

Description of the Unit

The activities in this flexible unit can replace the activities in the first half of Grade 6, Unit 2 while still developing the skills and knowledge required for Embedded Assessment 1: Responding to Literature. The unit begins by engaging students in analysis of internal and external forces that cause a character and themselves to change. Students apply this conceptual understanding of the relationship between forces and change to reading a novel with multiple characters and conflicts. Students use a double-entry journal to practice recording textual evidence to support analysis about character, plot and subplot, and setting. As they continue reading the novel, students prepare for a Literature Circle discussion by practicing the skills of questioning the text, examining how language impacts meaning, summarizing, and connecting. At the end of the novel, students collaboratively discuss ideas from their extended close reading and analysis of the novel, which prepares them to write an explanatory response for Embedded Assessment 1.

Activities

The thirteen activities in this unit are designed to engage students in reading a novel and to prepare them for the embedded assessment. The activities mirror the sequence of instruction in the existing SpringBoard novel unit based on *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech, but the sequence can be modified to correspond with the features of the novel you have chosen. For example, if the chosen novel includes rich and challenging vocabulary, you might want to move Activity 8, which focuses on analyzing word choice, to an earlier position in the sequence of instruction. This sequencing of activities is best done during the planning phase, using the Planning Dashboard.

Mini-lessons for Novel Study

Depending upon the richness of the novel you choose and the skills your students need to develop, you may want to supplement the unit with mini-lessons. The mini-lessons cover a range of novel study topics and can be used to expand on or reinforce the skills covered in the core activities. Mini-lesson topics include the following:

- Practicing Close Reading and Annotation
- Interacting with the Text Using a Double-Entry Journal
- Making Inferences
- Analyzing Point of View
- Exploring Setting
- Analyzing Characters
- Determining the Meaning of Unknown Words
- Analyzing an Author’s Word Choice
- Investigating Conflict and Motivation
- Analyzing an Author’s Use of Figurative Language
- Mapping the Plot
- Determining Theme

Recommended Novels

The activities in the flexible novel unit adapt the Unit 2 activities based on the novel *Walk Two Moons*, by Sharon Creech, and they maintain a focus on the skills and knowledge required for Embedded Assessment 1: Responding to Literature. In customizing the unit, consider choosing a novel that shares some characteristics with *Walk Two Moons*, a young adult novel in which the protagonist takes a journey and faces fears, change, and loss. Before selecting a novel for the unit, be sure to read it in its entirety to assess its appropriateness for your students and setting.

Recommended Novels		
Title	Author	Lexile
Adams, Richard	<i>Watership Down</i>	880L
Armer, Laura Adams	<i>Waterless Mountain</i>	860L
Armstrong, William H.	<i>Souder</i>	900L
Babbitt, Natalie	<i>Tuck Everlasting</i>	770L
Creech, Sharon	<i>Chasing Redbird</i>	860L
Creech, Sharon	<i>The Wanderer</i>	830L
Curtis, Christopher	<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i>	950L
DiCamillo, Kate	<i>Because of Winn Dixie</i>	610L
Funke, Cornelia	<i>Dragon Rider</i>	710L
George, Jean Craighead	<i>Julie of the Wolves</i>	860L
Hamilton, Virginia	<i>M.C. Higgins the Great</i>	630L
Hiaasen, Carl	<i>Hoot</i>	760L
Jiménez, Francisco	<i>Breaking Through</i>	750L
Kadohata, Cynthia	<i>Kira-Kira</i>	740L
Konigburg, E. L.	<i>The View from Saturday</i>	870L
O'Dell, Scott	<i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i>	1000L
Park, Linda Sue	<i>A Single Shard</i>	920L
Paulsen, Gary	<i>Hatchet</i>	1020L
Peck, Richard	<i>A Year Down Yonder</i>	610L
Philbrick, Rodman	<i>Freak the Mighty</i>	1000L
Ryan, Pam Muñoz	<i>Paint the Wind</i>	780L
Ryan, Pam Muñoz	<i>Esperanza Rising</i>	750L
Sachar, Louis	<i>Holes</i>	660L
Schmidt, Gary D.	<i>The Wednesday Wars</i>	990L
Williams-Garcia, Rita	<i>One Crazy Summer</i>	750L

Planning Your Flexible Novel Unit

Use the Planning Dashboard below to build a customized sequence of instruction for your flexible novel unit. You can select and sequence activities and mini-lessons so that they unfold in a logical order based on the novel you have chosen. Once you have determined a sequence of instruction, record reading assignments and notes on required teacher preparation for each activity. An editable version of the Planning Dashboard is available on SpringBoard Digital.

Activity	Sequence	Student Reading Assignment	Preparation Notes
Activity 1: Previewing Embedded Assessment 1: Responding to Literature (1 Class Period) Teacher Preparation: Select the novel for the unit and obtain enough copies for the class.			
Activity 2: Introduction to Explanatory Writing (1.5 Class Periods) Teacher Preparation: Obtain a DVD of the film <i>Up</i> , directed by Pete Docter.			
Activity 3: Previewing the Novel and Using a Double-Entry Journal (1 Class Period) Teacher Preparation: Select a passage from the novel to read aloud and use it to model the Double-Entry Journal. Assign students an additional passage for practice.			
Activity 4: Beginning Character Analysis (1.5 Class Periods) Teacher Preparation: Select passages from the novel that provide details about the characters. Assign additional reading from the novel that will reinforce what students have learned about characterization.			
Language Checkpoint: Using Noun Agreement (Optional, 1 Class Period) Teacher Preparation: Locate model sentences from the novel that demonstrate the concept of noun agreement.			

<p>Activity 5: Plot Development (1.5 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Select a passage from the novel that describes events that may cause change in a character.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 6: Setting (1.5 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Select a passage from the novel that provides vivid details of the setting. Locate example sentences from the novel for the Language and Writer’s Craft. Prepare a model response to the writing prompt.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 7: Asking and Answering Literal, Interpretive, and Universal Questions (1.5 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Select a passage from the text to model the Questioning the Text strategy</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 8: Analyzing an Author’s Diction (1.5 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Select passages from the novel that provide interesting examples of word choice and figurative language. Assign students additional passages to reinforce these concepts.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 9: Determining Theme (1.5 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Obtain a DVD of the film Up, directed by Pete Docter.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>

<p>Activity 10: Conflict and Making Connections (2 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Select a passage from the novel that would allow students to visualize the scene.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 11: Literature Circles (2 Class Periods)</p> <p>Teacher Preparation: Assign students passages from the novel for Literature Circles.</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Activity 12: Synthesizing Ideas from Literature Circles (3 Class Periods)</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
<p>Optional Mini-Lesson:</p>	<p>Sequence</p>	<p>Student Reading Assignment</p>	<p>Preparation Notes</p>
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