

Fourth Grade

Unit 1

Reading: Interpreting Characters: The Heart of the Story	Writing: The Arc of Story: Writing Realistic Fiction
<p>In this September unit, readers focus on re-establishing strong reading habits, learning strategies to read with high stamina and engagement, alongside the important skills of envisioning and summarizing. Readers, then, learn to develop defensible ideas about characters, using precise academic language and supporting their ideas with text evidence. Finally, they tackle interpretation and theme work, learning to find meaning in recurring images and objects and details as they consider the larger message of their books.</p>	<p>In this unit, writers embark on the fiction writing process by generating original story ideas, developing believable characters and planning possible plotlines using story arcs. By studying mentor texts, writers learn strategies for writing compelling scenes, which skillfully balance character action, feeling, internal thinking and dialogue. Finally, writers learn to craft powerful leads and endings and how to choose punctuation for intended effect and meaning.</p>

Unit 2

Reading: Reading the Weather, Reading the World	Writing: Boxes and Bullets: Personal and Persuasive Essay
<p>In this non-fiction unit, readers learn to read and interpret a wide variety of high interest and complex informational text. Students identify common text structures, as well as strategies for note-taking and summarizing in a way that captures the main ideas, details and key vocabulary. In the second part of the unit, readers engage in a team research project, cultivating their ability to synthesize ideas across multiple texts, evaluate sources, and compare and contrast sub-topics. The unit culminates with presentations of student research.</p>	<p>In this unit, writers learn about personal and persuasive essay structure, including the important roles of a thesis statement, reasons and evidence. Writers learn to effectively incorporate varied forms of evidence across their essay, alongside strategies to create cohesion through the use of transition words and repeated phrases. Finally, writers learn to craft effective introductions and conclusions, with their intended audiences in mind.</p>

Unit 3

Reading: Reading History: The American Revolution	Writing: Bringing History To Life
<p>In this unit, readers develop their ability to read and think like historians— paying special attention to the people, geography and chronology of the American Revolution. Students learn to preview, paraphrase and interpret primary source documents, alongside books and digital sources. Readers hone their understanding of multiple perspectives, as they study and weigh colonists’ contrasting viewpoints of American independence. The unit culminates with a reenactment of Second Continental Congress, with students role-playing the part of a Patriot or a Loyalist, presenting their original claims, reasons and evidence during this energetic debate.</p>	<p>In this unit, writers cultivate their ability to write information chapter books. Students self-select subtopics from the Revolutionary War era and learn to write with special attention to historical detail. Writers thoughtfully consider how to select text structure, text features and content area vocabulary in ways that effectively engage and teach their audience. This unit culminates as students publish informational books and present their learning at an “expert fair.”</p>

Unit 4

Reading: Historical Fiction Clubs	Writing: The Literary Essay: Writing About Fiction
<p>In this historical fiction unit, readers work in book clubs to analyze characters’ perspectives, multiple plotlines, and the critical role of setting and mood in this genre. Readers closely read pivotal scenes, exploring how authors develop universal themes and dissecting the social issues of time periods. Finally, readers learn how to extract facts and information from historical narratives in order to build a deeper understanding of the time periods of their books.</p>	<p>In this unit, writers learn to craft detailed essays that analyze characters, themes and compare and contrast literary texts. Building on the work from the previous essay unit, writers develop original thesis statements and support these with reasons and evidence. Writers bolster their ability to use academic language, cite appropriate textual evidence and explain the significance of selected evidence. In the latter part of this unit, writers tackle the more complex work of writing paired-text essays, which highlight the similarities and differences in character and/ theme development.</p>