CREATIVE WRITING
GRADES 9-12

EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Board Approval Date:___January 28, 2019_____   Michael Nitti
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Course Overview:

A good story always captures the attention of audiences of all ages. Creative Writing is designed to build on that love of a good story by giving students the opportunity to use their creative thinking abilities to write short stories, narratives, plays, poems, songs, and much more. Taught in a writing lab format, the course will encourage each student to acquire the skills and habits needed to be a self-directed writer. This course builds creative writing skills; it is not intended to provide remedial help in essay writing.

Course Instructional Time: 87 minutes 5 days per week for one semester

21st Century Life and Careers

In today's global economy, students need to be lifelong learners who have the knowledge and skills to adapt to an evolving workplace and world. To address these demands, Standard 9, 21st Century Life and Careers, which includes the 12 Career Ready Practices, establishes clear guidelines for what students need to know and be able to do in order to be successful in their future careers and to achieve financial independence.

The 12 Career Ready Practices

These practices outline the skills that all individuals need to have to truly be adaptable, reflective, and proactive in life and careers. These are researched practices that are essential to career readiness.

9.1 Personal Financial Literacy

This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.

9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation

This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one's interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.

Technology Integration

8.1 Educational Technology

All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and create and communicate knowledge.

8.2 Technology Education, Engineering, Design and Computational Thinking - Programming

All students will develop an understanding of the nature and impact of technology, engineering, technological design, computational thinking and the designed world as they relate to the individual, global society, and the environment.

ELA Integration - The Research Simulation Task requires students to analyze an informational topic through several articles or multimedia stimuli. Students read and respond to a series of questions and synthesize information from multiple sources in order to write an analytic essay.

Companion Standards - History, Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (9-10)

Unit 1: Introduction to Creative Devices and Published Work
(Pacing - 7 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study will explore the abstract concept of creativity, as it relates to works of art and photography and will expand the concept of creativity to poetry, narrative and prose writing. Students will read and analyze myriad works of literature that are considered creative based upon reliable literary criticism, focusing specifically on the devices of simile, metaphor, personification, inverse imagery, stream of consciousness, allegory and satire. The big ideas embedded in this unit include the following:

- Literary and poetic devices are intentionally utilized by authors to add creative and interpretive elements to written works.
- Readers must approach a written text with the understanding that literary devices must be considered to fully understand the meaning of a passage or an entire text.

Enduring Understandings:

- There are certain creative devices that an author can purposefully include in a work to enhance the writing and to provide discussion points for readers, as creative devices can lead to differing interpretations of scenes or texts.
- Literacy devices can be used in either prose or poetry and each contributes to the creativity of a written work.
- It is up to a reader to analyze a work and consider the creative devices used by a writer when reading, interpreting and inferring beyond a text.

Essential Questions:

- As a reader, how can one approach a text when he/she does not fully understand the devices used by an author or cannot ascertain why a writer used a specific device at a moment within the text?
- How does a writer decide which creative device to use when?
- Is there a 'right' or a 'wrong' time to use a specific literary device?
- Does the use of each device 'look' different when used within a different genre (i.e., within a narrative story vs. within a poem)?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Personification, imagery, simile and metaphor are devices used to provide vivid, detailed description of objects or people within a written work. Such vivid detail enables a reader to visualize what is happening within a text.
- Writing with details related to the five senses enables a writer to create a realistic, powerful setting in a written work.
- Writing as stream of consciousness allows a reader to understand the internal thoughts of a character, thus perhaps more thoroughly understanding the conflicts presented.
- Including allegory in a text allows a writer to equate objects, persons and actions within the text with greater meanings outside the text itself, including those with moral, social, religious or political significance. In an allegorical piece, characters are often personifications of abstract ideas such as charity, greed or envy.

Acquired Skills:

- Read, explore, discuss and evaluate literary examples from a variety of cultures, genres, styles and time periods, specifically focusing on creative devices.
- Examine the use of literary devices in various works and explain the benefits of including a particular device in a particular work or specific scene.
- Select a concrete object and apply knowledge of literary devices by describing the object using personification, imagery, simile and/or metaphor.
- Create a 'place description' by selecting a photograph and identifying sensory detail to describe that place, thus moving the setting from two- to three-dimensions.
- Utilize stream of consciousness by reflecting on one's internal thoughts and journaling the progression or development of those thoughts.
- Draft an allegorical story by designing a plot and a conflict that will allow characters to fully demonstrate what it is that they represent.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Homework and class work related to selected texts
- Graphic organizers and journal entries related to selected texts

Summative:

- Tests/quizzes related to selected texts and connecting commonalities among texts
- Object description assignment
- Stream of consciousness assignment
- Allegory assignment

Benchmark

- Imagery piece/place description assignment (benchmark)

Instructional Materials:

Core:

- *The Routledge Creative Writing Coursebook* by Paul Mills:
  - Chapter One: Writing as Art
- 'Black Bough' by e.e. cummings
- 'Mirror' by Sylvia Plath
- *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway
- Excerpt from 'To the Lighthouse' by Virginia Woolf
- Excerpt from 'The Sound and the Fury' by William Faulkner
- Works by Plato and Dante
- Excerpt from 'A Modest Proposal' by Jonathan Swift

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: Discussion of historical, economical and social implications of several works will occur (i.e., the significance of Hemingway's life experience on *A Farewell to Arms*)

Technology Connections:

- Daily writing tips for creative writing: http://www.dailywritingtips.com/creative-writing-101/
- Online resources to analyze works of art within a class discussion focused no creativity
- Helpful websites:
  - Literary devices defined: http://literary-devices.com
  - Literary devices presented as comics or cartoons for the visual learner: http://www.incidentalcomics.com/2011/11/literary-devices.html

NJSLS Standards:

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- W.11-12.3. (W.9-10.3) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-6, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.3-5, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 4, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-6

Unit 2: Editorial Writing (Pacing - 8 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

Editorials are meant to influence public opinion, promote critical thinking and sometimes cause people to take action on an issue. In essence, an editorial is an opinionated news story. The key to effective editorial writing, which students will explore, is the author's use of details, facts, statistics and first person accounts to support one's opinion. This unit will prepare students to research a controversial issue and support their opinions based on statistical data and expert analysis. The following items are the big ideas embedded throughout this unit:

- An editorial is similar to an argumentative essay, each requiring a writer to use different persuasive techniques in order to sway an audience.
- Defending an opinion with fact is a skill that is essential and is used throughout one's life.

Enduring Understandings:

- Persuasive writing and editorial writing/reporting can be compared to arguing and are often considered *arguing on paper*.
- Although editorials are opinion pieces, facts, statistics, data or quotes must be incorporated to support a writer's claim and/or to refute opposing arguments.
- Rules of Standard English continue to apply, even though editorial pieces can be written with a somewhat personal, informal tone.

Essential Questions:

- Why is argument writing important?
- Why is it important to provide statistical data and expert analysis throughout the writing of the editorial?
- Why is it important to consider the audience and the purpose when organizing one's writing?
- Why are diction, varying sentence structure and particular verb usage imperative to the overall writing process of editorials?

Acquired Knowledge:

- When writing persuasively, a writer's position must be clear and unvarying with specific examples of support and reasoning that displays critical thinking.
- Writing for a specific purpose and audience requires a writer to adopt a specific tone and personal voice appropriate for that purpose and audience.
- When writing an editorial, it is imperative that one considers opposing points of view and respectfully refutes them with evidence, data and fact.
- Selection of diction is imperative to the overall success; verbosity causes an audience to become disinterested.
- The use of Standard English is essential when communicating to a professional audience.

Acquired Skills:

- Read and analyze different opinion pieces, including letters and satirical pieces.
- Evaluate effective and ineffective editorial pieces to determine what 'works' when writing to persuade a particular audience.
- Draft, revise and edit an editorial (benchmark).
- Peer-edit another student's editorial to make corrections and improve the grammar, usage, mechanics and overall Standard English with the help of an assessment rubric.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussions related to current events or editorials

Summative:

- Tests/quizzes analyzing editorials or works of satire
- Formal letter assignment

Benchmark:

- Editorial assignment

Instructional Materials:

Core

- Political cartoons as satire
- 'Letter to Myself' by Stephen Fry
- Current editorials from local and national newspapers

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: Current events, national events, local events
- Civics: Possible lessons related to topics selected by students

Technology Connections:

- Helpful websites:

  o New Jersey Editorials and Opinion Articles:
     http://www.nj.com/njvoices/
  o USA Today's Opinion Page and Cartoon Gallery):
     http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/index
  o NY Times Opinion Page:
     http://www.nytimes.com/pages/opinion/index.html
  o The Onion: America's Best Satirical Newspaper at www.theonion.com

NJSLS Standards:

- RI.11-12.1. Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. RI.11-12.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
- RI.11-12.8. Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses).
- W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-4, 6, 8-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.1, 4-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1-3, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-3, 6

Unit 3: Personal Narrative, Memoir and Diary Writing (Pacing – 13 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study will help students to differentiate between personal narrative, memoir and diary/personal journal writing. While all three are written from a first person perspective, they are differentiated by tone, purpose and structure. The big ideas embedded throughout this unit include the following:

- There are benefits and limitations when writing solely from first person perspective.
- Works written in the first person tend to be more emotionally charged, as they are written with the author's internal thoughts and conflicts as a central focus.
- The differences among personal narrative, memoir and diary writing include the style and purpose of the writing.

Enduring Understandings:

- Writing from the first person perspective provides a reader the opportunity to know the thoughts, emotions and conflicts within a subject or character.
- First person writing limits a reader's knowledge of other characters' thoughts, emotions or conflicts.
- Although all first person narratives, there are differences between personal narratives, memoirs and/or diary entries, each with its benefits as well as its limitations.

Essential Questions:

- How does a writer decide the perspective or point of view from which he/she is going to write?
- Once deciding upon first person perspective, how does a writer decide which genre to select?
- What are writing strategies that an author can employ when trying to add emotion, personality or voice to a work?
- What are the benefits and the limitations when a writer chooses to focus a story, memoir or entry on a small moment rather than a series of events?

Acquired Knowledge:

- The greatest benefit of first person writing is the personal perspective a reader gains by knowing the internal thoughts and conflicts of a subject or character.
- The greatest limitation to first person writing is the inability to understand the thoughts or feelings of characters beyond the narrator of the story.
- A person narrative documents a writer's personal experience, reflects the writer's inner voice and communicates a clear theme.
- A memoir focuses on a single period in a writer's life and is characterized by its intimate focus on memories, feelings and emotions.
- A diary or personal journal is a first person account, often written in stream of consciousness, which was written for personal expression rather than for mainstreamed publication.

Acquired Skills:

- Read and analyze various works of literature written in first person point of view.
- Infer characteristics about characters or subjects beyond a text and predict future events based upon information presented in the text.
- Differentiate between first, second and third person narration and identify the strengths and weaknesses when writing from each point of view.
- Analyze the actions, thoughts and emotions of subjects or characters when considering the point of view from which the text was written.
- Create a character journal and compose a set of diary entries focused on one key event/conflict in that character's life.
- Compose a memoir that reflects upon a moment, event, relationship or revelation and explain how the moment, event, relationship or revelation changed him/her.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussion related to selected readings

Summative:

- Tests/quizzes related to selected readings
- Character journal assignment

Benchmark:

- Memoir assignment (benchmark)

Instructional Materials:

Core:

- *The Routledge Creative Writing Coursebook* by Paul Mills:
  - Chapter Two: Personal Narrative
- *Butterfly Revolution* by William Butler
- *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Supplemental:

- Picture books that can be used as mentor texts, including but not limited to the following:
  - *Shortcut* by Donald Crews
  - *When I Was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant
  - *My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother* by Patricia Polacco
  - *A Chair for my Mother* by Donald Crews
  - *Coat of Many Colors* by Dolly Parton
  - *How My Parents Learned to Eat* by Ina R. Freedman
  - *Grandpa Never Lies* by Ralph Fletcher
  - *Dim Sum for Everyone* by Grace Lin
  - *My Very Own Room* by Amada Irma Perez
- Sample memoirs written by athletes, musicians, actors and writers:
  - *The Lost Continent* by Bill Bryson
  - 'It's Not About the Bike' by Lance Armstrong
  - *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* by David Eggers
  - *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: Connect nonfiction accounts to historical, social or economic information related to the story (i.e., *The Diary of Anne Frank; The Lost Continent*)

Technology Connections:

- Sample student writing samples of many genres including personal narrative available online at The Write Source:
  http://www.thewritesource.com/studentmodels/
- Helpful websites:
  - The Purdue Online Writing Lab: The Personal Memoir at
    http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/753/02/
  - The Purdue Online Writing Lab: The Narrative Essay at
    http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/04/
  - Search 'mentor texts for…' to obtain a list of picture books within any genre

NJSLS Standards:

- RI.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- RI.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RI.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RI.11-12.6. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
- RI.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-4, 6, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.3-5, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 4, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-3, 6

Unit 4: Poetry (Pacing – 10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study will provide the opportunity for students to understand and appreciate poetry as it exists on the printed page as well as in the air or as sound. Students will read and analyze various poems, specifically focusing on poetic devices, format and context, ultimately identifying the theme, message, meaning or motif of each poem. They will ultimately use this knowledge to experiment with various poetic forms and publish original works. The big ideas embedded in this unit include the following:

- Poems can be read for pleasure, instruction, and/or enlightenment.
- The use of poetic devices and sensory images in poetry is very purposeful; it is up to a reader to interpret and derive meaning from the information presented by a poet.
- When writing original poetry, most topics derive from the thoughts or experiences of the poet himself or herself; however, he or she can be influenced by the structure, form, flow, rhyme, rhythm or risk present in other poetic works.

Enduring Understandings:

- Poetry written from different cultures, languages and historic periods must be read and analyzed with an appreciation for such differences.
- The use of poetic devices, including but not limited to alliteration, assonance, consonance, imagery, metaphor, meter, onomatopoeia, personification, point of view, pun, repetition, rhyme, rhyme scheme, simile and stanza, is intentional, each device adding to the readability and overall meaning of a poem.

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to understand the culture, tradition and experiences of a poet and/or the historical/social time period in which a poem was written?
- Can one fully understand a poem without understanding the poet?
- How can a reader recognize the theme, message, meaning or motif of a poem?
- What is the purpose of imagery? Sound devices? Symbolism?
- How can formatting, lining or rhyme scheme add to a poem?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Understanding the biography of a poet and his/her culture or tradition often allows a reader to more thoroughly understand a particular poem or text.
- Understanding the historical and/or social climate surrounding a poetic work often helps a reader to infer theme, message, meaning or motif.
- The use of a poetic device such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, imagery, metaphor, meter, onomatopoeia, personification, point of view, pun, repetition, rhyme, rhyme scheme, simile and stanza gives a poet the ability to write creatively and symbolically rather than literally, often requiring interpretation from a reader.

Acquired Skills:

- Read, analyze and interpret poems and paraphrase for meaning.
- Examine poetic devices and explain not only their meanings but also their uses within a given poem.
- Draft, self- and peer-edit original poetry incorporating poetic devices discussed in class.
- Examine one assigned poem, explain and analyze all elements included in the poem (i.e., poetic deices, format, context, rhythm and rhyme) and explain the underlying theme, message or motif.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussion related to assigned works
- Tests/quizzes related to assigned works

Summative:

- Poetry journal – poetry analysis and the creation of original works

Benchmark:

- Poetry explication assignment

Instructional Materials:

Core:

- *The Routledge Creative Writing Coursebook* by Paul Mills:
  - Chapter Three: Poetry
- Works of Langston Hughes, Emily Dickinson, e.e. cummings
- 'The Waste Land' by T.S. Eliot
- 'For Poets' by Al Young
- 'Women' and 'Everyday Use' by Alice Walker
- 'Harlem/Soweto' by Safiya Henderson
- 'Sisters' by Rita Dove
- 'The Bean Eaters' and 'We Real Cool' by Gwendolyn Brooks

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: Time periods in which works were written; social climates in which particular bodies of work were written; biographies or autobiographies of poets
- Science: The symbolic use of scientific images often require analysis for a reader to fully understand a poem (i.e., Eliot's *The Waste Land*)

Technology Connections:

- Poetry Out Loud presentations are available on YouTube or TeacherTube
- Internet searches of poet biographies or specific poetic texts provide the opportunity to differentiate learning for students
- Helpful websites:
  - Poetry 180: A Poem a Day for High School Students at http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/
  - National Recitation Contest: Poetry Out Loud at http://www.poetryoutloud.org/

NJSLS Standards:

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
- RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at grade level or above.
- W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-2, 4-7, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.2, 4-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 4, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-4, 6

Unit 5: Children's Literature (Pacing - 12 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of study, students will examine works of children's literature and identify compositional risks presented in children's books. While reading a number of new and classic children's trade books, students will explore strategies for evaluating books, selecting books for a purpose, learning about authors and illustrators and using books to ignite a lifelong love of reading. Works will be read not only as entertainment, but also for students to understand story structure, literary elements, figurative language and poetic devices. Students will use this knowledge to create, design and construct a children's book. The big ideas embedded in this unit include the following:

- The structure of children's literature mimics the story structure of works written for older readers.
- When writing a work of children's literature, it is important for an author to consider the reading levels and interests of an audience to best capture their attention, entertain them and effectively communicate a message.
- Works of children's literature often include compositional risks and can be used as mentor texts when teaching reading and writing to older readers/writers.

Enduring Understandings:

- Children's stories follow plot pyramid structure and often include themes to be inferred beyond the text.
- Knowing audience member's reading levels, maturity and interests allows a writer to focus his/her writing for a specific target audience.
- Although emergent or developing readers may struggle to independently read specific books, many can understand complex ideas presented in a story when that story is presented orally.
- To capture and keep the attention of a young audience, authors include compositional risks and unique writing styles.

Essential Questions:

- How has children's literature changed over time?
- How do children's authors decide what to write about?
- How can a children's author keep a story simplistic enough for a reader to follow along yet thought-provoking enough to challenge young readers to think beyond the text?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Stories written for young readers still follow short story format and include literary elements such as character, setting, conflict, plot, resolution and theme.
- Children's stories often include one conflict and one resolution; it is the protagonist's attempt to resolve the conflict that provides tension or emotion for the reader.
- The compositional risks included in works written for children (i.e., sensory detail, onomatopoeia, personification, symbolism, realistic dialogue among characters, foreshadowing, flashback, play on words) are also included in works for older, more mature readers.
- Using works of children's literature can and should be used to help older students understand figurative language, figurative speech and poetic devices.

Acquired Skills:

- Explore different genres of children's literature including fairy tales, memoir, narrative and informational
- Examine works of children's literature and identify literary elements
- Identify examples of figurative language, figures of speech and poetic devices and explain how each contributes to the readability and entertainment value of the work
- Infer theme from works and extrapolate evidence from the text to support the theme
- Create an original story for a young audience of developing readers, following story structure and including the elements, language and devices discussed in class

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussion of works read

Summative:

- Reading journal analyzing works

Benchmark:

- Children's book assignment

Instructional Materials:

Core

- Various versions of the children's tale *Snow White*
- *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
- *There is a Bird on Your Head!* By Mo Willems
- *Ling and Ting: Not Exactly the Same* by Grace Lin
- 'A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings: A Tale for Children' by Gabriel Garcia Marques
- Current lists of Newberry and Caldecott Award Winners

*See Supplemental Materials in Technology Integration Section

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: Discuss the history and development of reading in America as well as shifts in children's literacy; informational texts may connect to historical topics
- Science: Informational texts may connect to scientific topics

Technology Connections:

- Excerpts from videos:
  - *Snow White*
  - *Alice in Wonderland*
  - *Where the Wild Things Are*
- Helpful websites:
  - Caldecott Medal Home Page at http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal
  - Newberry Medal Home Page at http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/newberymedal/newberyhonors/newberymedal
  - Teachers First: Best Books List at http://www.teachersfirst.com/100books.cfm
  - American Library Association's ALSC's Children's Notable Books List at http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists
  - Picture book lesson ideas for students in grades 3-12 at http://writingfix.com/picture_book_prompts.htm
  - Mentor Texts Sets Recommended by Teachers College at http://readingandwritingproject.org/resources/text-sets

NJSLS Standards:

- RL.11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-7, 9
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.3-6, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1-2, 4, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-3

Unit 6: Short Stories (Pacing - 15 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit will serve as a way for students to write an original short story that encompasses the themes and motifs read and analyzed in class. Students will follow story format and will apply their knowledge of the literary concepts as they draft, revise, edit and publish a creative story of their own. The big ideas embedded throughout this unit are:

- Short stories capture life 'in action'.
- The development of a believable character is integral when creating a short story because a reader not only reads a story with his or her mind, but also with his or her emotions and intuitions.
- There is often a symbolic nature or essential factor influencing a short story's setting.
- Effective stories involve some element of surprise or tension, in which the characters reveal insights about themselves or the world.

Enduring Understandings:

- Regardless of the genre, short stories tend to mirror the life lessons learned by an audience of readers.
- Character is a literary element that needs to be developed and crafted carefully; it is in the development of character that a writer can make a reader truly care about what happens in the story.
- A writer purposefully develops setting, often thinking of setting as an additional 'character' in the story.
- The rising actions must build to a climax in the story, a point where surprise, tension or emotion is at its peak.
- Compositional risks such as flashback or flash-forward, symbolism, word play, dialogue that moves the story forward or sensory detail add to the entertainment value of a story.

Essential Questions:

- How do writers craft stories focused on a theme?
- How do genre and theme work together?
- What are strategies that an author can use when developing a character?
- Why is setting so important? How can one create a meaningful setting?
- What are techniques a writer can employ to create suspense, tension or emotion in a story?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Short stories follow a familiar structure (plot pyramid), where one conflict reaches one resolution, all while introducing a life lesson or theme.
- Regardless of genre, short stories often share common themes and can be compared or contrasted.
- Character and setting work in concert to move the plot along.
- Retelling a story and summarizing a story are very different and require very different skill sets.
- Writing one's original short story requires planning and preparation to ensure that all elements are working together.

Acquired Skills:

- Read, discuss and write about a variety of short stories.
- Explore the traditional elements of the short story and how these are found in the selected stories.
- Explore the plot structure of each short story discuss their similarities and differences.
- Explore how the other elements, namely setting and character, affect the plot.
- Explore the surface and deeper meanings to be found in the short stories, the perspective each writer is giving us on life (i.e., theme).
- Explain the literary strategies each writer uses in presenting this perspective.
- Summarize a story.
- Draft, revise, edit and publish an original short story where concepts studied throughout the unit are applied.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussion focused on assigned texts
- Creative character prewriting assessment

Summative:

- Tests/quizzes on assigned texts

Benchmark:

- Original short story

Instructional Materials:

Core:

- *The Routledge Creative Writing Coursebook* by Paul Mills:
    - Chapter One: Writing as Art
    - Chapter Four: Fiction
- 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge' by Ambrose Bierce
- 'Harrison Bergeron' by Kurt Vonnegut
- *Athletic Shorts* by Chris Crutcher
- 'The Man Who Loved Flowers' by Stephen King
- 'The Ones Who Walk Away from Omalas' by Ursula K. LeGuin
- *Dubliners* by James Joyce
- Short stories written by the following authors:
    - Ernest Hemmingway
    - Edgar Allen Poe

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: It is important to understand the time period in which a story was written to fully understand the author's intended message (i.e., Hemingway)
- Science: Advances in science or technology must be understood to truly appreciate science fiction stories

Technology Connections:

- Audio recordings of short stories, especially those with an eerie mood or tone
- Google 'Audio Short Stories' and download MP3 or iPod versions of short stories
- YouTube or TeacherTube specific stories for video versions to be viewed in class
- Helpful websites:
    - Short Stories at Classic Reader at http://www.classicreader.com/browse/6/
    - Classic Short Stories: Dedicated to the Short Story and those Interested in Reading Light Prose at http://www.classicshorts.com/

NJSLS Standards:

- RL.11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-4, 6, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.3-6, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-4,

Unit 7: Writing for a Young Adult Audience (Pacing - 15 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study is designed to introduce readers to young adult literature (YA lit), which is often written for and read by those between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Students will explore a broad range of young adult literature, investigate strategies used by authors of young adult literature to entice readers and consider how young adult literature can be used to promote both life-long reading and critical thinking. After exploring much YA lit, students will collaboratively create a profile for a possible young adult series. The big ideas embedded in this unit include the following:

- In the last fifty years, a plethora of fiction has been created especially for teens and deals with the possibilities and problems of contemporary life.
- Young adult literature is written for and marketed to young adults, ultimately helping them to gain some objectivity about themselves and their situations.
- Young adult literature is often characterized by mature themes, often consisting of plot lines similar to events encountered by everyday teens.
- Introducing 'the right book' to a young adult has the ability to transform him or her into a lifelong reader.

Enduring Understandings:

- The story structure in young adult literature mimics that of chapter books or adult novels, while the topics introduced and life lessons addressed are more closely aligned to the experiences and values of preteens and teenagers.
- The young adult genre has experienced a great growth since it was first introduced in the 1960s, perhaps because of the ability of young readers to connect with the characters, settings or conflicts in YA stories.
- While some young adults say 'I don't like to read,' it is possible that the 'right book' may transform a nonreader into an independent and perhaps avid reader.

Essential Questions:

- Why has the genre of YA lit expanded so greatly in recent years?
- Why do preteens and teenagers prefer books written and marketed for them?
- How do these books differ from chapter books or adult novels?
- If YA lit inspires preteens and teenagers to want to read, why is it not read more frequently in America's public schools?

Acquired Knowledge:

- The two-part definition of young adult literature is: written for *and* marketed to young adults.
- Young adult literature is thought to have started as its own genre in 1968 with S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders.*
- Characteristics of a young adult novel usually include several of the following: a teenage (or young child) protagonist, first-person perspective, adult characters in the background, a limited number of characters, a compressed time span and familiar setting, current slang, detailed descriptions of appearance and dress, positive resolution, few subplots and an approximate length of 125-250 pages.

Acquired Skills:

- Read and analyze works of YA lit, identifying key factors that would make each text attractive to young adult readers.
- Read works of YA lit and connect the plot line and theme of each to the social atmosphere during the time in which it was written.
- Compare common themes across works, including the following: Community, Journeys and Coming to New Understandings, Family and Tradition, Challenges of Prejudice and Coming of Age.
- Create a pitch for an original young adult series that will potentially be written for and marketed to young adults.

Assessments:

Formative:

- Class discussion focused on the texts read
- Graphic organizers and open-ended questions comparing texts

Summative:

- Tests/quizzes focused on the texts read

Benchmark:

- Young adult series pitch

Instructional Materials:

Core:

- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- *Impact* by James C. Dekker
- *A Little Piece of Sky* by Nicole Bailey-Williams
- *The Missing Girl* by Norma Fox Mazer
- *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
- *Harry Potter Series* by J.K. Rowling
- *Twilight Series* by Stephanie Meyer
- *House of Night* by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast
- *Wicked Lovely* by Melissa Marr
- *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- History: The time period in which any story was written is important, as it often influences the events presented in the story; many young adult books have been censored in public schools so a discussion of the First Amendment is important

Technology Connections:

- Excerpts from the film adaptation of texts can be shown; these films will not be shown in their entirety. Rather, excerpts will be selected for their educational value (i.e., in contrast with a text version), will be age-appropriate and will comply with district policy P.2530,DP (…suited to the varied interests, abilities, reading levels and maturation levels of the pupils to be served.).
- 'Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom Today: Classroom Teachers Speak Out', an article published in the *ALAN Review* (April 2006) at http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v33n3/gibbons.pdf
- Helpful websites:
  - Young Adult Library Services Association Book Lists at http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook
  - Young Adult Literature and Research at http://theliterarylink.com/yalink.html
  - The 50 Best Young Adult Novels of All Time at http://www.dbrl.org/files/readers/50_Best_YA.pdf
  - Popular Young Adult Nonfiction Books at http://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/young-adult-nonfiction

NJSLS Standards:

- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
- SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

- 8.1.12.C.1 Develop an innovative solution to a real world problem or issue in collaboration with peers and experts, and present ideas for feedback through social media or in an online community.
- 9.3MK-COM.5: Communicate information about products, services, images and/or ideas to achieve a desired outcome

*Note: also reference the corresponding NJSLS standards for grades 9-10

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-3, 6-7, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.1-5, 9-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1-6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1-3, 6

Sample Standards Integration

21ˢᵗ Century Skills & Career Readiness Practices

CRP4: Communicate Clearly and Effectively and with Reason
CRP7: Employ valid and reliable research strategies

In unit 2, students are asked to write an editorial piece considering issues, events, and trends going on in school right now. Students will conduct research to add detail to support their opinion on the topic.

9.3MK-COM.5: Communicate information about products, services, images and/or ideas to achieve a desired outcome

Unit 7: Small groups are asked to make a pitch for a young adult series of books. Students will develop a product pitch which includes character profiles, story boards, and a business abstract. The final product will be pitched to a publishing company (the class). Students will use marketing strategies to promote their young adult book series.

Technology Integration
8.1.12.C.1 Develop an innovative solution to a real world problem or issue in collaboration with peers and experts, and present ideas for feedback through social media or in an online community.

Unit 7: Small groups are asked to make a pitch for a young adult series of books. Students will develop a product pitch which includes character profiles, story boards, and a business abstract. The final product will be pitched to a publishing company (the class). Students will use various digital platforms to develop their product/presentation.

Interdisciplinary Connection

6.2.12.A.4.c Analyze the motivations, causes, and consequences of the genocides of Armenians, Roma (gypsies), and Jews, as well as the mass exterminations of Ukrainians and Chinese.

6.2.12.A.4.d Assess government responses to incidents of ethnic cleansing and genocide.

- Unit 3: **History:** Connect nonfiction accounts to historical, social or economic information related to the story (i.e., *The Diary of Anne Frank; The Lost Continent*)

6.3.4.D.1 Identify actions that are unfair or discriminatory, such as bullying, and propose solutions to address such actions.

- Unit 4: **History:** Time periods in which works were written; social climates in which particular bodies of work were written; biographies or autobiographies of poets.