

7A: Red Scarf Girl & Narrative

During this unit, students read a highly engaging memoir about a young girl growing up in China in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution. Students will learn some of the history and politics of this tumultuous period by focusing on the story of Ji-li Jiang and her family, who live through the upheaval. As students follow Ji-li's journey through a world turned upside down, they will track how her understanding and feelings about what is happening to her society change over time.

Core texts your student will read:

- *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution* by Ji-li Jiang

What your students will do/learn:

- Students experiment with some narrative writing techniques, creating focused descriptions by zooming in on a moment and using strong verbs, dialogue, and vivid details to capture the feeling of a moment.
- Students learn key classroom routines, including the sharing routine, during which classmates respond to shared writing by noting one effective way the writer used language or details or evidence.
- Students analyze some of the propaganda images Ji-li Jiang was exposed to and consider how this material influenced the attitudes of young people like Ji-li.
- Students read and discuss Jiang's experiences in China during the Cultural Revolution as they read *Red Scarf Girl*. Using a specially designed app, the Hope-o-Meter, students analyze levels of hopefulness and gain insight into how Ji-li's feelings and motivations change as the Revolution impacts her school, her friendships, and her family.
- Students write consistently throughout the unit, developing their idea or claim about the text and providing textual evidence.
- Students will write an end of unit essay responding to the following prompt: How does Ji-li change over the course of her story?

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. What are two of the moments from your experiences that you wrote about as you learned to focus on one moment? What caught your attention about those moments? What techniques did you use to try to communicate the experiences and feelings of those moments? Which technique made the biggest impact on your writing?
2. What stands out to you about Ji-li's life or about China during the Cultural Revolution? What was it like being a child during this time period?

3. Can you share a piece of writing with me in which you used precise details to show, not tell? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "In your writing, I noticed your detail about how you were unable to eat 'a bite of dessert.' Including that detail shows me how sad and upset you were.")
4. Can you tell me about a part of *Red Scarf Girl* when Ji-li feels hopeful? When does she feel less hopeful?
5. What other emotions does Ji-li experience in *Red Scarf Girl*? What major events make her feel that way?

In this unit, students study characters in two genres: a short story and a play. They consider how the ways characters interact with one another and respond to conflict help them understand each character and shape the themes of the text. Students read "Sucker," a short story by Carson McCullers, and *A Raisin in the Sun*, a play by Lorraine Hansberry. Both texts are grounded in an understanding of how people facing hardships might both support and harm the people around them, and both texts provide students with rich opportunities to observe the growth and change of characters. In addition, Lorraine Hansberry's groundbreaking play allows students multiple ways to discuss and analyze issues of individual and cultural identity, familial obligations, and differing notions of success, all through the eyes of family members who pull together in spite of the challenges society places upon them and their dreams.

NOTE: As students read *A Raisin in the Sun*, they will find that the characters speak in the vernacular, and occasionally use terms that are offensive. The play is set in the 1950s, and the main characters are members of a Black family trying to move forward with their lives. Students will note the ways in which the family's dreams are thwarted by institutional and individual racism. Other sensitive family issues are also discussed in the text. Consider ways in which you might discuss these issues and provide opportunities for your student to share their reactions and thoughts. Or reach out to your student's educator for additional support.

Core texts your student will read:

- "Sucker" by Carson McCullers
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry
- "Harlem" by Langston Hughes
- Excerpt from *To Be Young, Gifted and Black: An Informal Autobiography* by Lorraine Hansberry

What my student will do/learn:

- Students read and discuss the character dynamics and how they change in the short story "Sucker."
- Students perform scenes from the play *A Raisin in the Sun* and analyze film performances to support their analysis of text details and characterization.
- Students gain a deeper knowledge of the historical and social context of *A Raisin in the Sun* by examining an excerpt from Hansberry's memoir and engaging in an immersive exploration of mid-twentieth century Chicago with the specially-designed Quest: *Black, White and Blues in Chicago*. Students discuss the ways in which the characters react to conflict and challenges—including racism. They compare Lorraine Hansberry's fictional family's responses to Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem" and to the challenges faced by Lorraine Hansberry's real family, described in an excerpt from Hansberry's memoir, *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*.

- Students continue to use key classroom routines, including the sharing routine, during which classmates respond to shared writing by noting one effective way the writer used details or evidence.
- Students continue to write in response to prompts 2–3 times weekly, and practice analytic writing in response to text by developing a controlling idea or claim and providing support with details or evidence.
- Students write an end-of-unit essay responding to the following prompt: Choose to write about either Walter or Mama. Describe one way your character changes from the beginning to the end of the play.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. How would you describe the relationship between Pete and Sucker? Does their relationship change at all? How do Pete’s reactions compare to real teenagers you know?
2. What obstacles do the characters in *A Raisin in the Sun* encounter as they pursue the things they want? How do they react? How do their experiences relate to what you or people you know have experienced?
3. How do Langston Hughes’s “Harlem” and the excerpt from Lorraine Hansberry’s memoir relate to *A Raisin in the Sun*? What themes (or big ideas) are evident in these texts? How are those themes relevant in today’s world?
4. Can you share a piece of writing with me in which you use pieces of evidence from the text to support your answer? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, “I like how you focus on Beneatha saying “Un-huh” to Mr. Lindner when he introduces himself (Act II, Scene Three, 58). You’re right—it shows how Beneatha is the first to recognize that Mr. Lindner is not really welcoming the Younger family to the neighborhood.”)
5. How have the characters in *A Raisin in the Sun* changed by the end of the play?

In this unit, students explore a series of narrative non-fiction and informational texts that expose the workings of the brain, ask them to reflect on what it means to be human, and allow them to consider how the development of their own brains during adolescence may impact their experiences and thinking. This unit supports students as they build awareness of their unique cognitive strengths and challenges, and of the ways in which they can exert control over their own learning.

Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science, documents the fascinating story of Phineas Gage, whose dramatic accident, injury, and recovery made him a famous case study in neuroscience. Students trace the impact of Phineas's extraordinary brain injury, the remarkable efforts of doctors and scientists to learn from his survival, and the early understanding of brain structure and function that grew from that knowledge. Students then move on to readings from *Inventing Ourselves: The Secret Life of the Teenage Brain*, where they add information to their working model of the brain and consider whether and how adolescent behavior may be shaped by their developing brains. In excerpts from Oliver Sacks's book, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, students apply their growing understanding of how the brain functions to modern brain injury cases. Finally, the *Perception Academy* Quest lets students apply their newly acquired knowledge to a fictional case of brain injury to diagnose the injured region of the brain based on the symptoms and behaviors of the patient.

Core texts your student will read:

- *Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science* by John Fleischman
- Excerpts from *Inventing Ourselves: The Secret Life of the Teenage Brain* by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore
- Excerpt from "Demystifying the Adolescent Brain" by Laurence Steinberg
- Excerpts from *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* by Oliver Sacks
- Excerpts from the majority and dissenting opinions in *Roper vs. Simmons*

What my students will do/learn:

- Students read about and discuss Phineas Gage's traumatic accident and brain injury, focusing on what might be learned about the structure and function of the brain through the physical and psychological effects of the injury on Phineas.
- Students explore the biology of adolescent brain development and consider the debates about the ways in which this brain development affects teenage behaviors, including organization and risk taking. They discuss what they are learning in light of their own experiences, and society's expectations of adolescence.
- Students continue to add to their understanding of the structures and functions of the brain as they investigate additional case studies and consider the symptoms and behaviors of other brain injury patients. Students continue to use key classroom

routines, including the sharing routine, during which classmates respond to shared writing by noting one effective way the writer used details or evidence.

- Students continue to write in response to prompts 2–3 times weekly, and practice analytic writing in response to text by developing an idea or claim and providing support with details or evidence.
- Students write an end-of-unit essay responding to the following prompt: Compare and contrast Phineas's behavior and brain to those of an adolescent.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. What stood out to you about Phineas's injury and the effects it had on his behaviors and emotional state? What is something you learned about the brain as you studied his case?
2. What is adolescence and what qualities do people typically exhibit during this time in their lives? Was there anything in the readings about adolescence that surprised you? That you disagree with?
3. Can you share a piece of writing with me in which you include evidence or details from the text to support your controlling idea or claim? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "The way you explained how the doctor's care allowed Phineas's brain to swell with less damage really helped me understand the how Phineas might be considered lucky in some ways.")
4. When you consider his brain and his behavior, how was Phineas like an adolescent? In what ways was he different?

In this unit, students learn to read like a movie director. First, they read poems by D. H. Lawrence, Federico García Lorca, and Emily Dickinson to learn to form mental images while reading. Then, they read three texts by Edgar Allan Poe—"The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado," and "The Raven." They use the rich details from "The Tell-Tale Heart" to create a visual storyboard that helps them understand the curious perspective of the strange, first person narrator in this story. They watch thoughtful, animated adaptations of "The Raven" and "The Cask of Amontillado" and compare the adaptations to the original texts. After reading these stories, students' knowledge of Poe's tales allows them to participate in the murder mystery Quest, *Who Killed Edgar Allan Poe?*, where they investigate a fictitious crime scene, interrogate characters to find and interpret clues, and present their proposed solution to the mystery before the true solution is revealed. At the end of the unit, students write an essay arguing for or against the reliability of the narrator of one of the unit's texts.

Core texts your student will read:

- "The White Horse" by D. H. Lawrence
- "The Silence" by Federico García Lorca
- "A narrow fellow in the grass" by Emily Dickinson
- "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe
- M'Naghten Rule, from *Queen v. M'Naghten*
- "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe
- "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe

What my student will do/learn:

- Students identify and discuss the imagery in several challenging poems, examining how the ability to "see" the vivid images in a text supports their understanding.
- As they read "The Tell-Tale Heart," students use the Tell-Tale Art app and the details in the text to visually storyboard a climactic scene from both the narrator's and the reader's perspectives.
- After studying "The Tell-Tale Heart," students use an early legal definition to debate the narrator's sanity.
- Students analyze the characters, setting, and mood Poe crafts in both "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Raven," and then compare their interpretations of the original text to animated adaptations of each tale.
- Students continue to use key classroom routines, including the sharing routine, during which classmates respond to shared writing by noting one effective way the writer used details or evidence.
- Students continue to write in response to prompts 2–3 times weekly, and practice analytic writing in response to text by developing a controlling idea or claim and providing support with details or evidence.

- Students write an end-of-unit essay responding to the following prompt: Can you trust that the narrator is accurately describing what's happening in the story or poem? Why or why not?

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student:

1. In one of the poems you've read, find an example of imagery that helps you visualize something in your mind. Could you draw what you see? What details would you use?
2. What stood out to you about the characters and settings in Poe's short stories and poem?
3. After looking at the way other people visualize Poe's texts, including students and professional animators, how are their ideas different from or similar to your own? In what ways did comparing your own visualizations to theirs help you gain a better understanding of the text?
4. Can you share a piece of writing with me in which you provide evidence from the text to support your controlling idea or claim? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "I like that you focused on the idea that the speaker seems unable to stop his or her body from feeling scared, but that the snake's actions—"rides," "divides," and "wrinkled"—do not seem scary.")
5. Which of Poe's narrators seems the most trustworthy? The least trustworthy? What makes you say so?

7E: The Frida & Diego Collection

In this Collection unit, students explore primary source documents and conduct independent research to learn about some of Mexico's most famous artists, Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo, an extraordinary couple who lived in extraordinary times. In each sub-unit, students analyze primary source materials with a goal of building their ability to independently research a topic, generate a question, select and analyze credible sources, and write using those sources. Students learn to determine if a source is credible and understand the ethical uses of information; construct their own research questions and explore the Internet for answers; practice working with descriptive writing; and participate in a Socratic seminar about the complicated issues inherent in the work of Frida and Diego. As students reach the end of the unit, they synthesize all of the skills they've developed to tackle a culminating research assignment—part essay, part multimedia project.

Core texts your student will read:

- Excerpt: "Rockefellers Ban Lenin in RCA Mural and Dismiss Rivera" from *The New York Times*
- Excerpt: "Frida Becomes My Wife" from *My Art, My Life: An Autobiography* by Diego Rivera
- "Detroit Industry: The Murals of Diego Rivera" from *NPR.org* by Don Gonyea
- "Letter to Ella and Bertram Wolfe" from *The Letters of Frida Kahlo: Cartas Apasionadas* by Frida Kahlo, compiled by Martha Zamora
- Excerpt: "Statement by Frida Kahlo" from *My Art, My Life: An Autobiography* by Diego Rivera
- Excerpt: "Life with Frida" from *Frida's Fiestas: Recipes and Reminiscences of Life with Frida Kahlo* by Guadalupe Rivera and Marie-Pierre Colle
- Excerpt: "Frida Kahlo" from *Smithsonian* by Phyllis Tuchman

What my student will do/learn:

- Students conduct scavenger hunts to become familiar with the texts and images included in the Collection.
- Students construct effective research questions, evaluate Internet sources, and craft responses using those sources.
- After comparing Frida's writing to a Shakespearean sonnet, students engage in descriptive writing of their own.
- Students establish expectations, prepare questions for, and engage in a Socratic seminar, discussing the lives, times, and work of Frida and Diego.
- Students continue to write in response to prompts 2–3 times weekly, and practice analytic writing in response to text by developing a controlling idea or claim and providing support with details or evidence.
- Students write an end-of-unit essay responding to one of the following prompts:
 - a. Research Option 1: Informative Essay: Frida Kahlo: The Early Years—Why did Frida Kahlo begin painting? How did this circumstance affect the type of

paintings that she did? What did that mean for her long-term career? Write an informative essay about the beginning and development of Frida's artistic work.

- b. Research Option 2: Argumentative Essay: Who has the right to decide what public art should be: the artist or the public?—There was controversy surrounding Diego Rivera's mural, Detroit Industry. Why did many people object to this work of art? What role does the public play when a work of art is being commissioned for a public space? What role does the artist play? Should Rivera have followed the demands of the public or was he right to follow his artistic instincts? You will write an argumentative essay stating your claim that either Rivera was right to follow his artistic vision or the public was right to demand that he paint the mural they envisioned. Be sure to identify at least 2 sources you can use in your work.

As you conduct your research in both the Collection and on the Internet, be sure to look for relevant facts, concrete details, and clear evidence to support your claim.

- Students also create a digital collage to share their essay research with the class.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. As you worked to evaluate sources, what did you notice about the credible websites? What advice might you give a friend looking for information on the Internet?
2. What does it mean to "cite your sources?"
3. What are some facts that you learned about the lives, artwork, or times of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera? In what ways were Frida and/or Diego controversial? What do you think continues to inspire people about their lives and art ?
4. Can you share the descriptive poem you wrote using comparisons to describe an animal? (Provide feedback to your student by celebrating their poem and responding to something specific as a reader. For example, "It's very funny when you describe the orangutan's teeth as 'sharp as my 2-year old baby brother's teeth.'"

7F: The Gold Rush Collection

In 1848, gold was discovered in California and the gold rush began. People came to California from all over America and the world—including Mexico, China, and Europe—to find (and lose) their fortunes, significantly shaping the economy and the landscape of California, and the lives of its indigenous and other existing residents. In this Collection, students explore primary documents and conduct independent research to better understand the complex story of the California gold rush. Students build information literacy skills and learn how to construct their own research questions and explore the Internet for answers. They also participate in a Socratic seminar in which they rely on their research to examine the many issues inherent in the gold rush story.

Throughout these activities, students conduct research to learn about the wide diversity of people who took part in the California gold rush. They compare and contrast a fictional portrayal with historical accounts and use the information they gather to write narrative accounts from the point of view of a specific person living through this complex and dynamic era. As students reach the end of the unit, they synthesize all of the skills they've developed to tackle a culminating research assignment—part essay, part multimedia project.

Core texts your student will read:

- Excerpt: "California Culinary Experiences" from *The Overland Monthly* by Prentice Mulford
- Excerpt: "Letter the Tenth: Amateur Mining—Hairbreadth 'Scapes, &c." from *The Shirley Letters from California Mines in 1851–1852* by Dame Shirley
- Excerpts: Chapter XXVII and Chapter XXVIII from *Roughing It* by Mark Twain
- Excerpt: "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" from *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman
- Song Excerpt: "Oh My Darling, Clementine" by Percy Montrose
- Excerpt: Chapter 3—"The Magic Equation" from *California: The Great Exception* by Carey McWilliams
- Excerpts: Preface and Chapter XI from *Sights in the Gold Region, and Scenes by the Way* by Theodore T. Johnson
- Excerpts from July 22–August 10, 1849, *The Gold Rush Diary of Ramón Gil Navarro* by Ramón Gil Navarro
- Excerpt: Chapter 8—"Good Haul of Diggers" from *Digger: The Tragic Fate of the California Indians from the Missions to the Gold Rush* by Jerry Stanley
- Excerpt: "The Toil of Trace and Trail" from *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

What my student will do/learn:

- Students conduct fun and "low-stakes" scavenger hunts to become familiar with the range of texts and images included in this unit.
- Students learn how to construct research questions and identify appropriate and relevant websites and Internet sources for answers.
- Students assume the identity of someone who experienced the gold rush, then research their experience and write a diary entry from their point of view.
- Students establish expectations, prepare questions for, and engage in a Socratic seminar, discussing the circumstances and consequences of the California gold rush.

- Students continue to write in response to prompts 2–3 times weekly, and practice analytic writing in response to text by developing a controlling idea or claim and providing support with details or evidence.
- Students write an end-of-unit essay responding to one of the following prompts:
 - a. Research Option 1: Argumentative Essay: Was the gold rush good for the state of California? Like all things, it depends on how you look at it. Who benefited from the gold rush (remember to consider different populations such as Native Americans and immigrants)? How and why? How did the gold rush affect California in the short term? How did it shape the California we know today? Conduct research and write an argumentative essay that persuades the reader of your point of view.
 - b. Research Option 2: Informative Essay: Who was John Sutter? Who was Elsa Jane Guerin? Choose one of these two famous figures from the gold rush era and start digging. Where did this person come from? Did he or she strike it rich? Has his or her legacy had a lasting impact on the state of California? Conduct research and write an informative essay on one of these fascinating characters from the Old West.
- Students also create an interactive timeline to share their essay research with the class.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student:

1. As you worked to evaluate sources, what did you notice about the credible websites? What advice might you give a friend looking for information on the Internet?
2. What is the difference between an open-ended and closed-ended question? Why do people prefer open-ended questions during a Socratic seminar?
3. What are some facts you learned about the circumstances and/or consequences of the California gold rush?
4. What are some of the ways particular people's lives changed for the better? What about for the worse?
5. Can you share the diary entry you wrote as someone who participated in the California gold rush? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "This is great how you describe being sick and not being able to help with panning for gold. Nice job adding in those specific details of the poor conditions they experienced.")

Poetry in America: Grade 7

In this unit, students study poetry using lessons designed in partnership with Poetry in America, whose mission is to bring poetry to the world. Each sub-unit contains three lessons focused on one poem; students may work through all sub-units at one time, or each sub-unit may be taught independently. In the three lessons within each sub-unit, students look carefully at the language and form the poet uses and reflect on the poem's topic and themes. They have conversations about the poem with their classmates and also listen to poets, celebrities, academics, and everyday citizens discuss the poem in embedded videos within the lessons. Students have the opportunity to try on the poet's use of language, craft, and structure in creative writing assignments.

In Sub-unit 1, students read Kay Ryan's poem "Carrying a Ladder," which conjures up the hilarity, frustrations, and rewards of hauling around a real ladder as a metaphor for describing very real human emotions and experiences.

In Sub-unit 2, students consider what it means to be an immigrant and an American as they read Emma Lazarus's "The New Colossus"—the poem etched on the Statue of Liberty.

In Sub-unit 3, students consider the personal and cultural background that African American poet Richard Hayden drew on for his iconic poem "Those Winter Sundays."

Core texts your student will read:

- "Carrying a Ladder" by Kay Ryan
- "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus
- "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden

What my student will do/learn:

In Sub-unit 1, students work with Kay Ryan's poem "Carrying a Ladder."

- Students work with concrete images and scenes as a means to unpacking the poem's possible figurative meanings.
- Students compose their own extended metaphor poem to express something they "carry" with them.

In Sub-unit 2, students study Emma Lazarus's iconic poem "The New Colossus."

- Students analyze the imagery, symbol, form, and allusion the poet uses to compare the different values of the Old World and the New World.
- Students may interview a friend or family member about their immigration experience, or research recent media pieces that focus on immigration.
- Students write a poem addressed to the Statue of Liberty, describing the modern experience or understanding of what it means to be an immigrant.

In Sub-unit 3, students read Richard Hayden's poem "Those Winter Sundays."

- Students build their knowledge of the blues musical form and the sonnet poetic form and discuss how those influences are reflected in Hayden's poem.
- Students use his poem as an inspiration for writing their own ode to an unsung hero in their life.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

Read the poem "Carrying a Ladder" with your student.

1. Which description of carrying a ladder struck you as the funniest? The most accurate?
2. What do you think is meant by the line, "We are always really carrying a ladder, but it's invisible"?
3. Can you share the metaphor poem you wrote about something invisible you carry? (Provide feedback to your student by celebrating their poem and responding to something specific as a reader. For example, "The line in your poem, 'my toes always pinched; my old shoe soles too worn for this new landscape' paints a picture of how awkward it can feel in middle school—a new stage of life that you are still figuring out.")

Read the poem "The New Colossus" with your student.

1. What phrases or images really catch your attention when you think of this poem and the Statue of Liberty? What did those phrases or images make you think about this symbol?
2. As you read the poem together, find some sounds that get repeated in the poem. What types of ideas or emotions are emphasized by these sound patterns?
3. Can you share the piece you wrote in response to "The New Colossus"? (Provide feedback to your student by celebrating their piece and responding to something specific as a reader. For example, "Your description, 'working for the now left little time for dreaming of the future' was a powerful way to describe your grandfather's first few years as an immigrant.")

Read the poem "Those Winter Sundays" with your student.

1. In these lessons, you watched President Biden discuss the poem and his relationship with his father. What did you learn about the President's understanding of this poem?
2. What do you think this poet wants to say about the relationship between this speaker and his father? Which line really seems to communicate this idea to you?
3. Can you share the poem you wrote in the style of "Those Winter Sundays"? (Provide feedback to your student by celebrating their poem and responding to something specific as a reader. For example, "This poem about our neighbor's patience in caring for her elderly mother really celebrates her gentle manner. It is really important to notice things like this. Thank you for sharing it.")

In this unit, students complete self-guided grammar instruction and practice that teachers will assign to them throughout the year. Sub-units are organized by key grammar topics, so teachers can assign the content that best meets your student's needs while making sure students work with the key grammar topics within the TEKS for their grade. Each lesson follows the same overall structure: an opening activity that explains how to use the lesson, followed by a series of activities that contain key instruction and practice for each topic, and ending with a revision assignment that allows students to apply their deeper understanding of grammatical topics to their own writing.

What my student will do/learn:

- Students complete largely self-guided lessons, which follow the same format throughout the unit.
- Students may first review their foundational understanding of a topic before exploring more advanced concepts within that topic.
- Students engage in revision assignments at the end of each lesson, applying new grammar knowledge to their own writing and considering the impact of those changes.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. How did you feel about working through the grammar lessons mostly independently? When did you feel confident during the process? When did you feel like you needed a bit more guidance?
2. As you identified examples of different grammatical topics in your writing (complete sentences, pronouns, verb use, etc.), did anything stand out to you? Were you surprised by how much grammar you already know, even if you didn't realize what each component was called?
3. Can you share a piece of writing with me in which you made a grammar change (in a sentence or part of a sentence) or correction based on what you learned in the lesson? (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their writing that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "I really like how you added an adverbial phrase to this sentence. It gives me a much clearer idea of when Jerome hurt his knee.")
4. After revising your work to use your knowledge of grammar and conventions, how did you feel about the result? How might revising with a focus on grammar make a difference in your writing in the future?

7G: Intermediate Story Writing

In this unit, students get to practice their creative writing skills, learning the elements of storytelling and character development, and the importance of vivid language. Students gain a sense of ownership over their writing as they experiment with the impact of their authorial choices on sentences, language, character traits, and plot twist. As students consider how to use these elements to create a story, they also gain tools to help them effectively and incisively analyze a piece of literature.

Students begin with creating a character, observing and recording details, and writing about their character in mundane situations to make them multifaceted and believable. As students explore the situation, they pay particular attention to their character's point of view and the perspective this conveys about the setting and action. After some explicit instruction about the structure of a story, particularly the idea of character change and growth, students pull all their skills together to write a story and practice the most important part of creative writing—revision.

What my student will do/learn:

- Students work to create a believable character for their short story, selecting an appropriate problem and developing their character's response.
- Students apply their understanding of the shape of a story to develop their own story, experimenting with point of view, sensory details, and perspective.
- Students consider and incorporate multifaceted personalities and characters' change and growth in a story.
- Students write dialogue consistent with each character's personality.
- Students revise, paying particular attention to sentence structure and sensory details.
- Students edit their paper, paying particular attention to conventions and transitions, and create a final copy.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. What problem does your character face? How does this problem help reveal your character's personality?
2. What point of view do you use in your short story? Why did you choose it?
3. How does your character change and grow?
4. Read me the most important or exciting scene in your story. If you were filming this, who would you cast as the main character and why? Where would you shoot the film and why? (Provide feedback to your student by identifying something in their story that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "I was nervous when your character yelled at the bigger kids, because I thought he might get into a fight.")
5. What worked well for you in this writing process? What might you do differently the next time you craft a short story?