presidents for the students to compare and contrast, such as *So You Want to Be a President?* and *Lives of the Presidents*. Ask students the following questions:

- In what ways are the two books similar?
- How are they different?
- Did you feel that any of the humorous comments made about the presidents were inappropriate? (Note: Be sure they quote from the text to back up their opinion.) (RI.3.9,RI.3.6,RI.3.1,SL.3.1)

Research / Informational Writing

Give the students this prompt: "Choose one president that interests you from the books we've read about the presidents. Research the president using online sources, an encyclopedia, and a biography (of him). Then, write a poem about him (called a "bio-poem" for a poem that is a biography) based on your research. Use the following format to organize your poem. Use the process of revising and editing before publishing your work." (Note: The example below about George Washington is for you, though you may decide to share it with the class to explain the activity.) (W.3.7, W.3.10, W.3.2, W.3.5, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, W.3.6)

Formatting guidelines:

- Line 1: First, Middle, and Last Name
- Line 2: Four jobs held by the man during his life (other than presidency)
- Line 3: Birthplace, Child of
- Line 4: Lover of
- Line 5: Educated
- Line 6: Resident of
- Line 7: Three contributions
- Line 8: Number order of president (ordinal number)
- Line 9: Nickname

Sample poem:

*George Washington
Surveyor, Planter, Soldier, Commander
Born in Virginia, son of Mary
Lover of Martha, math, and farming
Educated in elementary school
Resident of Mount Vernon
Revolutionary commander, government creator, humble leader
First president
Father of our Country*

Class Discussion / Art Connection

Select three or four works. Begin a class discussion by asking students if they can identify the subject in each work. Then ask students to describe the choices that the artist has made to convey each subject's importance.

Terminology:

- bio-poem
- chronological order
- cumulative choral reading
- define
- definition
- dictionary
- sequence
- synonyms

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:**This unit teaches:**

- Art: portraiture, Gilbert Stuart, Daniel Chester French
- **Geography:** U.S. geography (e.g., as related to immigration and migration)
- **History:** U.S. Constitution (g.g., James Madison and the Preamble), immigration, and the presidency

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **Geography:** Early American settlements
- **History:** Colonial times (e.g., focus on life before the first presidency)

Grade 3 Unit 5**A Feast of Words on a Planet Called Earth
and Beyond**

In this fifth six-week unit of third grade, students read stories, poems, and informational text full of rich language, a “feast of words.”

Overview:

They read fiction that demonstrates the use of idioms and fiction that exhibits careful diction. They read poems that focus on a simple topic such as corn or grass to see how the topics are developed line-by-line and stanza-by-stanza. They write to express their own opinions about the need (or not) for laws that legislate what people can and cannot eat. Working with Latin suffixes, they will see the way suffixes transform one part of speech into another. Students illustrate an idiom to express their own interpretation of its meaning and then write a note to Amelia Bedelia about the idiom. Finally, the students will stretch beyond this world to read and research about other planets.

Essential Question:

What makes a word or phrase the “right” word or phrase?

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RI.3.7:** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps [and] photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
- **RF.3.3:** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- **RF.3.3(b):** Decode words with common Latin suffixes.
- **L.3.4b:** Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word.
- **RL.3.4:** Describe the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
- **W.3.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- **RL.3.5:** Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

Student Objectives:

- Independently read stories, poems, and informational text.
- Use dictionaries and thesauruses, both in print and online, to look up words and to consider varied shades of meaning.
- Decode and analyze words with Latin suffixes.
- Collect words from poems, both through listening to read-aloud selections and independent reading.
- Comprehend poems by seeing how each stanza or line builds on its predecessor for meaning, such as in the poem “Eating While Reading” (Gary Soto).
- Listening to a read-aloud novel such as *The Search for Delicious* (Natalie Babbitt), note how each chapter builds on earlier sections, requiring careful reading /listening for comprehension.
- Think critically about a text by listening to a read-aloud informational text such as *What the World Eats* (Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel).
- Write an opinion piece based on one’s own thinking about food legislation.
- Dramatically read a poem.
- Learn the meaning of idioms both within stories and in books about idioms.
- Research and write a report about a planet, using the key questions (“who, where, when, why, what, and how”) to guide research.

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

- *Amelia Bedelia* series (Peggy Parrish)
- *Dog Breath!: The Horrible Trouble with Hally Tosis* (Dav Pilkey)
- *My Momma Likes to Say* (Denise Brennan-Nelson)

Books About Idioms

- *In a Pickle and Other Funny Idioms* (Marvin Terban and Giulio Maestro)
- *Mad as a Wet Hen!: And Other Funny Idioms* (Marvin Terban and Giulio Maestro)
- *Punching the Clock: Funny Action Idioms* (Marvin Terban and Thomas Huffman)

Poems

- “Eating While Reading” (Gary Soto) (E)
- *Candy Corn: Poems* (James Stevenson)
- *Popcorn: Poems* (James Stevenson)
- *Sweet Corn: Poems* (James Stevenson)
- "Catch a Little Rhyme" (Eve Merriam) (EA)

- “Barefoot Days” (Rachel Field)
- “The City” (Langston Hughes) (EA)
- “Skyscrapers” (Rachel Field)

Stories (Read Aloud)

- *The Search for Delicious* (Natalie Babbitt) (E)
- *Frindle* (Andrew Clements and Brian Selznick)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- “Daffodils” (William Wordsworth)
- “The Grass” (Emily Dickinson)
- “Spring Grass” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
- “The Grass on the Mountain” (Paiute American Indian) transcribed by Mary Austin

Informational Texts

Informational Text

- *A Medieval Feast* (Aliki) (E)
- *The Planets* (Gail Gibbons) (EA)
- *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11* (Brian Floca) (E)
- *Planets!* (TIME for Kids) (Editors of TIME For Kids with Lisa Jo Rudy)
- *The Solar System* (Gregory Vogt)
- *Our Solar System: Revised Edition* (Seymour Simon)
- *Mercury* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
- *Venus* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)
- *Mars: The Red Planet* (All Aboard Science Reader) (Patricia Brennan Demuth)
- *Mars* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)
- *Jupiter* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
- *Saturn* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
- *Uranus* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
- *Uranus* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
- *Neptune* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)

Informational Texts (Read Aloud)

- *What the World Eats* (Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel) (E)
- *It’s Disgusting and We Ate It! True Food Facts from Around the World and Throughout History* (James Solheim and Eric Brace)
- *11 Planets: A New View of the Solar System* (David A. Aguilar)
- *Discover the Planets* (Kids Can Read) (Cynthia Pratt Nicolson and Bill Slavin)
- *Pluto: From Planet to Dwarf* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
- *Mercury* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Venus* (Scholastic A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Mars* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)

- *Jupiter* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Saturn* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Uranus* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Neptune* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
- *Earth* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)

Resources for Students

- Dictionaries
- Online dictionaries
- Thesaurus
- Online thesaurus
- *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms (Revised)* (Marvin Terban)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Note: *You may want to do the planets in science at the same time you are doing fiction/poetry in language arts. The two parts of the unit will come together in the research project at the end of the unit.*

Word Work / Latin Suffixes:

Display this list of words with a common Latin suffix (e.g., -able, -ible, -ation, -fy, -ify, -ment, -ty, -ity): likeable, readable, drivable, laughable, and teachable. Ask students:

- What does each word have in common with the rest? (Answer: the same Latin suffix –able)

Then explain that this is an example of a Latin suffix. Have students use white boards to write the root word for each (i.e., like, read, drive, laugh, and teach). Then ask students:

- What part of speech is “read”? (Answer: verb)

Explain that when we add the suffix *-able*, it becomes a different part of speech (i.e., an adjective). Then use the new word in a sentence so that students see the part of speech change. For example, “I was surprised to find this thick book was very readable.” Then explain that “readable” describes the book, which means it’s an adjective. Extend this lesson by continuing to collect words that end in *-able* or *-ible*. (RF.3.3b, L.3.4b)

Vocabulary / Thesaurus:

Have students look up the word “know” in an online thesaurus. Create a horizontal line on the board with “wonder” at one end and “know” at the other. To show shades of meaning, discuss the placement of other “state of mind” words (i.e., the synonyms and antonyms of “know”) on the scale. Repeat this activity with verbs and /or adjectives (such as “warm”) that come up in student reading. (L.3.5c)

Word Work / Poetry:

As you and the students read poems throughout this unit, ask them choose words that they like to collect in their journals. Read aloud a poem such as “Daffodils” (William Wordsworth) several times, modeling fluent reading. Choose an evocative word from the poem, because, for example, of the way it sounds or what it means. Every time the class reads a poem, either together or individually, give the students a few minutes to choose one or two words that they like and then use them in a sentence. (RF.3.4c)

Poetry / Comprehension:

Using a poem such as "Eating While Reading" (Gary Soto) to illustrate how each line builds meaning to the next. Have students read multiple poems aloud to each other, explaining their understanding of the poem, line-by-line, and stanza-by-stanza. (RL.3.5)

Language / Writing:

Read several books that use idioms in the story (e.g., the *Amelia Bedelia* series) or a book that uses idioms as the text (e.g., Terban's work). Then assign the students this prompt: "Choose an idiomatic saying. Draw a picture of the literal and figurative meaning of the saying. Write a short paragraph to explain to someone like Amelia Bedelia why it is important to know what the saying really means." [See here for more idioms](#). (RL.3.4, RI.3.5, L.3.4a, L.3.5a)

Drama / Fluency / Poetry

Give the students this prompt: "Choose one of the poems in this unit's collection. Memorize it (or read it) and perform it for the class. Be sure to use your best expression as you read." To add a twist to the poetry performance, pair up the students and have them choose a poem with personification such as "Skyscrapers" (Rachel Field) As one student reads, have the other student "be" the skyscraper (or the personified object in the poem of choice). (RF.3.4b)

Class Discussion / Literature

Before this lesson, gather some cubes or building blocks to use as a visual representation. Using a chapter book such as *The Search for Delicious* (Natalie Babbitt) or *Frindle* (Andrew Clements and Brian Selznick), use the building blocks to show how the author of a book builds meaning. At the end of each chapter, have students write down on Post-Its what they believe is the main idea of the chapter. Place the Post-Its on the board and look to see how well the students comprehended the text, discussing as you read them aloud. After the class comes to consensus, write down the main idea of the chapter on another Post-It and place it on the block. Do this with each chapter (or in reading session if you do not finish a chapter in one sitting) to show how events build upon each other. If, later in the book, the class realizes (with your guidance) that they have forgotten something important in a previous chapter, go back and revise the building blocks. This will teach the students that good readers tailor their thinking—rethinking the importance of events and ideas—as they read. (RL.3.5, SL.3.2)

Class Discussion / Informational Text / Opinion Writing

Using a book such as *What the World Eats* (Faith D'Aluisio and Peter Menzel), discuss the differences in the way people eat around the world. Challenge the students to think critically about nutrition, their eating habits, and the way other cultures look at food. Use the following questions to guide the discussion: What do you think the authors were trying to say in this text?

- Can you support your opinion with evidence from the text?
- How did the illustrations support the ideas in the print part of the text?
- Do you think the authors fairly described the way people in the United States eat?

Finally, assign an opinion writing piece: "Some people eat more healthy food than other people. In your opinion, do you think there should be laws passed to tell people what they can and cannot eat? Support your answer with strong reasons." (RI.3.2, RI.3.7, SL.3.1a, SL.3.2, SL.3.1c, SL.3.1d, SL.3.1b, W.3.1, L.3.1i, L.3.2)

Informational Writing / Informative Text

Assign to the students a research project on a planet other than earth. Create a display of many books on the planets and have students choose a book with which to start their research. Using the key words “where, when, why, and how key events occur,” students should begin by creating a list of questions they want to answer through their research. The generating of questions could happen as a class if students need modeling of the process. Give students large index cards with each question on one side and have them write the answers on the other side. When they are finished finding the answers, have them use these cards to write a report on the planet. As students revise, they should focus on word choice to make their reports as literary and interesting as possible. Students should create one prop to help explain their most interesting finding about the planet. (L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.5, W.3.8, W.3.7, W.3.10, W.3.2)

Terminology:

- dictionary
- idiom
- Latin suffixes
- thesaurus
- word roots

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:

This unit teaches:

- **Geography:** World geography (e.g., continents and countries)
- **Science:** the solar system (i.e., the planets)

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **Science:** Astronomy (e.g., the universe, galaxies, orienteering, and exploration of space)

Grade 3 Unit 6**Fantastic Adventures with Dragons, Gods,
and Giants**

In this sixth six-week unit of third grade, students read fantasies, adventure poetry, mythology, and informational texts about Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome.

Overview:

Beginning with fantasy stories and poems about dragons, students learn to summarize and illustrate chapters, seeing how they are building blocks to the ending. They record themselves fluently reading an assigned chapter (i.e., with a video camera or tape recorder), and combine it with their illustrated chapter summaries to create a multimedia presentation. They will also hear a variety of myths, Greek and Roman, and read a book based on Homer's *The Odyssey*. Finally students will research an Olympic sport and compare it to an Olympic sport in the days of Ancient Greece.

Essential Question: *Why is it important to know mythology?*

Focus Standards:

These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RI.3.10:** By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RL.3.10:** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RF.3.4:** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension
- **RF.3.4(c):** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
- **RL.3.6:** Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
- **RL.3.2:** Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- **SL.3.5:** Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.

Student Objectives:

- Independently read books in the 2-3 stretch text range with fluency and comprehension.
- Summarize and illustrate the chapters of a book such as *My Father's Dragon* (Ruth Stiles Gannett and Ruth Chrisman Gannett).
- Create an audio recording of a dramatic reading of a chapter in a challenging chapter book.
- Create a multimedia presentation (e.g., a set of Power Point slides) of the recording and the illustrations for the book summaries.
- Write an opinion piece describing the “most interesting” mythical character.
- Retell myths with key details, noting the message of each.
- Quote from the text to support the main idea of a non-fiction book.
- Read a variety of informational books on Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome.
- Research a current Olympic sport, comparing and contrasting it to a sport in the days of Ancient Greece.
- Write a short fantasy narrative in response to a prompt based on the style of the book *Could Be Worse!* (James Stevenson).

Suggested Works: (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars

Literary Texts

Stories

- *The One-Eyed Giant* (Tales from the Odyssey Book 1) (Mary Pope Osborne and Troy Howell) (E)
- *My Father's Dragon* (Ruth Stiles Gannett and Ruth Chrisman Gannett) (E)
- *Could Be Worse!* (James Stevenson)
- *The Miraculous Journey Of Edward Tulane* (Kate DiCamillo and Bagram Ibatoulline)
- *Vacation Under the Volcano* (Magic Tree House Book 13) (Mary Pope Osborne and Sal Murdocca) (E)
- *Hour of the Olympics* (Magic Tree House Book 16) (Mary Pope Osborne and Sal Murdocca) (E)

Poems

- “Adventures of Isabel” (Ogden Nash) (E)
- “A Dragon’s Lament” (Jack Prelutsky)
- “The Dragons are Singing Tonight” (Jack Prelutsky)
- “Life Doesn’t Frighten Me At All” (Maya Angelou)

Stories (Read Aloud)

- *Greek Myths for Young Children* (Heather Amery and Linda Edwards)
- *D’Aulaires’ Book of Greek Myths* (Ingri and Edgar Parin d’Aulaire)
- *The Gods and Goddesses of Olympus* (Ailiki)
- *Favorite Greek Myths* (Mary Pope Osborne and Troy Howell)

- *Classic Myths to Read Aloud: The Great Stories of Greek and Roman Mythology* (William F. Russell)
- *The Orchard Book of Roman Myths* (Geraldine McCaughrean and Emma Chichester)

Poems (Read Aloud)

- “The Tale of Custard the Dragon” (Ogden Nash)

Informational Texts

Informational Text

- *Boy, Were We Wrong About Dinosaurs!* (Kathleen V. Kudlinski and S.D. Schindler) (E)
- *If I Were a Kid in Ancient Greece* (Ken Sheldon, ed.)
- *Ancient Greece and the Olympics: A Nonfiction Companion to Hour of the Olympics* (Magic Tree House Research Guide 10) (Mary Pope Osborne, Natalie Pope Boyce, and Sal Murdocca) (E)
- *Ancient Rome and Pompeii: A Nonfiction Companion to Vacation Under the Volcano* (Magic Tree House Research Guide 14) (Mary Pope Osborne, Natalie Pope Boyce, and Sal Murdocca) (E)
- *Rome: In Spectacular Cross Section* (Andrew Solway and Stephen Biesty)

Informational Text (Read Aloud)

Greece

- *Ancient Greece* (DK Eyewitness Books) (Anne Pearson)
- *I Wonder Why Greeks Built Temples and Other Questions About Ancient Greece* (Fiona MacDonald)
- *If I Were a Kid in Ancient Greece: Children of the Ancient World* (Ken Sheldon, ed.)

Rome

- *If I Were a Kid in Ancient Rome: Children of the Ancient World* (Ken Sheldon, ed.)
- *Tools of the Ancient Romans: A Kid’s Guide to the History & Science of Life in Ancient Rome* (Rachel Dickinson)
- *Science in Ancient Rome* (Jacqueline L. Harris)
- *Ancient Rome* (DK Eyewitness Books) (Simon James)
- *Ancient Rome and Pompeii: A Non-fiction Companion to Vacation Under the Volcano* (Magic Tree House Research Guide 14) (Mary Pope Osborne, Natalie Pope Boyce, and Sal Murdocca) (E)

Art, Music, and Media

Art

- [Greek and Roman Art Collection](#) (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Sample Activities and Assessments:

Note: If you choose to begin with *My Father’s Dragon* (Ruth Stiles Gannett and Ruth Chrisman Gannett), it will create a transition to the adventures in *The One-Eyed Giant* (Mary Pope Osborne and Troy Howell). Because there is so much literature in the mythology of Ancient Greece, you may want to spend a week or two on the Gannetts’ book and then move into the mythology for the remainder of the unit.

Since this may be the first time students are introduced to myths, it is helpful to keep a list of the mythological gods, creatures, and characters as you read. By focusing on the outstanding characteristic (e.g., Heracles—Greek, Hercules—Roman—strength) or domain (Poseidon—the sea) of each, students will begin to see the foundational role played by these names and places in word derivations.

Class Discussion / Literary

As students read the book *My Father's Dragon* (Ruth Stiles Gannett and Ruth Chrisman Gannett), continue the focus from unit 5 on how each chapter builds on the last to tell the story. As students finish each chapter, have them write down a short summary of what happened and illustrate it with a drawing. Have the students turn this into a mini-book of the larger book. As students write their summaries in this activity, you could teach a strategy for writing succinct summaries such as "Somebody-Wanted-But-So" (see [here](#) for more information). (RL.3.10, RF.3.4c, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Fluency / Audio Recording

As a class, create a set of audio recordings of the book *My Father's Dragon* (Ruth Stiles Gannett and Ruth Chrisman Gannett). Using the illustrations from the chapter summaries (see Class Discussion / Literary above), assign to each student a chapter to rehearse reading aloud. With a video camera or tape recorder, have students record themselves reading a chapter in their best reading voice, interpreting the parts of each character. (SL.3.5, RL.3.10, RF.3.4c)

Literary / Writing / Opinion Piece

Give the students this prompt: "Choose the most interesting mythical character in your opinion. Be sure to support your opinion with strong reasons and to connect your writing to specific parts of the myth. Be sure also to use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, and for example) to connect your opinion and reasons. Provide a concluding statement." (RL.3.2, W.3.1, W.3.1c, L.3.1)

Class Discussion / Literary

After reading each of the myths, have students retell the story with as many key details as they can. Have them partner to retell, helping the partner when he/she forgets what came next. Discuss the following prompts/questions as a class, or have them write down their thoughts for more independent thinking and accountability before discussing as a group.

- As we read the myth and as we retell the stories, let's think about the message in the myth.
- Why was the myth told during the time of the Ancient Greeks?
- Why is it still told today? (RL.3.2, SL.3.2, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Class Discussion / Informational Text

Introduce the book *Boy, Were We Wrong About Dinosaurs!* (Kathleen V. Kudlinski and S.D. Schindler) by explaining that this book will teach them about how scientists can change their thinking after new evidence is collected. Tell students that in the discussion after reading, they should be prepared to share two different specific places in the book where this happened. Have them use a white board or Post-It to write down their thinking. (RI.3.10, RF.3.4c, RI.3.2, SL.3.1a, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Research / Informational Text / Informational Writing

Read a variety of nonfiction readings on the first Olympic games in Ancient Greece. Then give the students this prompt: "Using online resources, research one sport from the most recent summer Olympics and tell how

it is similar and how it is different from the first games. Create a teaching poster or multimedia slide and report orally on your learning.” (RI.3.5, W.3.6, SL.3.4, W.3.7, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Class Discussion / Literary / Writing

Lead a class discussion based on *Could Be Worse!* (James Stevenson) using the following prompts/questions:

- How do you think the children felt when they tried to tell the grandfather of an adventure and he always topped it with a fantastic tale?
- If you were the grandfather, what story would you have told?
- Write a “fantastic” grandfather response to this: I fell off the monkey bars on the playground and scraped my knee. (RL.3.6, W.3.10, W.3.3, L.3.1, L.3.3, L.3.2)

Class Discussion / Art Connection

Introduce some of the art held in the Greek and Roman collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (see Art, Music, and Media). Then lead a discussion about how the students see the mythology influencing Ancient Greek and Roman art. In particular, discuss the relationship between the stories of the people (myths) and the inspiration for artistic pieces. (RL.3.2)

Terminology:

- fantasy
- mythology
- narrative poem
- summary

Making Interdisciplinary Connections:

This unit teaches:

- **Art:** Greek and Roman Art
- **History:** Ancient Greece (e.g., the Olympics and life in Ancient Greece) and Ancient Rome (e.g., Roman mythology, government, and life)

This unit could be extended to teach:

- **History:** Vikings (e.g., Norse mythology, Norsemen, and Leif Ericson)