

Welcome!

Grade 3, Unit 1

Classic Tales:

The Wind in the Willows

In this unit, students will be exposed to classic children's stories and will learn about the elements of fictional narratives.

What's the story?

Students will explore interesting **themes** and discuss **character traits** through a variety of classics, from *The Wind in the Willows* to a selection from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn about the **elements of fictional narratives**, including dialogue, narration, characters, plot, and setting. They will be **exposed to rich language** and a variety of **vocabulary** and will **discuss literature** with their teacher and classmates.

Students will be guided through a variety of **writing experiences** focused on different purposes for their writing. They will also **collaborate** with their classmates and **share** their **ideas** as they develop and deepen their understanding of these literacy skills.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. Who were the main characters in your reading today?
Follow up: What are some adjectives you would use to describe those characters?
2. Where did the story you read today take place?
Follow up: How would you describe that setting?
3. What are themes? (broad ideas that come up many times over the course of a story or book)
Follow up: What are some of the recurring themes that you have noticed in the stories you have been reading or in the stories your teacher has been reading to you?
4. I know you have been learning about the word *meandered* in this unit. Can you use that word in a sentence for me? I will try to use it in a sentence too!
5. Whose perspective was your Read-Aloud told from today?
Follow up: How did you know that?

In this unit, students will be introduced to the science of animal classification.

What's the story?

Students will **develop scientific skills** while they observe and practice **identifying important characteristics** of organisms and objects.

What will my student learn?

Students will have the opportunity to **engage in discussions** with their teacher and classmates, in which they will be asked to **respond based on observations** and **thinking** that occurred throughout their reading.

Students will focus on an **informational writing piece** that will extend their understanding of animal classification. They will also have many opportunities to **work with their peers**, **share ideas**, and **provide feedback** on their writing.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. How do scientists classify animals?
Follow up: Why do they classify animals?
2. What is a vertebrate? What is an invertebrate?
Follow up: What are some animals that are vertebrates? What are some animals that are invertebrates? How would your life be different if you did not have a backbone?
3. What are some characteristics of mammals?
4. Tell me about the changes that a frog goes through in its lifetime.
5. What were some of the discoveries that Jane Goodall made about chimps during her years in Africa.
6. If you could be any animal that you read about, what would it be?
Follow up: Why would you choose to be that animal?

Welcome!

Grade 3, Unit 3

The Human Body: Systems and Senses

In this unit, students will learn about the makeup and functions of the human body.

What's the story?

Students will focus on the **various systems in the body** and will learn how closely **interconnected** they are.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn about the **skeletal, muscular, and nervous systems** that make up our bodies. They will further explore the **senses of sight and hearing** and how our eyes and ears work.

Within the unit, students will **write** in many different ways and for a variety of purposes. For example, they will create a "**unit dictionary**" containing vocabulary, definitions, and writing exercises related to the new words they are learning. They will also **write about one of the body systems** they have studied in the unit.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. Why is the human body compared to complex machines?
Follow up: What are some of the systems you have learned about? What jobs do those systems have?
2. Why is the skeletal system so important?
Follow up: How many bones do you have in your body? What is so remarkable about bones? How do bones heal and grow?
3. Why is the muscular system important to the body?
Follow up: How do muscles work in pairs? What are voluntary muscles? What are involuntary muscles?
4. What are two very important parts of the body that are a part of the nervous system?
5. How do the skeletal system and the muscular system work together?
Follow up: How do the skeletal system and the nervous system work together? How do the muscular system and the nervous system work together?

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Grade 3, Unit 4

The Ancient Roman Civilization

In this unit, students will be introduced to an ancient civilization whose contributions can be seen in many areas of our lives today.

What's the story?

Students will explore the **culture** of **ancient Rome**, including religion, food, education, legends, social class structure, and entertainment.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn about **Roman geography** and **history, government**, major **leaders**, and monumental **battles**. They will also study the **rise and decline** of the Roman Empire.

Students will be introduced to a **writing portfolio**, which they will reference as they collaborate, share ideas, and give feedback on their writing. They will also focus on **writing an opinion piece** that will be completed through a multiday performance task.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. You learned about the word *ruins* in this unit. What are ruins?
Follow up: Can you use the word *ruins* in a sentence that relates to what you have been studying? What part of speech is *ruins*?
2. What made Rome a civilization?
Follow up: Why do you think civilizations were created along the banks of a river?
3. How is a myth different from a legend?
Follow up: Are myths fact or fiction? Why? Are legends fact or fiction? Why?
4. What kind of rights did Roman women have?
Follow up: What rights didn't they have?
5. Tell me about Augustus Caesar.
Follow up: Can you give me three facts about him?
6. What were some of the factors that led to the decline of the Roman Empire?

In this unit, students will learn about the properties of light and sound.

What's the story?

Students will build on what they previously learned about the **five senses** and the human body, focusing on the **senses of seeing and hearing**. Students will be introduced to this content through a narrative story about two old friends, Samuel and Jack, who are losing their sight and hearing.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn **how light** and **sound travel in waves** and how light and sound can be manipulated by various instruments.

In this unit, students will **respond to texts** they have read, **conduct research**, and **take and organize notes**. As part of their final writing task, they will **plan, draft, revise, edit**, and **publish a newspaper article**.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What are some sources of light?
Follow up: What would Earth be like without the light from the sun? What would it be like without the heat energy from the sun?
2. What are some things that are transparent?
3. What causes light to reflect off water, glass, and other smooth and shiny objects?
Follow up: What are some things in our house that are reflective?
4. What happens to light when it encounters a translucent object?
Follow up: What are some examples of translucent things?
5. Explain the difference between convex and concave.
Follow up: How do scientists use convex lenses? What are concave lenses used for?

In this unit, students will be introduced to the men, women, and children of the Viking Age.

What's the story?

Students will learn about the **culture, region, and everyday life** of the **Norse people**.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn about the **Viking explorers** who traveled across the ocean to settle in places such as **Greenland, Iceland, and Newfoundland**. They will read about Norse **mythology** and will explore stories about the genealogy of gods, goddesses, dwarfs, and giants.

This unit provides many opportunities for **daily writing**. Students will focus on **reading responses, analyzing characters, and gathering and categorizing important information**. They will collaborate and share ideas with their classmates in preparation to **write a formal piece** showcasing character descriptions.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What do you know or have you learned about Vikings?
2. Can you describe what a myth is?
Follow up: Where did the word *Norse* come from? Why are the stories you are reading called Norse myths?
3. Which of the Norse characters stands out to you the most?
Follow up: Why? How would you describe them?
4. What has been your favorite chapter in this unit so far?
Follow up: Who are the main characters in it? Where do the events in that myth take place? (setting) What happens in the story? (plot)
5. Who are the two most memorable characters in your reading so far?
Follow up: How are they similar? How are they different? Which one can you relate to the most?
6. What does the word *disguise* mean?
Follow up: How was it used in your reading? What is a synonym for that word? Can you use it in a sentence that applies to you?

Astronomy: Our Solar System and Beyond

In this unit, students will learn more about our solar system and galaxy, other galaxies, and the universe.

What's the story?

Students will explore the **solar system**, the concept of **gravity**, and the exploration of **outer space** by reading an informational text that will take them on a journey through the **universe**.

What will my student learn?

Students will study the concept of **gravity and its effect** on the earth and other places in space. They will also learn about key people and events involved in the **study and exploration of outer space**. Students will explore the **sun**, the inner and outer **planets**, and the objects existing in our **solar system**. They will also study why planets stay in **orbit**.

Students will write in a variety of ways and for different purposes. They will complete a multiday **informative writing project** in which they will describe a day in the life of an astronaut on the International Space Station. Students will **collaborate** with their peers, **share ideas**, and **provide feedback** on one another's writing.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. Can you use **Many Very Energetic Mermaids Just Swam Under Neptune** to tell me the order of the planets?
2. What has been the most interesting planet you have learned about so far?
Follow up: Why? What have you learned about it? Compare it to another planet you have been reading about. How are they the same? How are they different?
3. What is the greenhouse effect?
4. What is a meteor?
Follow up: What is a meteoroid? And a meteorite?
5. What have you learned about the Milky Way?
Follow up: How did it get its name? How many galaxies do scientists believe there are? (billions)

6. What are some of the constellations you have been reading about?

Follow up: What colors can stars be? Why are they those colors? What stars are the hottest based on their color?

Welcome!

Grade 3, Unit 8

Native Americans: Regions and Cultures

In this unit, students will continue to learn about the first known inhabitants of North America. The Reader for this unit contains selections that describe the historical events and cultures of Native Americans.

What's the story?

Students will explore, in more depth, how some **Native Americans** first **migrated from Asia to North America** and how they started to shape their **customs and cultures**.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn details about how Native Americans **adapted to the environment** of the region in which they settled and how that adaptation shaped their cultural identity. They will also study how Native Americans **spread through the continents**.

They will maintain a "**unit dictionary**" notebook, complete **written responses**, submit **journal entries**, and **categorize information** in graphic organizers. They will also collaborate and share ideas with their peers.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What does the word *nomadic* mean?
Follow up: Would you rather settle in a permanent community or lead a nomadic life? Why?
2. How did farming change the lives of the early people?
Follow up: How did people begin to use plants? What else did people raise for food?
3. Describe or draw the following dwellings you have been learning about: adobe house, mesa, and pueblo.
Follow up: How are they similar? How are they different?
4. What are some of the characteristics you learned about the Southwest region?
Follow up: What did you learn about the Hopi people? What about the Pueblo people? Compare these two tribes (for example, language, customs, houses, etc.).
5. What made the Southeastern Native Americans migrate from the northern part of the continent to the southeastern part?
Follow up: What did they farm? How did farming affect the way they lived? How did the children in these tribes help with food?

Welcome!

Grade 3, Unit 9

Early Explorations of North America

In this unit, students will learn more in-depth information about the motivations behind the European exploration.

What's the story?

Students will learn about how those **motivations changed** over time and how the European explorers and settlers **interacted** with the Native Americans who were already inhabiting the continent.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn details about the **voyages of Christopher Columbus**, the **conquistadors** Juan Ponce de León, Hernando de Soto, and Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, and the **explorers** John Cabot, Henry Hudson, and Samuel de Champlain.

Students will work on their **writing** over the course of the unit. They will start with **short opinion** writing selections and will end with a **formal opinion** writing selection.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What were European explorers looking for?
Follow up: Why were they so eager to find spices? What makes cinnamon a unique spice?
2. You have been learning about many Spanish explorers. Which one did you think was the most interesting?
Follow up: Why do you think that? What was he known for? Was he successful in his explorations?
3. Describe or draw a Spanish settlement based on what you have been reading.
Follow up: What things would you expect to see or hear on a settlement? What are missionaries? What are conquistadors?
4. What are some of the things that Christopher Columbus and John Cabot had in common? **Follow up:** What are some things that were different about them?
5. What were some of the accomplishments of Samuel de Champlain?
Follow up: How did he change the way Europeans thought about North America?
6. Which explorers had the greatest success in America? Why?

In this unit, students will continue to learn about the exploration and settlement of North America by Native Americans and Europeans.

What's the story?

Students will dive deeper into the way in which the **English colonies** were established and how each developed a **unique culture**.

What will my student learn?

Students will learn how the **climate, geography, and motivations** of the settlers **influenced life** in each of the **thirteen colonies**. They will also learn about the events that led to the signing of the **Declaration of Independence**, the **Revolutionary War**, and the establishment of the United States as an independent **nation**.

During this unit, students will explore **narrative writing**. They will focus on the characteristics of narratives and will work to apply them in their own writing. They will have the chance to **plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish** their own narrative as well.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What were the three distinct colonial regions?
Follow up: How would you compare and contrast the three regions? What were their climates? What were their main industries? And their geography?
2. What are the five parts of a narrative plot?
Follow up: Choose a book or movie you have read or seen. Can you use your hand and the five-finger retelling strategy to explain the narrative plot to me?
3. What was life like in Jamestown?
Follow up: In what region was this colony? Who was John Smith? What role did he play in the survival of Jamestown? What role did Pocahontas play in the survival of Jamestown?
4. What was life like on a plantation?
Follow up: What are cash crops? Which cash crops were very successful in the Carolinas? What was the connection between slavery and cash crops?
5. How did the life of the Pilgrims in New England compare to the life of the colonists in the Southern colonies?

6. Why do you think Squanto and Samoset decided to help the struggling Pilgrims?
Follow up: What did they do to help them? Do you think the Pilgrims would have survived without their help? Why?
7. What are some of the reasons people moved to the Middle colonies?
Follow up: What was life like in the Middle colonies? What factors shaped life in these colonies?

In this unit, students will continue to build their knowledge about animal habitats and taking care of the earth.

What's the story?

Students will learn about **food chains**, the **balance of nature**, **changes** to the environment, and how to **protect the environment**.

What will my student learn?

Students will read about **producers**, **consumers**, and **decomposers** in food chains. The Reader for this unit contains a selection of readings that focus on **ecosystems** and the balance of nature. Students will also explore how the environment changes both naturally and as a result of human actions. Finally, they will read a biography about **John Muir**.

Throughout the unit, students will write **Ecologist's Journals**, in which they will **summarize** what they have learned, **apply** the concepts that they have explored during their reading, and **extend their knowledge**.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What is a producer? Give me an example of one.
Follow up: What is a consumer? Give me an example of one. What is a decomposer? Give me an example of one. What is the most important decomposer?
2. What is a food chain?
Follow up: Can you describe one of the food chains in the Mara National Reserve? What happens if a part of the food chain disappears forever?
3. How was the Petrified Forest created?
Follow up: What are the effects of flooding? Is flooding a natural change or a human change to the environment? How do you know?
4. What are some examples of human changes to the environment?
Follow up: What are some examples of environmental damages that have been caused by humans?
5. What are some things we can do to protect the environment?
Follow up: What are some things that you already do?