

LCCS 6th Grade ELA Curriculum Overview

Month	Unit
September - October	Unit 1: Fiction Short Stories & NWT
November - January	Unit 2: The Devil's Arithmetic & Holocaust Book Lit Circles & LAT
February-March	Unit 3: Hero Project & Refugee & RST
April-May	Unit 4: The Giver & ELA Skills Review
May	Unit 5: Poetry & Analysis & Poetry Slam
June	Unit 6: Voices Lit Circle & The Breadwinner

Unit 1: Fiction Short Stories & NWT

Overview: This unit focuses on character, plot, and theme development, as well as literary analysis and narrative writing. Students will read several short stories to understand how character, conflict, and setting propel plot; and analyze character development. Students will participate in an initial lit circle of various genres to understand how identity is forged through the overcoming of conflict and obstacles. Students will write a narrative incorporating elements of fiction and a literary analysis to explore character development and different points of view.

Short Stories: “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros, "Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes, “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury, “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan, and "Examination Day" by Henry Slesar.

Unit Novels: *Thirst* by Varsha Bajaj, *As Brave As You* by Jason Reynolds, *Born Behind Bars* by Padma Venkatraman, *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan, and *The House that Lou Built* by Mae Respicio

Timeline: 28 days

Unit 2: The Devil's Arithmetic & Holocaust Book Lit Circles & LAT

Overview: In this unit, students will use primary sources - survivor testimonials, photos, and historical documents - and *The Devil's Arithmetic* to learn how the Holocaust happened. Students will use memoir and testimonials to compare and contrast fictional events presented in the novel to come to a greater understanding of the inhumanity of the Holocaust. Students will participate in Holocaust Lit Circles and hear from a Holocaust survivor himself to understand the many effects of the Holocaust. Students will be writing reflection pieces, RSTs, and LATs over the course of the unit.

Class novel: *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen

Lit circle novels: *White Bird* by R.J. Palacio, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, and *The Children of Willesden Lane* by Mona Golabek

Timeline: 36 Days

Unit 3: Hero Project & Refugee & RST

Heroes are a huge part of growth as children and young adults. Students have personal heroes, sports heroes, and literary heroes as heroes take on many different forms and evolve from many different situations. Students will explore heroes through the lens of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey to understand an ordinary everyday person, like themselves, can be a hero without being famous. Through a short study of the epic hero *Beowulf*, students will ascertain which characteristics define a true hero. In this unit, students will explore personal heroes who exemplify the classic hero. Through the research process, students will develop an annotated bibliography and take notes to create a presentation of the life of their hero.

Class novel: *Refugee* by Alan Gratz

Short stories: *Beowulf* by Joseph Campbell

Timeline: 28 Days

Unit 4: The Giver & ELA Skills Review

Overview: Not only is *The Giver* a superlative example of character development, this novel provokes opinions from students on philosophical issues surrounding the structure of human society. In this unit, students will explore the dystopian worlds of Harrison Bergeron and Jonas. Students will learn along with Jonas that his community's utopian plan severely restricts the rights of everyone within that society making it a dystopia. Students will learn the importance of free will, personal rights, history, a common truth, and humanity through the lesson Jonas learns in *The Giver*.

Class novel: *The Giver* by Lois Lawry

Timeline: 28 days

Unit 5: Poetry & Analysis & Poetry Slam

This unit gives students an opportunity to explore poetry by reading and responding to poetry as well as writing their own original poems. Students will recognize the power of beautiful and figurative language to include in their own poetic and prose writing. Students will delve into their own lives, what's important to them, and the future they want to see. Poetry allows students an opportunity to explore their lives, express their feelings and emotions as well as make connections to other people and situations. Poetry is a great way for enhancing students' reading, oral, and writing skills. Students will participate in an all class, and then eventually, a middle school wide poetry slam.

Timeline: 15 days

Unit 6: Voices Lit Circle & The Breadwinner

Overview: In this unit students explore novels written in verse through their final Lit Circle - Voices. Students will appreciate the difference between verse and prose novels as well as how successive poems tell stories as rich and developed as those written in prose. As this follows the poetry unit, students will be encouraged to take their poetry one step further to write stories in verse.

Students will also explore the Taliban influence on the Middle East through the eyes of multiple young women. In the core text, *The Breadwinner*, students experience how the Taliban presence in Afghanistan drastically altered Parvana and her family's life. Students will be challenged to think about what constitutes basic human rights and the way in which the Taliban violated the human rights of many Afghanistan citizens. Students will also be challenged to think about women's rights, especially in regard to education and freedom, and how both were constantly at risk under Taliban rule.

Lit circle novels: *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson, *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse, *Crossover* by Kwame Alexander, *Alone* by Maggie Freeman, *All the Broken Pieces* by Ann Burg

Timeline: 15 Days