

ELA GRADE LEVEL OVERVIEW

An Introduction to StudySync's Thematic Units for Grade 12



Introduction

This Grade 12 Overview contains detailed information about the texts and writing tasks in each unit. Text complexity information is presented alongside writing task expectations, allowing for a macro view of the program, which can be used for review, planning, or clarification about text placement.

The Grade 12 Core ELA takes students through literary and nonfiction texts that explore a variety of themes, perspectives, and experiences.

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Overall Approach to Text Complexity

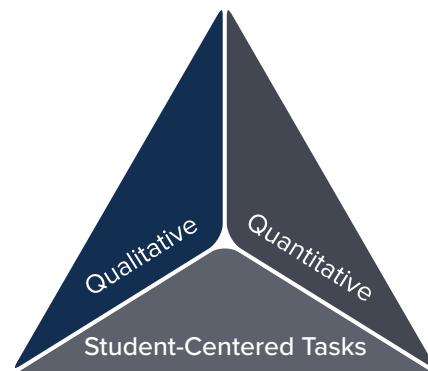
StudySync offers students a wealth of opportunities to interact with high quality texts that span a variety of genres, cultures, and eras. The selections presented in each unit and grade strike an appropriate balance of fiction, poetry, drama, argumentative, and informational texts, consistent with grade-level standards, and offer for analysis complex themes and ideas as well as compelling characters and compelling examples of craft and structure. Students explore topics in-depth through groupings of related selections that address a person, era, idea, or event from multiple perspectives and in multiple text forms.

Reading selections gradually increase in text complexity across units and grades, with challenging texts accompanied by scaffolding to aid students in grasping the full depth of their meaning over the course of a lesson. Students are asked to engage with increasingly sophisticated texts and to engage with more accessible texts in an increasingly sophisticated and deep manner.

Text complexity is determined by a combination of three factors: **quantitative** measures, **qualitative** measures, and **reader and task expectations**.

Quantitative measures refer to measurable factors that can increase a text's difficulty, such as its Lexile score, length, and date of publication.

Qualitative measures refer to structural, linguistic, or contextual elements of the text that make it more or less difficult, such as prior knowledge required or specific vocabulary terms.



Finally, reader and task expectations refer to the ways in which students are asked to interact with the text. All three factors are considered when placing texts in a particular grade or unit. A text with a low Lexile that requires significant prior knowledge and asks students to perform rigorous analysis may be more appropriate for a particular grade than a text with a higher lexile that requires less analysis.

Information about these three factors is provided for every text in the program in the pages that follow.

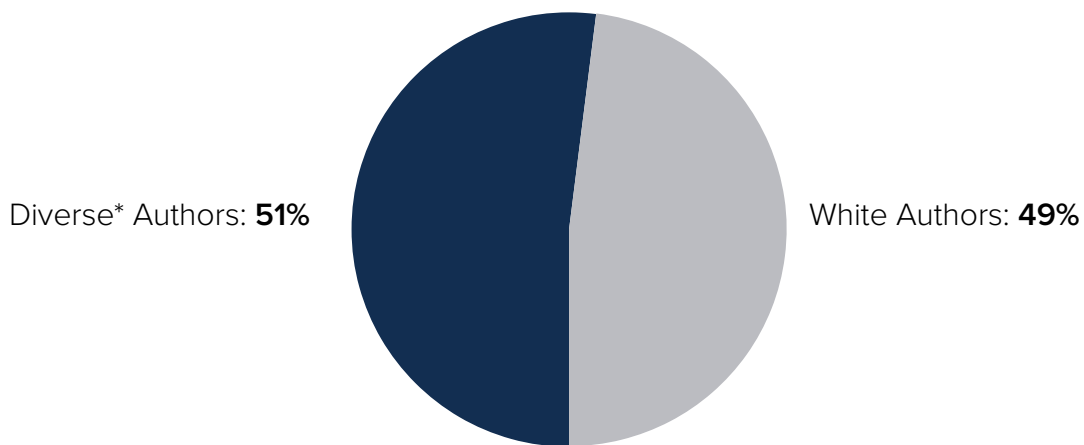


Overall Grade Diversity Representation

Following the scholarship of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, StudySync's table of contents is designed to be reflective of our readers' cultures and experiences and to open windows to cultures and experiences different from their own. To ensure that students have meaningful and immersive reading experiences, we've prioritized the inclusion of Black authors and authors of color as well as female authors for a truly diverse offering of literature.

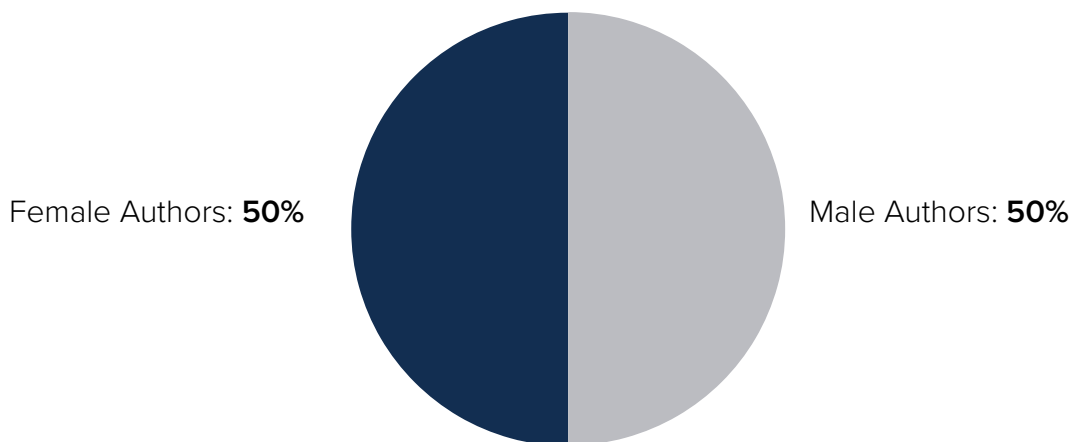
Diversity Representation

Authors with diverse backgrounds make up at least half of StudySync's table of contents. *



Gender Representation

Female identifying authors make up at least half of StudySync's table of contents.



* Author's with diverse backgrounds: Black authors, Native American authors, authors of color, and Jewish authors.



Overall Approach to Writing Instruction

StudySync instructs students on a variety of writing forms that adhere to the state curriculum standards. Each unit of the program exposes students to a different writing form and all of its associated skills and processes, which they practice through unit-specific **Extended Writing Projects (EWP)**. At each grade level, one EWP covers each of the following writing forms: narrative, informational, argumentative, research, and literary analysis. Additionally, one unit in each grade contains an **Extended Oral Project**, where students will create and present a presentation based on the specific requirements of the standards for that grade.

Explicit instruction in writing is included in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language lessons and activities, all of which are scaffolded to support learners of varying backgrounds and abilities. Writing activities in each unit, from the in-depth EWP to Close Read writing prompts, self-selected writing responses, writer's notebook activities, Blast responses, and other short writing activities explore different aspects of the writing process, giving students a variety of writing practice opportunities to hone their skills and enhance their understanding of each unit's particular writing form.



Writing Process: Each unit's Extended Writing Project allows students to practice long-form writing using the steps of the writing process and associated skill lessons.

This application of the writing skills and processes culminates in the Extended Writing Project, which challenges students and holds them accountable for their learning experiences. The Extended Writing Project prompts students to inquire deeply into a unit's theme and essential question by drawing from text evidence, research, and their own life experiences to develop extended responses in a variety of writing forms specified in the standards. Throughout the Extended Writing project, students evaluate and assess Student Model examples that connect to the modes of writing in each unit. Lessons push students to effectively express themselves and rely on text evidence as a basis of support for their ideas.

Students have a myriad of opportunities to enrich their writing, including immersion in specific academic vocabulary, peer review and revision, and group discussion and collaboration. They explore different formats of presenting and publishing the finished works that represent their best possible writing efforts in the program.



Addressing Sensitive Content

Specific StudySync Library items that contain potentially objectionable language have been flagged to ensure that teachers are fully prepared to lead discussion with students around these texts. While these topics and texts can be challenging, with adequate preparation they can yield productive and powerful conversations among students.

The following are recommended for texts that contains sensitive content:

Before class

teacher preparation for introducing sensitive content in the classroom

During class

strategies for productive conversations about sensitive content with students

During the discussion

easy, in-the-moment activities to help students process their thinking, express themselves compassionately, and maintain an effective discussion

After the discussion

strategies to support students in reflection and continued learning beyond the allotted time for classroom discussion

Before Class

It is strongly recommended that you develop a plan to address sensitive topics with your students prior to assigning the text. The following are some suggested steps and activities to help you prepare.

Outcome

Prepare to be an active facilitator.

Suggested Strategies

- Read the text thoroughly and identify any language or content that students may find sensitive or challenging to discuss.
- Consider that the topics that you may believe are controversial or sensitive may not be the same ones that create conflict for your students.
- Construct a clear outcome for the discussions before the lesson (“By the end of the discussion...”)
- Plan how you will work with students to establish a supportive environment for the discussion, and how you will assist them in navigating sensitive content. You may utilize the strategies described below, but these are neither prescriptive nor comprehensive. Your knowledge of your students’ personalities, interests, and needs should guide your choices.



During Class

In order to fully prepare yourself and your students for reading about and discussing sensitive content, it is strongly recommended that you develop a classroom culture and a set of norms that will support challenging conversations, and focus students on discussing the text. The following are some suggested steps and activities to help you collectively prepare.

Outcome

Understand the difference between intent and impact.

Suggested Strategies

- Ask students: Recall a time when someone said or did something that hurt you, and when that person found out they said, “I am sorry, I did not mean to hurt you.”
- If students struggle to recall an instance of this, provide them with a scenario: Imagine a peer hears you participating in class, and approaches you after school. This peer says “Wow, I didn’t think you were that smart!” What would be your reaction? What was this peer’s intent?
- Prompt students to discuss what this experience can teach them about the difference between intent and impact.
- Explain to students that during discussions of sensitive topics, how we say things can matter just as much or more than what we are saying.
- Remind students to be careful of the impact of their words on other people. We also must try to understand the speaker’s intent, especially when their words have a negative impact.

Discussion Norms and Agreements

Establish discussion guidelines that focus on the importance of student input and respect of individual thought.

Suggested Strategies

- As a class, work with students to generate guidelines or present a list of ground rules for the lesson and work with students to accept or modify them.
- To prepare students for co-creating norms or agreements, you could ask:
 - What is difficult about discussing [topic]?
 - What is beneficial about discussing [topic]?
 - What agreements will help address the challenge of discussing this topic while also ensuring the discussion is beneficial?
- Students should feel ownership of the discussion agreements, and express them in their own language. However, it is important to ensure that most of the following suggested guidelines are covered:
 - Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
 - Listen actively with an ear for understanding others’ views.
 - Critique ideas, not individuals.
 - Base all responses in the text, by providing evidence from the text to support your reasoning/opinion.
 - Allow everyone the opportunity to speak and respect those that choose not to.
 - Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
 - Avoid assumptions about any individual or generalizations about social groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their perceived social group.



During the Discussion

While preparation is key, sensitive topics can often generate challenging emotions in the moment. The following suggestions are activities that you can utilize during the class to help your students process their thinking, express themselves compassionately, and maintain an effective discussion.

Observation

Student(s) becoming less engaged and showing a decline in participation.

Suggestion

- **Fist-to-Five:** Have students hold up fingers to express their current level of comfort with the conversation:
 - 0 = I would rather not talk about this topic.
 - 1 = I am very uncomfortable talking about this topic.
 - 2 = I am usually uncomfortable talking about this topic.
 - 3 = I am sometimes uncomfortable talking about this topic.
 - 4 = I am usually comfortable talking about this topic.
 - 5 = I am very comfortable talking about this topic.
- **Stop and Jot:** Have students take a moment to break from the discussion and write down what they are thinking. Taking the time to journal, even for just a couple minutes, can help students focus their thinking and plan what they want to say and how to say it.

Observation

Students hesitating to participate or struggling to respond to challenging discussion questions.

Suggestion

- **Think, Pair, Share:**
 - Write the discussion question on the board.
 - Have students answer the question by free-writing in their journals for three minutes.
 - Have students share their thoughts with a partner.
 - Have students share their thoughts whole-group.
- If students still struggle to participate, ask students to share something interesting that their partner said in their Pair discussion.

Observation

Student(s) expressing a strong reaction to the text or to the discussion.

Suggestion

- Ask students to point to key information in the text, stating their source. You can have students do this individually or as a class. Create a list of the key points of information for the whole class to see. Then, have students distinguish between evaluative statements versus statements of opinion or experience.



Observation

Student(s) expressing confusion about the sensitivity of the text or the discussion.

Suggestion

- Provide a space for students to capture thoughts (Pros/Cons, Agree/Disagree).
- Students may gain understanding through a Circular Response Discussion, where students share their points of view in a circular fashion throughout the classroom. Students should have the option to pass if they would like.
- Ask students to identify information they would like to know to clarify their understanding on questions, opinions, or comments presented, even if that information is not available in the moment.
- Observation: Student(s) struggling to express themselves when a challenging statement, opinion, or idea is communicated.

Suggestion

- Students may benefit from a structure in order to process challenging moments in a discussion:
 - Restate: Have students say in their own words what they think they heard. The act of repetition can often help clarify misunderstandings, and encourage reflection.
 - Count: Have students contemplate for a count to 10. This will allow students to consider their responses carefully.
 - Breathe: Have students take a deep breath before re-engaging in the discussion. This will allow students to consider how best to express their emotions.
 - Empathize: When responding, students should have compassion for the speaker, and challenge the statement instead of the person who said it. This will help maintain a safe classroom environment while also assuming good intentions and seeking to understand.

Observation

Student(s) engaging in a deep discussion while others are ready to move on, or more content needs to be discussed.

Suggestion

- Stoplight: This is an effective strategy for measuring students' comfort with moving on in the conversation, especially after a challenging topic has been discussed. Students can hold up colored pieces of paper, or raise their hands to indicate their position on the stoplight.
 - Green: We can move on.
 - Yellow: We can move on, but I feel some concern about moving forward.
 - Red: I do not want to move on yet.
- Ask students to base all responses in the text. Consider, is there a certain level or type of evidence that you expect students to provide in their reasoning? Be prepared to bring students back to the text to ground the discussion.



After the Discussion

More often than not, discussions around sensitive topics must come to a close before anything is resolved. The following suggestions are activities that you can utilize at the end of a discussion to encourage students to embrace and process this lack of closure.

Suggestion

- Wrap-Up Reflection Questions
 - Ask for student feedback. Consider the following questions:
 - What are the two most important points you learned today?
 - What important questions remained unanswered for you today?
- What did you learn specifically from what someone else said, in relation to the text, that you would not have said or thought on your own?
 - Ask students to reflect:
 - Which discussion norm do you feel was your strength today? How do you know?
 - Which discussion norm do you feel was an area for growth for you today? What could you do to make this a strength next time?
- Do you have any suggestions for how the group can better engage in similar discussions next time?
 - Ask students to journal:
 - What are you thinking that wasn't said today in class?
 - What do you know that others might not?
 - What do you want to learn?
 - What do you want to share?

The Critical Incident Questionnaire

At the end of the day (or week, or unit, or other appropriate time period), set aside 10 minutes for the group to respond in writing to a few specific questions. (This may be especially helpful to do when a class session has been particularly difficult or tense).

- At what moment were you most engaged as a learner?
- At what moment were you most distanced as a learner?
- What action that anyone in the room took did you find most affirming or helpful?
- What action that anyone in the room took did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- What surprised you most?
- Keep all responses anonymous. Collect them at the end of the period. Read and analyze the responses, and compile them according to similar themes and concerns. Report back to the group at the next meeting. Allow time for comments and discussion.





Unit 1

What's Next?

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Unit Overview

Unit 1 Title

What's Next?

Essential Question:

How can we transform the future?

Genre Focus

Informational

Introduction

For high school seniors, the future seems closer than ever. In a matter of months, these students will make major decisions about their lives. Will they go to college or get a job? Will they move away or stay close to home? Will they stay close to their friends or will they branch out and meet new people? Every choice they make will affect their future in ways they cannot yet imagine.

How can we make sure that we make the right choices? How much does a person's individual choices affect his or her future? Can we make sure our choices have a positive impact on ourselves and on society?

This unit offers a wide variety of literature that will encourage students to consider these questions and more while also exploring texts in the unit's genre focus, informational text. There is a wide variety of nonfiction selections in this unit, beginning with the newspaper article "Are the New 'Golden Age' TV Shows the New Novels?" The speeches "We Choose to Go to the Moon" and "Commencement Address at Wellesley College" as well as personal essays *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*, and "How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked" model for students how to use language to express a personal point of view. The informational texts "Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools," "Overcoming Impostor Syndrome," and "Booster Staff Investigates" illustrate how to share information from an objective viewpoint. The United States Supreme Court opinions in *Plessy v. Ferguson* offer students strong examples of arguments supported by rhetorical appeals and strong evidence. The excerpt from the classic novella *The Metamorphosis* allows students to read across genres as well.

Students will begin this unit as readers, and they will finish as writers, as they apply what they have learned about informational texts to their own informative writing projects.



Text Complexity

Grade 12 Unit 1 serves as the starting point for twelfth grade students' continued development as critical learners. Although this unit focuses on the genre of informational texts, it also features readings in poetry and fiction. The texts all share a thematic link, focusing on how individuals and groups can change the future, with a particular emphasis on education and life after high school. The unit's title and Essential Question will engage and energize students as they start the year wondering what will happen after they graduate. Nine Blasts – each accompanied by podcasts – focus on the thoughts of real students who are facing common decisions about the next chapter of their lives. These multimedia texts are relevant and engaging for students, providing an access point to the other readings in the unit.

With a Lexile® range stretching from 970-1470, the majority of the texts in this unit fall between 1100L and 1250L, a perfect starting point for twelfth graders. Additionally, the vocabulary, text features, content, and uniting theme make these texts accessible to twelfth graders, enabling them to grow as readers by interacting with appropriately challenging texts.

The unit begins with “Are the New ‘Golden Age’ TV Shows the New Novels?” which is used in the SyncStart unit. Though this text challenges students through its specific vocabulary, argumentative text structure, as well as pop culture and literary references, it also has the largest number of lessons supporting it. The difficulty of this opinion article is offset by a collection of skill lessons that teach students the necessary background skills for success in their English Language Arts class. Skills like Annotation, Context Clues, Reading Comprehension, Text Dependent Responses, and Collaborative Conversations do not just build a foundation for the school year; they also allow students to encounter this text repeatedly using different perspectives.

Following the SyncStart unit, a reading of “Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools” informs students about the difference between these two educational opportunities. The article is paired with another informational text, “Overcoming Impostor Syndrome,” which helps students take control of their own future by providing the tools to prevent and combat the feeling that they do not deserve the success they have earned. The Skills lessons, Close Read questions, and writing activities for “Overcoming Impostor Syndrome” ask students to compare and contrast how the authors use distinct text structures to develop ideas and inform their readers. This task prompts students to look closely at structural differences between informational texts, while applying comparative thinking and writing skills to two texts that share a similar genre and purpose.



An excerpt from Franz Kafka's novel *The Metamorphosis* challenges students to analyze the allegorical transformation of a protagonist whose life is dictated by the people around him. Students are supported in their analysis of the analogy with the Skill lessons Story Structure, Textual Evidence, and Connotation and Denotation. They will also watch a StudySyncTV episode that models an effective and in-depth discussion of this text.

A personal essay, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and On Life* is paired with President John F. Kennedy's speech "We Choose to Go to the Moon" to initiate a discussion of how goals and ambitions are only met through self-determination and a realistic sense of hope. The shared thematic link provides students with consistent access and reference points, so students can focus on applying the skills to these texts. As one of the texts at the higher end of the Lexile® band for this unit, students' reading is also supported by Skill lessons in Author's Purpose and Point of View, Rhetoric, and Arguments and Claims, as well as a StudySyncTV episode.

"How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked," "Commencement Address at Wellesley College," and *Plessy v. Ferguson* demonstrate that structural and interpersonal challenges to one's culture and identity have been an evolving but consistent theme in United States history. While the personal essay and the speech are low-Lexile® readings, *Plessy v. Ferguson* is the most challenging text in the unit. The landmark Supreme Court ruling is made accessible through a strong thematic link to these previous texts and is accompanied by Skill lessons on Reasons and Evidence, Rhetoric, and Technical Language to support students as they read and analyze.

The final text in the unit, "Booster Staff Investigates," describes how six teenagers discover inconsistencies and fraudulence in their new high school principal's credentials. This engaging text reaffirms that students have the ability to change the future even now while they are still attending high school.



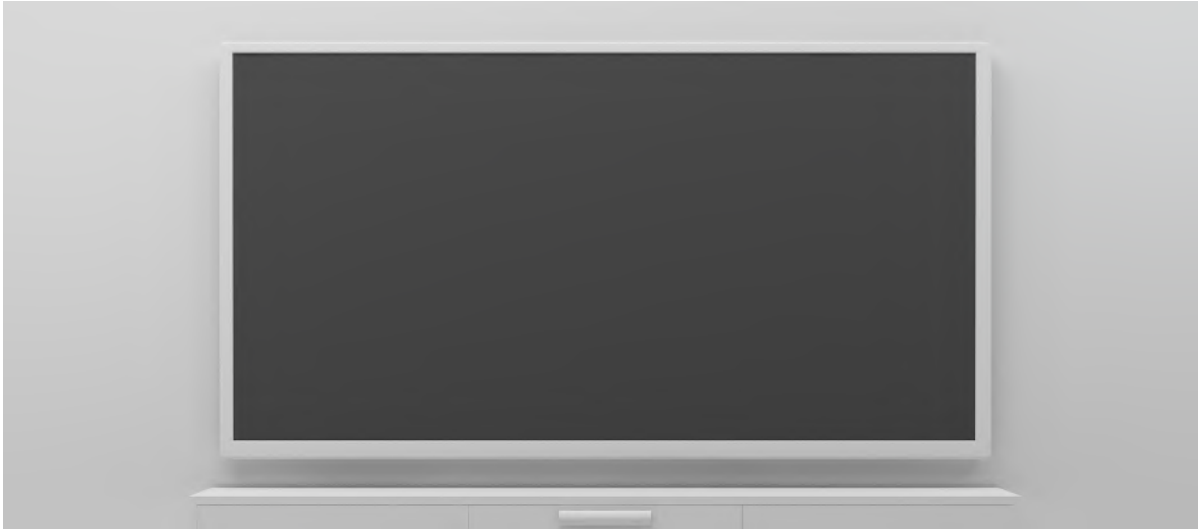
English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “Fate or Foolishness” and “A First in Space,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing skill lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension of the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will plan and present an informational presentation about a person who was the first to accomplish something. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner.



Are the New ‘Golden Age’ TV Shows the New Novels?

by Adam Kirsch and Mohsin Hamid

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2014

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- Students often look for a thesis at the beginning of an article, but these authors build up to a thesis.
- Tell students to look for each author’s opinion later in the text, but ask them to guess the opinion earlier if they can.

Prior Knowledge

- References to Charles Dickens and unfamiliar TV shows may need explaining.

Specific Vocabulary

- Guide students to look up the meanings of the unfamiliar and challenging words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1270

Word Count: 1,238



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Annotation, Context Clues, Reading Comprehension, Text Dependent Resources, Textual Evidence, Informational Text Elements, Collaborative Conversations, Short Constructed Response, Peer Review

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: Select one of the articles. Analyze how the author uses examples, explanations, and concluding remarks to support his thesis and provide direction to his ideas. Remember to use textual evidence to support your points.

Beyond the Book

Debate: Novels vs. Television

Students will analyze both arguments, take a position, and defend it in a formal debate.

Ask students to:

- Analyze the author's point of view while considering their own opinion.
- Collect facts to support their opinions about whether television shows are the new novels.
- Construct an argument with a clear claim, compelling evidence, and thorough analysis in preparation for the debates.
- Include rhetorical devices to persuade the audience.

Once students have constructed their arguments, invite pairs of students to debate. Allow the class to vote for the position they think was most compelling.

To reflect, ask students:

- After hearing the debates, do you think television shows are the new novels?
- What were the most persuasive pieces of evidence used in the debates?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

How can contemporary movements impact future developments in the arts? This text explores whether modern television will transform our perceptions of literature.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the text as a mentor for their personal essay. They may, like the two writers, use supporting evidence to make their statements more convincing.



Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools

by Ursula McPike

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- This text uses paragraph headings and other features used in informational texts.
- Have students discuss which features they might expect to find in an informational text and how to use those features.

Connection of Ideas

- The text supports ideas with both quantitative and qualitative evidence.
- Have students identify the different types of evidence and explain how each piece of evidence relates to a key idea.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1220

Word Count: 1,155



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Write a journal entry in which you weigh your options after high school. Consider your hopes for the future as well as the resources and supports that will be available to you. Which experiences would best prepare you for your career, or perhaps help inform your decision? What might your next steps be?

Beyond the Book

Art: Vision Board

Trade schools and colleges provide students with different paths depending on their situations, interests, and goals. Students will create a vision board to display images that represent who they want to be, what they want to do, and where they want to be in five years.

Ask students to:

- Search and study other people’s vision boards.
- Decide on what their own vision boards will include. (e.g., images relating to careers, finances, home, relationships, travel, spirituality, education, health)
- Decide what medium they will use.
- Create their vision boards.
- Share their vision boards with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- How can a visual reminder or focus help you reach your goals?
- What similarities and differences did you notice about the vision boards in this room?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The text “Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools” compares two different types of education programs and provides information that can help young adults who are looking for options other than a traditional four-year college. Practical in its scope, this text also challenges traditional stigmas about community and vocational colleges, empowering students to chart their own course to a higher-paying future.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from the text for their personal essays. Have students analyze the writing style of the text for its clear, cohesive expression and effective supporting details.



Overcoming Impostor Syndrome

by Dena Simmons

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- This informational text is a researched essay and includes in-text citations and a bibliography.
- Have students review these and other specific text features commonly found in researched informational texts.

Prior Knowledge

- The text refers to *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* published by the American Psychiatric Association.
- Explain that *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, commonly referred to by the acronym DSM, is a reference book that identifies and classifies mental disorders.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1130

Word Count: 1,595



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Informational Text Structure, Central or Main Idea, Compare and Contrast

Close Read Prompt

Research: Select a topic related to your life after high school that you would like to learn more about (for example, how to find a job or how to select a dorm roommate). Then write an informational article about this topic, applying informational text structures to your article to support your main idea or claim.

Beyond the Book

Investigate: Accepting Compliments

Accepting compliments is not easy for most people, but it is particularly difficult for those with Imposter Syndrome. Students will investigate compliments across cultures.

In small groups, ask students to:

- Choose a country and research giving and receiving compliments in that country.
- Allow each group to share what they discovered about giving and receiving compliments in that culture.
- Have each group perform or act out a situation for the class that illustrates what they learned from their research.
- After demonstrating their learning, ask students to describe their learning process.

To reflect, ask students:

- How is receiving and giving compliments in other cultures the same as and different from receiving and giving them in the United States?
- How do cultural values impact the acts of giving and receiving compliments?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

“Overcoming Impostor Syndrome” focuses on the theme of disempowerment, centering its research on the “impostor feelings” that can immobilize students with a deep sense of inadequacy throughout the college journey. It highlights how these perceptions typically do not match the actual capabilities, skills, knowledge, and potential of these distraught college-goers. Practical in its own right, this text offers tips for overcoming what many scholars refer to as “impostor syndrome.”

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “Overcoming Impostor Syndrome” to reflect on the obstacles they have faced in their lives as they write their personal essays.



The Metamorphosis

by Franz Kafka

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1915

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- This literary work is an allegory, which by definition conveys a symbolic representation of human affairs. Readers have to analyze and interpret the work to arrive at the meaning.
- Encourage students, after reading, to think freely about literary elements that could have larger meanings. Is there anything about Gregor Samsa that is true of many people?

Sentence Structure

- Students may have difficulty with the very long sentences in this translation.
- Tell students not to be intimidated; these are just the character's pained, precarious thoughts. Read aloud and break down the long sentences with students.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1340

Word Count: 1,993



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Story Structure, Textual Evidence, Connotation and Denotation

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: An allegory is a literary device used to convey a symbolic message that comments on some aspect of human life and society. In an allegory, characters represent ideas. Kafka uses the literary device of allegory to structure this story. What do you think the character of Gregor Samsa represents? What message might the author be conveying about human life and society? Focus on specific words that connote or denote an opinion about human life and society. Use textual evidence to support your ideas.

Beyond the Book

Photography: Gregor's Dilemma

Kafka paints a powerful picture for the reader of Gregor's inner dilemma of work and life. Students will share through photography an important idea from the text that illustrates Gregor's major plight.

Ask students to:

- Decide on an important idea or moment from the text.
- Decide what photograph would depict this moment best.
- Mount the photograph on a display background with a quote, saying, or statement that explains the photograph.
- Present their projects to the class explaining how it supports the text.

To reflect, ask students:

- How can a photo hold emotion and meaning, and how is that the same or different from a text?
- Which projects captured Gregor's predicament the best? Why?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

What would you do if you woke up and discovered that you had transformed into a large insect? This bizarre occurrence is the basis for Franz Kafka's iconic novella *The Metamorphosis*.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use *The Metamorphosis* to inform their ideas about personal identity, the responsibility they feel to their families, and personal feelings of uncertainty they've experienced as they write their personal essays.



Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life

by Anne Lamott

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1995

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students may need to review the genre lesson from the beginning of the unit.
- Remind students that personal essays present the author's own thoughts and feelings about a topic.

Purpose

- The writer's purpose is not immediately apparent, but it is revealed gradually as she describes her experience with anxiety.
- Tell students that they can figure out the author's purpose by paying attention to how they feel as they read.

Connection of Ideas

- The writer uses several examples of figurative language to express different aspects of similar ideas. The reader must interpret and draw connections among these examples of figurative language.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1320

Word Count: 1,004



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: The author uses several examples of figurative language to describe her ongoing experience with anxiety. Identify three instances of figurative language, explain their meaning, and evaluate how effective these examples are in supporting the writer’s thesis.

Beyond the Book

Meme: The Best Advice

Lamott says, “You just have to see two or three feet ahead of you. This is right up there with the best advice about writing, or life, I have ever heard.” Students will create a meme to share advice with others.

Ask students to:

- Complete a free write in which they describe a moment when they received life changing advice.
- What was happening in their lives when they received the advice?
- What was the advice they received?
- Who gave them the advice? How did the advice change their perspective on life?
- Distill this life advice into a phrase.
- Pair this advice with a clever image to create a meme.
- Share their memes with the class and briefly explain the origin of this saying and what it means to them.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why are some memes powerful while others are not?
- What inspires people to share memes so frequently on social media?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Bird by Bird, a book written by Anne Lamott, uses literary techniques, including figurative language, to discuss how a person can overcome feelings of anxiety through the writing process. She explains how writing an autobiography — the ultimate exhibition of unique inner struggle and desperation — can help satiate an innate human desire to be visible in society.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Anne Lamott’s essay by thinking about her process for writing and reflection. Considering Lamott’s process could help them in the writing and reflection process for their personal essays.



We Choose to Go to the Moon

by John F. Kennedy

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1962

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Sentence Structure

- Many of Kennedy's sentences are quite long; paragraph 17 is a single sentence with over 150 words.
- Explain that the sentences are not always complex, but that they are filled with rhetorical devices such as parallelism and figurative language.

Connection of Ideas

- Students will need to make frequent inferences based on Kennedy's use of imagery.
- For instance, how can outer space be "conquered," and what is meant by calling space "the new sea"? Stop periodically to discuss passages like these.

Prior Knowledge

- The political background of the Cold War era might be unfamiliar to some students.
- Provide background on Sputnik and other topics as needed.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1470

Word Count: 1,223



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Author's Purpose and Point of View, Rhetoric, Arguments and Claims

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: Examine the reasons President Kennedy lists for wanting to cultivate the space program and send Americans to the Moon by the end of the 1960s. Based on his speech, what do you think motivates him? Do you find his use of rhetoric persuasive? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Beyond the Book

Research: Timeline of the Space Race

John F. Kennedy delivered his speech at the beginning of the Space Race and at the height of The Cold War. At this moment Americans were concerned they would lose the race to their adversary. Students will research major events and timing of this race.

Break students into small groups and ask them to:

- Research the major events of the Space Race.
- Note important people, dates, and changing dynamics in the relationship between Russia and America.
- Create a multimedia presentation of the timeline of the Space Race to present to the class. The timeline should include information and media for each event.
- Present their findings in a formal group presentation.

To reflect, ask students:

- How did creating a timeline of events help you understand the emotions and fears of the American people?
- Which statements from JFK's speech had the biggest impact on the Space Race and why?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

When Kennedy gave this speech in 1962, his words set off a spark that eventually led to American astronauts becoming the first people to set foot on the Moon. Students will compare the personal essay with the speech to understand the transformative power of a decision.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use this text as a mentor for their Extended Writing Project. They may imitate Kennedy's methods of identifying goals and explaining why they are worthwhile.



How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked

by Elissa Washuta

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2013

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students may need to review the genre lesson from the beginning of the unit. A personal essay is organized chronologically and leads up to the main message of the essay in the last paragraph.
- Ask students to notice, as they read, what each paragraph is telling them about what it feels like to be a Native American student.

Specific Vocabulary

- Some terms may be unfamiliar to students, such as “dream-catcher earrings,” “petroglyph,” and “indigenous.”
- Before the students read, you might show them images of objects and give them definitions of words that are abstract.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1150

Word Count: 1,218



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Today, many people are turning to online services such as Ancestry.com to discover their backgrounds. Do you think that knowing your ethnic makeup and cultural heritage is important in order to forge your identity? Why or why not? Use details from this selection and from your own life to develop your ideas.

Beyond the Book

Reflect and Present: Giving Gifts

Ask students to:

- Reflect on the experiences discussed in the text, their own experiences, and other books and media that explore student life. What is rewarding? What is challenging?
- Synthesize this information in order to identify a gift they would give future students to help them on their journeys.
- Create a written or artistic representation of their gift to present to the class.
- Regardless of the format they choose, students should explain their rationale for why they selected this gift and how it would help others.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why might have Washuta decided to end her essay with a focus on gift-giving?
- What did you learn from your classmates' gifts?
- Is there a particular gift that you would have liked to receive? Why?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Elissa Washuta explains how her personal journey to uncover her cultural identity encouraged her to give back to others through the gift of education.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from “How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked” by considering how they’ve formed their own identities.



Commencement Address at Wellesley College

by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2015

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Commencement addresses are given to graduating high school or college students. They are almost always delivered in first-person point of view and usually contain advice or lessons on life in general.
- As a well-known and respected writer and women's rights advocate, Adichie was a natural fit for giving the commencement address at Wellesley, a women's college.

Connection of Ideas

- Adichie uses several anecdotes to illustrate and link her ideas.
- A common theme in this speech is the idea of not forcing things to fit. Following this theme as it is elaborated in each anecdote will help students understand the structure and flow of Adichie's speech.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 970

Word Count: 2,609



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: In her speech, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie uses personal memories and stories to explain how small gestures of resistance (wearing makeup, or wanting to be called a “chairperson” instead of “chairman,” for example) have helped her and her mother be true to themselves, notwithstanding other people’s attempts to transform them into something they are not. Think about your own identity. Has anyone ever pushed you to be something other than your true self? Write a brief speech that describes this situation and the outcome. Were you able to remain true to yourself, or did you have to compromise? Why is it important to be true to yourself? Why is it important for others to acknowledge your true self? (If you have never experienced such a situation, please imagine one and write your speech based on that.)

Beyond the Book

Conversation: The Argument

Today, friends are more likely to engage in a heated back and forth argument via text message than face to face.

Ask students to:

- Imagine a situation regarding feminism or women’s rights that might cause two close friends their age to have an argument with one another.
- Create a text conversation between these two friends complete with emojis. The text conversation should reveal the passionate beliefs of each friend, the ways they attempt to persuade each other, and the resolution.

To reflect, ask students:

- Do you think these friends would have had the same conversation if they were talking face to face?
- Why do people say things via text message or social media that they would not say if they were arguing face to face? Did you draw on your own experiences for this activity?

Connect to Essential Question

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie encourages her audience to use their privilege to positively transform the future. Using anecdotes, Adichie encourages students to resist the pressure to “twist themselves into shapes” just to satisfy the expectations of the people around them.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use Adichie’s style as inspiration for their own speeches. Have them brainstorm relevant anecdotes and humorous moments and incorporate those into their speeches.



Plessy v. Ferguson

by U.S. Supreme Court

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1896

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- The Fourteenth Amendment establishes equality “before the law.”
- Justice Brown distinguishes between “social equality” and “political equality.”
- Justice Harlan believes that laws intended to restrict only one group are a violation of equality.

Vocabulary

- Legal jargon, such as *jurisdiction*, *due process*, *plaintiff*, *adjudication*, and *statute*, may present a challenge to some readers.
- Context clues in the text or a dictionary can help define unfamiliar words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 2,040



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Reasons and Evidence, Rhetoric, Technical Language

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: Compare and contrast the arguments in Justice Brown's majority opinion with Justice Harlan's dissenting opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Which rhetorical strategies does each use most effectively to advance their arguments? Which arguments or instances of legal reasoning don't seem to have withstood the test of time? Explain your response using textual evidence from each argument.

Beyond the Book

From Document to Dialogue

Ask students to identify the major points of both the majority opinion and the dissenting opinion and note where they address similar topics or ideas. Have students use these moments to write a dialogue between Justices Brown and Harlan that preserves their rhetorical strategies in a more conversational context. Remind students that Supreme Court justices are accustomed to debating cases with consideration and respect for differing opinions. They should reflect these same values in the dialogue they create.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Plessy v. Ferguson is an infamous Supreme Court case from the late 19th century that established the constitutionality of “separate but equal” laws in the United States for over half a century. Containing excerpts from Justice Brown's majority opinion as well as from Justice Harlan's sole dissenting opinion, the debate focuses on the role of government in protecting both the legal and social rights of American citizens, regardless of race.

Read alongside each other, “How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked,”

Commencement Address at Wellesley College, and *Plessy v. Ferguson* encourage students to analyze how an individual's enjoyment of civil rights and ability to be themselves can be challenged by cultural and societal factors.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Justice Harlan was the lone dissenting opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The Supreme Court's precedent of “separate, but equal” was not overturned until 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education*. While Justice Harlan's beliefs at the time were unpopular, he based his argument in his understanding of what the United States of America aspired to be. Students can find inspiration from how Justice Harlan bases his argument on aspirations when writing their personal essays. Have them reflect on how Justice Harlan uses his understanding of who we should be as Americans to shape his argument.



Booster Staff Investigates

by Maddie Baden, Connor Balthazor, Gina Mathew, Trina Paul, Kali Poenitske, & Patrick Sullivan

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2017

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Good journalism should be well-researched, but the numerous names and quotations from interviews, journals, and articles may be distracting to students and cause them to lose focus.
- Emphasize the importance of annotating the text to students. It will help them keep track of people and events and allow them to quickly refer back to their notes if needed.

Connection of Ideas

- This investigative report follows a chronological format that quickly introduces Dr. Amy Robertson as someone associated with “discrepancies.”
- For this reading and prompt, students should remain objective and avoid forming personal opinions. Direct students to annotate the undisputed facts in the report so that they can create an objective summary.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1210

Word Count: 1,562



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: Select two or three pieces of evidence presented in the article that you found particularly convincing, and explain why you think the evidence is strong. Use details from the text and your knowledge about reasons and evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Interview: Validity Checks in Interviews

Six student journalists were able to spot discrepancies in their incoming principal's credentials, and they conducted interviews to find out the truth. Students will choose an interview to verify the answers provided.

Ask students to:

- Find an interesting interview and watch or read it.
- Analyze the questions that were asked to decide if they were designed to uncover new information.
- Investigate the answers that were given. Conduct informal research about answers that seem vague or don't make sense.
- Share what you learned with a classmate.

To reflect, ask students:

- How easy is it to catch misinformation in an interview?
- When should an interviewer trust what she is being told, and when should she verify information?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Six teenagers discover inconsistencies and fraudulence in their new high school principal's credentials. Through skilled investigating and reporting, they shed light on their administrator's unreliable past.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can model their informative personal essays on "The Booster Staff Investigates" by using a clear thesis statement, vivid language, reasons and evidence, and a strong close.



Extended Writing Project

What's Next?

Essential Question

How can we transform the future?

Writing Form

Informative

Extended Writing Project Prompt

How will our understanding of who we are shape the goals we develop for ourselves? Reflect on your background, identity, interests, and talents. Think through experiences you have had and obstacles you have faced. Which of these aspects of life have had the greatest impact on who you are now? Select two to four of these aspects. Describe what you learned from them, how you developed as a result of them, and how they affect the goals you are setting for your future self.

EWP Mentor Texts

How Much Indian Was I?, My Fellow Students Asked, Bird by Bird, Commencement Address at Wellesley College, The Metamorphosis, Overcoming Impostor Syndrome, Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Organizing Informative Writing, Thesis Statement, Supporting Details, Introductions, Transitions, Precise Language, Conclusions, Style

Grammar Skills

Sentence Variety, Basic Spelling Rules I, Apostrophes



Writing Overview

The Extended Writing Project (EWP) in Grade 12 Unit 1 focuses on informative writing. Students probe the unit’s essential question—How can we transform the future?—as they write a personal essay reflecting on their background, identity, interests, and talents. The prompt for this EWP asks students to select two of these aspects and describe how they affect their goals for their future selves. The sample informational essay, “My So-Called Introverted Life,” serves as a mentor text for students to analyze and emulate. Students engage in the writing process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. At each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress and development of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student’s writing changes and improves over time.

Skill lessons on Thesis Statement and Organizing Informative Writing teach concepts specifically called out in ELA standards, while the additional Skill lessons Supporting Details, Introductions, Transitions, Conclusions, and Style focus on characteristics of the informative writing genre and help students develop their unique essays. Students receive instructions for altering their drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, and diction. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards.

Students develop their writing skills outside the EWP. All Independent Read and Close Read lessons culminate in a writing or speaking prompt in which students reflect on the text or apply the skills they have learned in conjunction with that text. In the Independent Read “Community Colleges vs. Technical Schools,” students are asked to write a personal response weighing their options after high school, while the prompt for “Booster Staff Investigates” asks them to write a rhetorical analysis. Close Read prompts specifically ask students to conduct a focused analysis using the skills taught in conjunction with those texts. After students read *The Metamorphosis*, they use skills from the Story Structure and Connotation and Denotation lessons to analyze Kafka’s language and allegorical story structure. Students analyze Author’s Purpose and Point of View, Rhetoric, and Arguments and Claims in “We Choose to Go to the Moon.”

Students to write in other genres and for different audiences. Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions about civic contributions as well as self-select texts for independent reading. Writer’s notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing. In their writer’s notebooks, students write to think, write to reflect, and write to practice skills they’re learning. In the skill lesson for Supporting Details, students write a mock speech for accepting an award. In each Close Read, students first write in their writer’s notebooks to reflect on the text before they engage in a collaborative conversation and write their short constructed response.





Unit 2

Uncovering Truth

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Unit Overview

Unit 2 Title

Uncovering Truth

Essential Question

How do challenges cause us to reveal our true selves?

Literary Focus

The Medieval Period and The English Renaissance

Genre Focus

Fiction

Introduction

Everybody loves a good hero story. From *Beowulf* to the Avengers, audiences clamor for these tales of good versus evil. It's exhilarating to follow along as a hero saves the day, and it's a comfort to know that someone is always there to protect us.

How do challenges shape the people we become? How and why do leaders face challenges? What do readers learn by reading about heroes, characters, and leaders and what they do in moments of challenge? What do these stories teach us about ourselves and our society?

In this unit, students will think about the theme and essential question as they focus on the medieval period and English renaissance literature, analyzing excerpts from *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, among others. They will also study the genre of fiction while reading the short story "The Postmaster," and dramas such as *Richard III* and *Hamlet*. In addition, nonfiction texts, such as "A Letter to NFL GMs" by Shaquem Griffin and *Men We Reaped* by Jesmyn Ward, will encourage students to think about how real-life individuals deal with challenges and discover their true selves in the process.

Students will begin this unit as readers, and they will finish as writers as they apply what they have learned about story elements to their own narrative writing projects.



Text Complexity

Grade 12 Unit 2 continues to push students further in their text analysis and critical thinking abilities. Although the genre focus of this unit is fiction, students will also have the opportunity to read poems, Shakespearean drama, poems, a graphic novel, as well as informational texts. The selections in this unit fall in a Lexile® band of 970-1470, with most texts residing in the 1000-1200 range. Students may struggle with archaic vocabulary, text and poetic features, and required prior knowledge for many of these texts, but detailed discussions about the themes and ideas examined throughout the unit will aid students in overcoming these challenges. Whereas Unit 1 encouraged students to consider how they can individually and collectively impact the future, Unit 2 invites students to question what is revealed about one's own identity when facing challenges.

One of the first texts in the unit, an excerpt from Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf*, presents students with at times difficult and archaic language. However, the difficulty is offset by its pairing alongside Gareth Hinds' graphic novel adaptation of the Anglo-Saxon epic, which provides a compelling visual access point. Additionally, the Media Skill lesson that accompanies Heaney's translation offers students several additional interpretations of *Beowulf*, both written and recorded. Students will be able to utilize these interpretations to further their understanding of the text.

The background information provided in the Literary Focus: The Medieval period lesson, which precedes the *Beowulf* pairing, will help students focus their analysis on a connection to the unit's essential question—How do challenges cause us to reveal our true selves? This provides students with a framework in which to read and analyze the other texts in the unit, including an independent reading of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, a text that is equally challenging as it is fantastical and engaging.

For the purpose of analyzing literature across literary periods and genres, we have grouped the poem "Truth Serum" with a soliloquy from Shakespeare's *Richard III* and "The Pardoner's Prologue" from Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. All three texts feature a speaker whose relationship to the truth is a source of power. Students may find the archaic language and poetic structure of these texts challenging. *Richard III* will prove to be a particularly challenging independent reading, but it is supported by a StudySyncTV episode that will make the text accessible. "The Pardoner's Prologue" features skill instruction on Point of View and Connotation and Denotation that will help students unpack the complexity of the language as well as the thematic links expressed by the speakers in each of these texts. Comparing "Truth Serum" to "The Pardoner's Prologue" will allow students to see how the themes and imagery of Medieval literature continue to influence literature and culture today, and help them to access the intricacies of these texts.



Students will continue exploring the unit's main theme about how challenge can reveal truth through the reading of *Shakespeare: The World As Stage* by Bill Bryson. This argumentative text will challenge students with its rigorous structure and use of counterarguments. Skill lessons on Central or Main Idea, Connotation and Denotation, and Informational Text Elements will prepare students to engage in a focused analysis of the text and respond to a Close Read prompt that evaluates Bryson's argument. The text also provides a compelling and often humorous access point for further readings of Shakespeare.

T.S. Eliot's "Hamlet and His Problems" and a selection of soliloquies from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* helps students deeply analyze the character of Hamlet and characterize what type of person he was. The background knowledge and argument that Eliot introduces about one of Shakespeare's most infamous protagonists establishes a focus for students' reading of the excerpts from Hamlet. Skill instruction on Language, Style, and Audience as well as Dramatic Elements and Structure will help students deepen their understanding of Shakespeare's craft. In addition, a Media Skill lesson featuring two film adaptations of the "To be or not to be" soliloquy will challenge students to revisit their original interpretations of the text, while also providing a visual access point for its challenging language.

Next, students will read "The Postmaster," analyzing its strong thematic connection to the unit's essential question while exploring a new context with more contemporary language. Lessons on Theme, Story Elements, and Summarizing will further develop students' fictional text analysis abilities.

Students will apply the skills they learned in this unit to the last two texts, which they will read independently. Shaquem Griffin's "A Letter to NFL GMs" answers the unit's essential question with resilience and passion, while the unit's final text, *Men We Reaped* prompts students to see how the themes of truth and identity are reflected in more contemporary works of American literature.



English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “The Legend of Carman” and “Long Live King Chazz,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing skill lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension to the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will write and perform a scene in which three or four characters figure out how to work together to escape from being trapped. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner.



Beowulf (A Graphic Novel)

by Gareth Hinds

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2007

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- *Beowulf* was originally an Old English epic poem. It is one of the oldest surviving texts written in English. This graphic novel is a retelling of the classic story.
- Explain that graphic novels tell stories through words and images. They are organized into boxes called panels. Some pages do not have words at all, but they are still important to the plot.

Connection of Ideas

- In order to fully understand the plot, characterization, and theme of a graphic novel, readers need to draw connections between the words and visuals on each page and across pages.
- Remind students to make inferences based on both the text and visuals as they read the excerpt from the graphic novel.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1060L

Word Count: 822



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: How does the portrayal of Beowulf in this excerpt reveal the qualities of an Anglo-Saxon hero? Write a response in which you answer this question. Be sure to use textual evidence to defend your analysis of *Beowulf*.

Beyond the Book

A Picture Is Worth . . .

Although Gareth Hinds's graphic novel uses text to introduce the characters and the plot, the end of this excerpt is all images. Challenge students to think about why Hinds chose only images to convey the fight scene between Beowulf and Grendel. Encourage students to depict a real or imaginary event using only images they can draw. Place students into small groups to discuss their drawings with one another.

To reflect, ask students:

- How did focusing on visuals instead of using words affect how they understood the experience they were trying to convey?
- What insights have you gained about developing characters and events based on your drawings?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In the excerpt from Gareth Hinds's graphic novel based on the Anglo-Saxon poem, the hero Beowulf introduces himself to Hrothgar's court and faces off against Grendel in an intense, grisly battle. Students will read this selection before the excerpt from Heaney's translation to compare and contrast the two portrayals of the iconic hero.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Gareth Hinds's graphic novel updates a classic work of literature, but it still tells the story of a traditional type of hero. As students write their personal or fictional narratives, do they want to break with the tradition of a single hero rising up to defeat evil? What other hero narratives are possible?



Beowulf (Lines 144-300 - Heaney Translation)

translated by Seamus Heaney

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 8th to 11th century

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- The epic poem *Beowulf* is set in Scandinavia in the Middle Ages. Explain that Scandinavia now includes the countries of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.
- Students may be unaware that *Beowulf* was originally written in Old English and has been translated many times into various languages. Remind students that translators make choices when they change a text.

Genre

- *Beowulf* is believed to be the oldest surviving long-form poem originally written in Old English. The original poet is unknown.
- Explain to students that *Beowulf* embodies many characteristics of medieval literature, including a focus on Anglo-Saxon values and the inclusion of a hero's epic journey.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,157



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Media, Word Patterns and Relationships

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: The two excerpts (the Heaney translation and the Hinds graphic novel) of *Beowulf* demonstrate a universal pattern in literature. People are living in fear as an evil force threatens to upset society. Then a brave, strong, and good hero appears to defeat the evil force. What would a hero's arrival look like in a modern-day setting? What would the application of Anglo-Saxon values look like in today's society and culture? Discuss this question with a group of your peers. To prepare for your discussion, use the graphic organizer to write down your ideas about the prompt. Support your ideas with evidence from the text. After your discussion, you will write a reflection in the space below.

Beyond the Book

Game: Pop Culture Heroes

Beowulf is a powerful hero who defends his people from vicious beasts. Students will create a game that identifies the classic hero qualities.

Ask students to:

- Create a list of qualities that made Beowulf a hero.
- Generate a list of current pop culture heroes and list their heroic qualities.
- Form small groups and create a game taking players on a hero's journey set past, present, or future.
- Make decisions about the type of game, rules, layout, and requirements to win.

Once games are complete, allow time for students to play each other's games and provide structured feedback.

To reflect, ask students:

- How are the heroes depicted in literature similar to and different from those in real life?
- Which game did the best job of illustrating the qualities of heroes? Why?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

After reading these excerpts of *Beowulf*, students will imagine the arrival of an Anglo-Saxon hero in today's society: in what ways would this hero's values and behaviors be embraced, and in what ways would they be challenged and unacceptable?

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can consider medieval ideas about character, virtue, and heroism to inform their narratives or stories about conflicts.



Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

by Anonymous (translated by Simon Armitage)

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 14th century

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- Students may be unfamiliar with the characters, themes, and plot lines of Arthurian legend, such as the Knights of the Round Table and the concept of a quest.
- Explain that Arthur is a mythical English king, and his knights are warriors who swear to obey and protect him. Quests are dangerous journeys knights undertake to achieve a goal and prove their bravery.

Sentence Structure

- The use of verse to tell a narrative that includes dialogue may be difficult for some students to digest.
- Remind students to read past the ends of lines until they reach the periods at the ends of sentences. Some challenging language may also require simplifying.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 2,930



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: How does the portrayal of Gawain in this excerpt reveal the values and code of conduct of medieval knights? Use textual evidence and original commentary to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Research: Medieval Feast Manners

The Green Knight arrives with a message during a medieval feast. Students will research the significance and rules of a medieval feast to create a rule book for future guests to follow.

In groups, ask students to:

- Research etiquette and expectations associated with a medieval feast.
- Take notes and pay attention to small details.
 - What are guests expected to wear?
 - How do they know where to sit?
 - Which table manners and eating norms should they know about?
 - How many courses is typical?
- Create a guidebook for guests to follow so they know what to expect and how to behave.
- Be aware of the following as they create their guides: tone, audience, graphics.
- Share and critique guides.

To reflect, ask students:

- Which guides were the most helpful? Why?
- What other occasions should come with guide books?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In this classic medieval romance, Sir Gawain demonstrates leadership ability when he volunteers to accept a deadly challenge to protect King Arthur's life and reputation.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. They may adopt some of the author's writing techniques for using language to inform and shape the readers' perceptions of characters and events as they craft their own narratives.



Truth Serum

by Naomi Shihab Nye

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2005

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students may have difficulty accessing poetry because of its multiple layers of meaning. They will need to look for figurative meanings.
- Encourage students to reread this piece several times and to note their genuine reactions during and after each read. They may find it helpful to use their background knowledge to help them interpret the imagery.

Connection of Ideas

- The message of the poem is implied through figurative language, and not explicit.
- Challenge students to analyze how imagery is used by having them identify and explain the poet's use of the five senses. A graphic organizer can help students keep track of how images in the poem connect to their senses.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 129



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Poem: Think about places, people, and experiences that bring truth and happiness into your life. Then write a poem about “Truth Serum” as you see it applied to your life. You may use Naomi Shihab Nye’s poem, including her use of sensory details, as a model for your own writing.

Beyond the Book

Graphic: Pressure Release

In her poem, Nye creates a truth serum to wipe away all the lies and untruths of the past. Students will create a graphic about having a superpower to combat lying.

Ask students to:

- Brainstorm a list of times you have lied to someone or someone has lied to you.
- Think about how they handle being lied to and then list superpowers that could protect or prevent these situations.
- Choose a superpower that will combat lying in some way and create a short graphic illustrating this power in a specific scenario.

To reflect, ask students:

- Is honesty valued in our society?
- Why does lying affect people differently?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The poem “Truth Serum,” by Naomi Shihab Nye, read alongside an excerpt from William Shakespeare’s play *Richard III*, and “The Pardoner’s Prologue,” from *The Canterbury Tales*, a poem by Geoffrey Chaucer, helps students develop an understanding of how a character’s choice around whether or not to be honest in the face of challenge can reveal a lot about who he or she is as a person.

In the poem “Truth Serum,” Nye creates a truth serum with the hopes of ridding future generations from the chaos caused by the lies of the past.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Ask students: What role does the truth play in leadership? How does telling the truth, or not telling the truth, change a leader’s path and purpose?



Richard III

by William Shakespeare

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1592

Genre: Drama

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Students may not be familiar with the differences between a soliloquy and a monologue.
- Begin with the general understanding that a character's soliloquy is spoken in private and most likely reveals truth while a monologue is an extended speech by a character engaged in a conversation with others.

Prior Knowledge

- The motivation behind the Duke of Gloucester's heinous plan may be confusing to students.
- Explain to students what a prophecy is and how people of Shakespeare's time took them very seriously.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 338



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Correspondence: In the persona of Richard III, write a confessional letter explaining why you choose to be a villain. Use your own words to paraphrase the reasons stated in the soliloquy, but maintain the meaning and logical order of the original text.

Beyond the Book

In this soliloquy Richard III lays out his plans to regain power at whatever cost. Students will rewrite his soliloquy through the lens of a superhero.

Ask students to:

- Reread and analyze the meaning of the soliloquy and think about a superhero who might have a similar viewpoint.
- Decide what voice, language, and events your superhero would have.
- Rewrite from the point of view of the superhero, but staying true to the message of regaining power.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- How does the writing differ based on point of view?
- How does your superhero manipulate and terrify people into supporting him?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The poem “Truth Serum,” by Naomi Shihab Nye, read alongside an excerpt from William Shakespeare’s play *Richard III*, and “The Canterbury Tales: The Pardoner’s Prologue,” a poem by Geoffrey Chaucer, helps students develop an understanding of how a character’s choice around whether or not to be honest in the face of challenge can reveal a lot about who he or she is as a person.

In this excerpt from Shakespeare’s play, Richard discusses his plans to lie and murder his way to the throne.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use *Richard III* as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. Have them study the way the character Richard III describes himself through the use of well-chosen figurative language. If students are describing a person in their persuasive essay, they should try to come up with apt metaphors and similes or a revealing quote to make him or her come alive.



The Pardoner's Prologue

(from The Canterbury Tales)

by Geoffrey Chaucer

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1387

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Chaucer writes in rhymed verse, and although this excerpt has been translated from Middle English to Modern English, it still contains words that may be unfamiliar.
- It is essential that students understand the Latin phrase “radix malorum est cupiditas,” (greed is the root of all evil). Students should be prepared to explain how it relates to the pardoner.

Prior Knowledge

- The Pardoner's confession reveals that he uses his holy title and tells lies to make a profit. Students may be confused by the Pardoner's occupation.
- Explain to students that during this time one could purchase relics and pardons for forgiveness of sins.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 855



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Point of View, Connotation and Denotation, Analyzing Medieval Literature

Close Read Prompt

Monologue: In “The Pardoner’s Prologue,” Chaucer satirizes medieval society by highlighting the greediness of a church official who shamelessly tries to swindle people, convincing them to give him money in exchange for pardons. Think of today’s society and imagine a person who represents some sort of corruption or foolishness. Then, write a short satirical monologue to expose that person’s true motives.

Beyond the Book

Photography: Nothing to Something

The Green Knight arrives with a message during a medieval feast. Students will research the significance and rules of a medieval feast to create a rule book for future guests to follow.

Sometimes in today’s society, we may interact with people who do not have our best interest in mind. To change this, have students do the following:

Find a photograph or image online or in a book of someone whom others might take advantage of or not treat them as they would want to be treated.

Choose one type of brief caption to write to tell the story of the person in the photo and the impact of the mistreatment.

- A narrative describing the person and circumstances; or
- A monologue in the voice of the person. If you do an actual interview, use quotation marks.
- Display the portraits and stories.

To reflect, ask students:

- What do the portraits and words make you think about?
- How might you look at strangers differently now?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The Pardoner explains how he tricks and lies. Using the Pardoner as inspiration, students will write their own satirical monologue, revealing a character’s true motivations.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can adopt some of Chaucer’s methods for developing characterization through a monologue as they prepare to write their narratives.



Shakespeare: The World As Stage

by Bill Bryson

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2007

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students who are unaware that there are claims against Shakespeare's authorship might struggle to understand why Bryson has written this chapter in defense of the Bard's status as a playwright.
- Discuss with students the difficulties of proving or disproving the authenticity of someone's work from the 16th and 17th centuries.

Purpose

- Students may be unaware of the publications referenced by Bryson.
- To fully understand the weight of these publications and their claims, students may need to acquire basic familiarity with publications such as *The New York Times*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Scientific American*, and *History Today*.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1470

Word Count: 660



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Central or Main Idea, Connotation and Denotation, Informational Text Elements

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: Bryson takes a strong, transparent view on the subject of Shakespearean authorship from the beginning of the excerpt, and maintains it throughout. What is Bryson’s main idea regarding the authorship debate? What are the key pieces of evidence and informational text elements he uses to make his point? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your claim.

Beyond the Book

Research: Shakespeare

Bill Bryson refutes, with humor, claims that Shakespeare was not responsible for writing the plays that carry his name. Students will research to uncover the ‘truth’ about Shakespeare.

Ask students to:

- Conduct informal research from articles that Shakespeare was solely responsible for writing his own work, as well as articles that claim others were responsible.
- Decide on who they think is responsible for writing the famous texts.
- Write a documentary that emulates current shows (e.g., *E! True Hollywood Story*, *Behind the Music*, *60 Minutes*, etc.) to share your research on Shakespeare.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- What were important factors to consider when you were researching Shakespeare?
- Which facts were the most powerful in making a point?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

What do we really know about William Shakespeare? That is the question that Bill Bryson seeks to answer in his book. In this excerpt, students will dive into what is known about Shakespeare’s life, and explore the debate on whether or not he is the true author of his plays.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the excerpt from *Shakespeare: The World as Stage* as a model in writing their essays. They may choose to imitate the rhetorical style of Bill Bryson to enhance their rhetorical appeals and use of evidence and reason when developing their arguments or claims.



Hamlet and His Problems

by T.S. Eliot

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1919

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students may not be accustomed to reading literary criticism, a genre of writing intended for literary critics and not a general audience.
- Explain to students that Eliot wrote this essay as a literary critic to make the claim that *Hamlet* is “an artistic failure.”

Connection of Ideas

- Students may have difficulty understanding scholarly ideas presented in this article, such as the idea of an “objective correlative” in literature.
- Encourage students to reread the paragraph that describes an “objective correlative” and have them highlight phrases and examples in the paragraph that they think help define this concept.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 3,202



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: In the essay “Hamlet and His Problems,” T. S. Eliot makes the claim that Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet* is “an artistic failure.” Why does he make this claim? What ideas and examples does he use to support this claim? Write a response in which you answer these questions. Remember to use evidence from the text to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Writing: Adapting and Updating

T.S. Eliot’s essay explains that Shakespeare uses earlier versions of *Hamlet* as inspiration for his own. Challenge students to write their own version of a scene from *Hamlet*. Encourage students to use their own lives and experiences to help them update Shakespeare’s version. Place students into small groups to read their scenes to one another.

To reflect, ask students:

- How did updating the older work help students better understand the original?
- What insights have you gained about developing characters and events based on writing your own scene?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

An essay written by T. S. Eliot, “Hamlet and His Problems,” read alongside excerpts from William Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet*, helps students deeply analyze the character of Hamlet and characterize what type of person he was. In this section from the essay, Eliot introduces evidence that asks readers to consider Hamlet in a new light.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Playwrights are masters at showing, not telling, what a character is like. If students are writing their persuasive essay about a valuable person, suggest that they let the person’s actions or words reveal his or her true nature.



Hamlet (Scenes from Acts I, II, III)

by William Shakespeare

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1601

Genre: Drama

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- This excerpt contains selected scenes from three acts of the play. Each scene revolves around one of Hamlet's key soliloquies.
- Review the term “dramatic irony” with students. Emphasize that audiences may know things that the characters do not.

Sentence Structure

- Much of the play is written in blank verse, or lines of iambic pentameter that don't usually rhyme.
- Remind students that a character's thoughts do not necessarily stop at the end of a line; some sentences are long and include multiple lines.

Specific Vocabulary

- Shakespeare uses many archaic words such as “havior” and “bruit,” which will likely be unfamiliar to students.
- Figurative language is common and may be hard to understand.
- Reading the text aloud will help students locate and use context clues.



Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 3,202

Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Dramatic Elements and Structure; Language, Style, and Audience; Media; Analyzing English Renaissance Literature

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: A soliloquy is a speech in which a character thinks out loud while alone onstage. Hamlet's three soliloquies in the excerpt offer the reader a window into his feelings concerning his father, mother, uncle, and especially himself. How does each soliloquy express Hamlet's conflicted feelings in a unique way and help to advance the plot? Be sure to use specific evidence from the text to support your analysis.

Beyond the Book

An Overwhelming World

Sometimes the circumstances we face are so overwhelming that we are unable to act. As a class, pick a moment in history that students think would have been overwhelming. Have students research this time period in groups, encouraging them to focus on a particular event. Then, as individuals, have students develop a character who is living through this event. Students should write a story that explains the event through the eyes of their character. Choose volunteers to share their stories with the class.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In the excerpts from Shakespeare's play, readers will see Hamlet battling an extensional crisis after his mother remarries his uncle shortly after his father's death. The actions Hamlet takes in the face of challenge will help the reader analyze who he truly was.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from *Hamlet* when writing their narratives. Have them reflect on Shakespeare's use of similes and metaphors to explain a character's thoughts and feelings.



The Postmaster

by Rabindranath Tagore

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1918

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- Students may be unfamiliar with the British colonization of India and some cultural references.
- Prior to British colonization, India was ruled by a changing group of Hindu and Muslim rulers. Later it was controlled by The East India Company and then by the British government. India became independent in 1947.

Genre

- Explain to students that the story is told by a third person omniscient narrator who reveals the thoughts and feelings of both characters. The narrator describes characters and events, but does not directly tell the reader the theme of the story.
- Remind readers that they will need to draw their own conclusions about the characters' thoughts and actions and decide what the deeper meaning of the story is.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1000

Word Count: 2,198



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Theme, Story Elements, Summarizing

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: Write a response comparing and contrasting the postmaster and Ratan's relationship with the village. How do their connections to place impact the story and reveal the text's themes? Be sure to use both evidence from the text and your own original commentary to support your analysis.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Memory Mime

Both the Postmaster and Ratan have been separated from their families and are left with only memories of their family. Students will investigate their own memories and create a reenactment of a memory.

Ask students to:

- Write down some of their most pertinent memories.
- Choose the most important memory and consider all the associations you have with the memory.
 - What senses are heightened when thinking about this memory?
 - What emotions are the most vivid?
 - What feelings do I want to convey when sharing this memory?
- Create a mime that portrays the memory and the emotions associated with it.
- Present the mime to the class and see if your classmates can determine what is happening and how you feel about this memory based on your performance.

To reflect, ask students:

- How and why do we remember certain moments? Do you remember more positive or negative moments? What helped convey the emotion to the audience?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

“The Postmaster” by Rabindranath Tagore, tells the story of the friendship between an unhappy and selfish adult man and the young orphan, Ratan, who cares for him. Will Ratan follow the example the postmaster sets for her, or will she find strength within herself?

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Tagore is skilled at showing how a character's view of himself is different from the narrator's view, and ultimately the reader's view. As students characterize the leader in their writing project, they could adopt the technique of making the leader unaware of his or her own qualities.



A Letter to NFL GMs

by Shaquem Griffin

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- An open letter is a letter written for a specific person or group of people, but the letter is also published for anyone else to read.
- Shaquem Griffin's open letter is addressed to General Managers of the National Football League. He wants this specific group to read his letter, but he also wants to share his story with people in general.

Connection of Ideas

- Readers will need to link the purpose of this letter to the stories that are contained within it.
- Students may need to make connections between Shaquem Griffin's purpose for writing this letter and his prior experiences in order to fully understand this text.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 970

Word Count: 2,888



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory: Why do you think Shaquem Griffin chose to write an open letter to general managers in the NFL? What is Griffin's point of view in the letter and how does he use his personal experiences to defend it? What do you think he hoped to accomplish by publishing this letter online? Write a response in which you answer these questions. Remember to use textual evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

This Is My Letter to the World

Challenge students to write their own letter to explain how they have overcome challenges in their own lives. Encourage students to use Griffin's letter as a model. Place students into small groups to read their letters to one another.

To reflect, ask students:

- How did reading about Griffin's personal experiences affect them?
- Did writing about a personal experience change how they viewed that experience?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Shaquem Griffin writes an open letter to NFL general managers, explaining to them that he has what it takes to be a successful player in the NFL. He goes on to discuss how the challenges he has dealt with in life have prepared him for this role.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Griffin's letter shows that actions speak louder than words. People doubted him, and he could only prove them wrong by working hard to accomplish his goals. If students are writing their narrative about a person who faces challenges, suggest that they let the person's actions reveal his or her true nature.



Men We Reaped: A Memoir

by Jesmyn Ward

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2013

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- People rarely read the prologue of a text, so students may not know how it fits in with the text as a whole.
- Give students the definition of *prologue* and then discuss why an author might include one as a part of a memoir.

Organization

- Dialogue is sometimes used to weave a narrative that ultimately compares the two settings of the author's childhood, which are seemingly drastically different until the "ghost motif" ties them together.
- Explain to students that dialogue is a tool used by the author. Review the terms "motif" and "foreshadowing" to further discuss the author's intentions.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1260

Word Count: 2,324



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: This excerpt contains descriptions of multiple locations that were significant in the author's life. Write a response in which you evaluate how the social and economic context of the locations influences the events described in the memoir. Remember to use evidence from the text to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Debate: Is it a personal responsibility to help communities?

Jesmyn Ward describes two different communities she grew up in, one a small private school and the other a crime ridden neighborhood in New Orleans. Her experiences highlight how neighborhoods become run-down and change over time. Students will debate the issue of responsibility of creating and maintaining safe neighborhoods.

Ask students to:

- Decide who is responsible in creating and maintaining safety in neighborhoods.
- Form groups to brainstorm, discuss, and research their positions.
- Conduct research and collect compelling evidence to prepare for the debate.
- Construct an argument with a clear claim, evidence, and thorough analysis.
- Make a list of points that support your position as well as responses to possible counterarguments.
- Include rhetorical devices to persuade the audience.

Set up a mock debate in the classroom. Establish guidelines for the debate. Provide feedback to the students about their argument.

To reflect, ask students:

- Which arguments were the strongest? Why?
- What role should you play in creating and maintaining a safe neighborhood?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Ward discusses how her life changed in the aftermath of her brother, and four close friends, were killed over the course of four years. Readers will see how these events shaped the person Ward became.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration for their persuasive essays by considering how Ward uses clear claims, rhetorical devices, vivid imagery, and the context of the Gulf Coast to illustrate uncomfortable truths.



Extended Writing Project

Uncovering the Truth

Essential Question

How do challenges cause us to reveal our true selves?

Writing Form

Narrative

Extended Writing Project Prompt

How do leaders rise up and guide others? Select an issue in today's society that is causing conflict. If you are writing a personal narrative, describe how this conflict has impacted your life and how you or a person in your life has demonstrated leadership skills in response to it. If you are writing a fictional narrative, show how a character becomes a leader and the effect this change has on the conflict.

EWP Mentor Texts

The Postmaster, The Pardoner's Prologue, Men We Reaped, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Organizing Narrative Writing, Story Beginnings, Narrative Techniques, Transitions, Descriptive Details, Conclusions

Grammar Skills

Modifiers, Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement, Basic Spelling Rules II



Writing Overview

The Extended Writing Project (EWP) in Grade 12 Unit 2 focuses on narrative writing. Students explore the unit’s essential question—How do challenges cause us to reveal our true selves?—as they write a personal or fictional narrative. The prompt for this EWP asks students to describe or imagine a conflict and how someone demonstrated their leadership skills in response to this conflict. The unit’s selections serve as mentor texts for students’ own writing. Over the course of the EWP, students engage in the informational writing process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. During each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student’s writing changes and improves over time.

Skill lessons on Narrative Techniques and Organizing Narrative Writing teach concepts specifically called out in ELA standards, while the additional Skill lessons Story Beginnings, Transitions, Descriptive Details, and Conclusions focus on characteristics of the narrative writing genre and help students develop the structure of their narratives. Revision lessons guide students as they revise their drafts for clarity, development, organization, diction, style, and sentence effectiveness. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards.

Each Independent Read and Close Read lesson culminates with a writing or speaking prompt in which students reflect on the text or apply the skills they have learned in conjunction with that text. In the Independent Read *Richard III*, students are asked to write a letter from the protagonist’s perspective, while the prompt for “Hamlet and His Problems” asks them to explain T.S. Eliot’s evidence for claiming *Hamlet* is “an artistic failure.” Close Read prompts specifically ask students to conduct a focused analysis using the skills taught in conjunction with those texts. After students read “Truth Serum,” *Richard III*, and “The Pardoner’s Prologue,” they use the concepts from the Point of View and Connotation and Denotation Skill lessons to write a short satirical monologue.

Other writing tasks in the unit allow students to write in other contexts and for other purposes. Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions about what it takes to be an effective leader, as well as offering them the opportunity to self-select texts for independent reading. Writer’s notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing. In their writer’s notebooks, students write to think, reflect, and practice skills they are learning. In each Close Read, students first write in their writer’s notebooks to reflect on the text before they engage in a collaborative conversation and write their short constructed response.





Unit 3

Against the Wind

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Unit Overview

Unit 3 Title

Against the Wind

Essential Question

How do leaders fight for their ideas?

Literary Focus

The Enlightenment

Genre Focus

Argumentative

Introduction

History is filled with great leaders. These people inspire us, educate us, and challenge us. But history is also filled with conflict, and troubled times can give rise to the best and the worst in all of us.

What turns a regular person into an effective leader? What ideas have people fought for throughout history? What do readers learn by reading historical speeches, documents, novels, and poems? What do these texts teach us about ourselves, our country, and our role in a global society?

In this unit, students will think about the theme and essential question as they focus on the Enlightenment, analyzing an excerpt from *Gulliver's Travels* and poems by Phillis Wheatley and Thomas Paine. They will also study historical documents such as the "Preamble to the Constitution and Bill of Rights" and *United States v. The Amistad*. In addition, several argumentative texts, such as "After Being Convicted of Voting in the 1872 Presidential Election" by Susan B. Anthony, will encourage students to think about how leaders fight for their beliefs.

Students will begin this unit as readers, and they will finish as writers, as they apply what they have learned about making claims and using evidence to their own argumentative writing projects.



Text Complexity

Grade 12 Unit 3 deepens students' critical thinking and analysis abilities through the study of a variety of challenging argumentative texts. Although the genre focus of this unit is argumentative, students will also read two poems, two works of fiction, and informational texts. With considerable skills at their disposal, students will start to read more challenging texts while examining the essential question "How do leaders fight for their ideas?" The unit's theme thus builds on the ones that preceded it, pushing students to examine not just the future they envision, but also how best to attain it as a reflection of their beliefs.

The Lexile® range for this unit is broader than the previous, at 1000-1760. The seven argumentative texts in this unit mostly fall within the 1200L to 1300L band, and are written with a variety of structural and linguistic complexities, challenging students to evaluate what constitutes sound reasoning and powerful rhetoric. The vocabulary, sentence structure, text features, content, and relationships among reasons and evidence make these texts challenging for twelfth graders, enabling them to progress as thinkers and readers. At the same time, the relevance of the arguments as well as the strong thematic links between the texts will help establish clear access points.

Unit 3 begins with *Gulliver's Travels*. Jonathan Swift's fantastical and humorous mockery of politics is immediately relatable, and students will find it particularly accessible when preceded by the unit's Literary Focus lesson, which details the historical context, themes, and ideas of Enlightenment Literature. Swift's satire lands in the middle of the Lexile® range for this unit, at 1330L and is accompanied by skill instruction in Point of View, Media (which introduces an animated interpretation of *Gulliver's Travels*), and Word Meaning. These lessons, accompanied by a StudySyncTV episode, will support students in their analysis of Swift's biting perspective, the language that he uses to establish a playful tone, as well as the lasting impact of this classic text.

The unit continues with two poems that are linked by their difficulty and theme. "Liberty Tree" by Thomas Payne and "To His Excellency, General Washington" by Phillis Wheatley utilize literary techniques to relate complex themes about leadership, revolution, independence, and freedom. Students are supported in their analysis by the clear relationship these poems have to the unit's essential question – how do leaders fight for their ideas? – as well Skill lessons on Theme and Compare and Contrast, which will help students focus their analysis on key ideas shared by the two poems.

Next, students will be challenged by a reading of the Preamble to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights in conjunction with the landmark Supreme Court case, *United States v. the Amistad*. Together, these two texts establish the foundation for analyzing arguments, reasons and



evidence, and rhetoric throughout the remainder of the unit. They also deepen the thematic introduction offered by previous texts, pushing students to question what happens when lofty ideals like freedom and equality for all meet the challenges of a complex history and laws that are subject to interpretation. Students may find the combination of legal texts challenging, but are supported by Skill lessons on Primary and Secondary Sources as well as Reasons and Evidence, and a StudySyncTV episode.

The final comparative cluster of the unit comprises three works of public advocacy. In “After Being Convicted of Voting in the 1872 Presidential Election,” Susan B. Anthony argues for women’s right to vote. Her voice is followed by that of Queen Liliuokalani in *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen*, in which the leader protests against the treaty that gives Hawaii “to the territory and dominion of the United States.” This high Lexile® reading is supported by a StudySyncTV episode and students will find that Queen Liliuokalani’s argument is remarkably direct. Finally, students will analyze “The Federalist Papers: No. 10,” in which James Madison outlines his argument for establishing the very governmental structures that these two revolutionary female leaders would later criticize. Madison’s argument demands focus and attention on its structure, but Skill lessons on Primary and Secondary Sources, Arguments and Claims, and Language, Style, and Audience will support students in their analysis. Students will be compelled to ask whether Madison’s ideas were carried out effectively, and they will be encouraged to do so with comparative Skills Focus questions that also connect these texts to the unit’s theme, and a Close Read writing prompt that asks whether Madison’s ideas are still relevant and applicable today.

Students will then read the next two texts, “Self-Made Men” and “I Am Prepared to Die,” in order to independently practice applying their argumentative text analysis skills.

“Leadership During a Crisis” will deepen students’ responses to the unit’s Essential Question by presenting two contrasting arguments about how leaders should fight for their ideas. Students will weigh an argument for a pacifist approach with a more aggressive one, considering their effectiveness throughout history. The reading provides a new framework with which to look back at the other texts, arguments, and voices of leaders throughout the unit. Students may be challenged by the argumentative text structures, graphic features, as well as media elements upon which the arguments are structured. Skill lessons in Informational Text Structure, Media, and Technical Language will help them evaluate the effectiveness of each argument.

Finally, “A Warrior’s Daughter” offers students the chance to apply the themes of this unit to a captivating short story in which an unexpected leader emerges.



English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “Emilia’s Lament” and “To Be a Queen,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing Skills lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension to the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will plan and present an argumentative oral presentation. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner.



Gulliver's Travels

by Jonathan Swift

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1726

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Sentence Structure

- Swift's writing features very long sentences and paragraphs, including some long sentences made even longer through the use of semicolons.
- Have students “chunk” the sentences into parts to focus on one clause or even phrase at a time, and then determine how the pieces connect.

Specific Vocabulary

- Made-up geographical names such as Lilliput and Blefuscu will be unfamiliar, and advanced vocabulary such as *conjectured* and *whereupon* may be as well.
- Guide students to look up words in online dictionaries with recorded pronunciations, and model recognizing and sounding out made-up words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1280

Word Count: 2,569



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Point of View, Media, Word Meaning

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Jonathan Swift's original version of *Gulliver's Travels* is a transparent satire of the European society he lived in. If you were to create a movie version of *Gulliver's Travels* with the purpose of satirizing leaders or famous people in contemporary American society, what changes would you make to the story? Select one scene you would change. Describe how you would make the movie interpretation of the scene different from the scene in the book to better satirize current leaders or celebrities.

Beyond the Book

Discuss and Write: Comparing Political Parties

Swift uses this story to mock the two political parties in England. Students will relate Swift's thoughts on English political parties to America's two major parties.

Ask students to:

- In small groups, analyze the text for details and characteristics about the two parties that are mocked in the story, the Tories and the Whigs.
- Conduct informal research and discuss the characteristics and general ideals of the two major parties in American politics, Democrats and Republicans.
- Discuss how these two parties are the same and different from the two parties in *Gulliver's Travels*.
- Write a satire about Democrats and Republicans without using those labels.

To reflect, ask students:

- Have political parties changed through the years?
- How does the tension between political parties affect citizens?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Jonathan Swift's iconic satire, *Gulliver's Travels*, uses fictional commentary to make specific claims about real-world politics in Great Britain. How can a tale about imaginary places and people enhance our understanding about real leaders and social situations?

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use *Gulliver's Travels* as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. As they think about one truth they know that many members of their community don't know, they might consider how Gulliver feels dealing with a group of people who don't believe his account of where he comes from.



Liberty Tree

by Thomas Paine

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1775

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- This poem is a ballad. In the first stanza, the rhyme scheme is *abab cdcd*. However, in the remaining stanzas, the scheme varies in line 7: *abab cdcd*.
- Allow students to hear the poem being sung.

Connection of Ideas

- While the poem describes a physical tree, the tree also symbolizes liberty and freedom—core values for the American patriots.
- Draw students' attention to how the literal and metaphorical meanings exist in parallel.

Specific Vocabulary

- Archaic vocabulary such as *groat* (broken, hulled grain) and phrases such as “O ye swains” may challenge some readers.
- Remind students to use context clues while reading and to use a dictionary to define unfamiliar words.



Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 239

Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: In “Liberty Tree,” Thomas Paine uses the central image of the Liberty Tree. What is the overall effect of this image? How does this central image support the poem’s meaning?

Beyond the Book

Writing: A Modern Symbol...

Thomas Paine’s poem uses a literal object to represent a metaphorical meaning. Challenge students to do the same by writing their own poems to feature a modern symbol of the United States. You may suggest an eagle, the flag, the Statue of Liberty, fireworks, or allow students to choose their own symbol. Remind students that their poem should reflect modern life and does not need to end with a call to arms. After students have written their poems, ask volunteers to read their poems aloud to the class.

To reflect, ask students:

- What ideas did you get from Paine? What other influences inspired your choice of symbol?
- How did you change the poem to fit your view of the United States today?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Why is the “Liberty Tree” a powerful symbol of hope? Thomas Paine’s poem explains the tree’s celestial origins and its clear message that unites and inspires. Students will analyze the symbols of freedom and divine intervention described in this poem and draw connections with similar metaphors and themes in Phillis Wheatley’s poem, “To His Excellency, General Washington.”

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Thomas Paine for their argumentative essay. Have them practice addressing the reader to make a call to action.



To His Excellency, General Washington

by Phillis Wheatley

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1775

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- The poem is addressed to General Washington, leader of the Continental Army, before he became the first president of the United States.
- Students will need to understand the allusions to ancient mythology to trace the theme of freedom.

Specific Vocabulary

- The poem includes many words not commonly used today, such as “realms” and “bemoan.”
- Students should use context clues and a dictionary to help define any unfamiliar words.

Prior Knowledge

- Readers may benefit from an overview of the historical events surrounding the American Revolution.
- The American Revolution occurred prior to the founding of the nation, so Washington was not yet president when Wheatley wrote the poem.



Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 306

Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Compare and Contrast, Theme

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: Which themes about freedom or the American Revolution are explored in “To His Excellency, General Washington”? How are these themes similar to or different than those in “Liberty Tree”? Which figures and images seem to overlap? Support your writing with textual evidence from “To His Excellency, General Washington.”

Beyond the Book

Freedom Is Not Free

History has many examples of people having to fight for independence and equality. Have students do informal research to discover some of these historical battles and discuss as a class. Then, choose a specific event and challenge students to write a poem about it. Allow students to use any type of poetic form they choose, including free verse. Choose volunteers to share their poems with the class.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Why was George Washington the best man to lead the Continental Army during the American Revolution? Phillis Wheatley attempts to answer this question in her poem “To His Excellency, General Washington,” which she sent to Washington in 1775. Students will read this selection to compare and contrast the thematic similarities between Wheatley’s poem and “Liberty Tree,” drawing connections to the literary period in which they were written.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from “To His Excellency, General Washington” when writing their argumentative essays. Have them reflect on how Phillis Wheatley describes General Washington to the reader. Which of his qualities does she choose to focus on and why? Encourage students to use literary devices, such as similes, metaphors, and allusions, to help readers connect with the truths the students are writing about.



Preamble to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

by Gouverneur Morris, James Madison, et al.

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1787

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Explain to students that the Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the US Constitution.
- These amendments guarantee individual rights and limit the power of federal and state governments.

Sentence Structure

- The Preamble and Bill of Rights use complex sentences with multiple phrases and clauses.
- Long sentences with multiple sections may overwhelm students and require careful reading.

Specific Vocabulary

- Terms used in legal and government documents might be difficult for students.
- Remind students to use context clues and a dictionary to define unfamiliar words like *infringed*, *indictment*, *compulsory*, and *disparage*.



Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1510

Word Count: 513

Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: The Constitution is a statement of “how we choose to rule ourselves.” What are the goals established in the Preamble and how do the amendments in the Bill of Rights advance those goals? Connect the goals of the Preamble to three amendments of your choosing. Remember to use textual evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Rights in the Twenty-First Century

The Bill of Rights was written in the eighteenth century, but the Constitution is a living document that is revised and updated to fit the needs of the people. Challenge students to think about how the first ten amendments affect them personally. Which amendments do they relate to the most? Which amendments do they think should be revised to better fit the twenty-first century? Which rights would they like to see added as new amendments? Place students into small groups to discuss their ideas with one another.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The Constitution of the United States of America is one of the most important documents to come out of the Enlightenment. In the Preamble and the Bill of Rights, the Founding Fathers articulate the ideals and guarantees of a nation founded on liberty and justice for all.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

The Bill of Rights is a legal document that uses logical reasoning to outline important rights that are intended to protect people. Students can look to the Bill of Rights for inspiration as they write their persuasive essays. Encourage students to use logical reasoning and specific examples in their own essays.



United States v. The Amistad

by U.S. Supreme Court

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1841

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- *United States v. The Amistad* is an excerpt from a Supreme Court case featuring arguments by two separate authors. Students will need to understand the differing purposes of each text and how they relate to one another.
- John Quincy Adams presents his argument for the defendants, while the Supreme Court presents its decision and reasoning in its majority opinion.

Prior Knowledge

- At the time of this Supreme Court case, slavery was still legal in the United States.
- John Quincy Adams was the sixth president of the United States. At the time of this case, he was no longer serving as president. He was the U.S Representative from Massachusetts, and a celebrated abolitionist.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1350

Word Count: 1,346



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Primary and Secondary Sources, Reasons and Evidence

Close Read Prompt

Argumentative: Imagine you are John Quincy Adams. Write a speech that you would give to the media, outside on the courthouse steps, just following the verdict in the case (as indicated in the majority opinion of the Court delivered by Justice Story). Explain the meaning of the verdict, citing textual evidence from both Adams's argument and the majority opinion of the Court. Using sound and logical arguments, describe what further legal and social changes need to be made in the United States of the 1840s.

Beyond the Book

Mock Trial

Have students conduct part of a mock trial of *United States v. The Amistad*. Have students call either Joseph Cinqué (one of the defendants) or José Ruiz or Pedro Montez (the plaintiffs) to the witness stand. Have teams represent the plaintiffs and the defendants and examine and cross-examine the witness. Have another team of students play a group of judges.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

United States v. The Amistad is a famous case that was heard before the United States Supreme Court case in 1841. The Court granted freedom to a group of Africans who had been kidnapped by Spanish slave traders. The necessity of freedom was passionately and eloquently defended by John Quincy Adams, who appealed to the values and ideas presented in the Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution. Students will read this selection to analyze and evaluate how Adams and the Supreme Court use these founding documents in their rhetoric, evidence, and reasoning.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from *United States v. The Amistad* when writing their argumentative essays. Have them reflect on how Adams used shared values and ideas as well as the Declaration of Independence to strengthen his reasons and evidence, ultimately convincing the Supreme Court to rule in favor of freeing the Africans kidnapped on the *Amistad*.



After Being Convicted of Voting in the 1872 Presidential Election

by Susan B. Anthony

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1873

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- Explain that today most citizens over the age of 18 can vote in U.S. elections. Originally, however, only white adult males who owned property had that right.
- Women did not gain the right to vote until 1920.

Specific Vocabulary

- Technical language related to law, such as “indictment for the alleged crime” and “powers derived from the consent of the governed,” may challenge readers.
- Support students’ comprehension by paraphrasing challenging legal terms.

Sentence Structure

- Lengthy sentences with multiple phrases and clauses may also pose a challenge.
- To help students follow Anthony’s ideas and claims, work with students to diagram sentences or break them down into smaller parts.



Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1200

Word Count: 552

Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Argumentative: You have just finished reading a famous persuasive speech by Susan B. Anthony. In your opinion, was her argument convincing? Write an argumentative speech in which you persuade your audience that Susan B. Anthony's argument was or was not convincing. Quote passages from the text to support your claims. Provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument you present.

Beyond the Book

Debate: What Cause Would Susan B. Anthony Champion Today?

Every generation has several social causes that they think are most important. Students will take a position and defend it in a formal debate.

Ask students to:

Select one contemporary social cause that they think Susan B. Anthony would find most important and build an argument to support their position. Subjects could include race issues, gender issues, guns, crime, economic disparities, the environment, taxation, refugees, and others.

Research their chosen issue and collect compelling evidence to prepare for the debate. Construct an argument with a clear claim, evidence, and thorough analysis. Include rhetorical devices to persuade the audience.

Once students have constructed their arguments, invite pairs of students to debate. Allow the class to vote for the position they think was most compelling.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

What does “We, the people of the United States” really mean? Susan B. Anthony answers this question in her powerful speech.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Have students brainstorm truths they know about that others may not be aware of. Stress that these truths can be positive, negative, or neutral.



Hawaii's Story by Hawaii's Queen

by Queen Liliuokalani

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1898

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Sentence Structure

- This document features legal and formal language as well as complex sentence structures.
- Guide students to break long sentences into smaller, easier-to-understand pieces. Encourage them to paraphrase complex or technical language using more familiar language. Provide print and/or digital resources for students to refer to as needed.

Purpose

- The text is a legal protest of a U.S. claim on Hawaiian territory.
- Have students scan the text to locate specific examples of protest language. Provide assistance and support for this task as needed.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1760

Word Count: 1,100



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Research: Imagine that you are a reporter. Write an article about Queen Liliuokalani's protest. Make sure that your article answers the questions of *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*. Use evidence from the text and information acquired from your own research.

Beyond the Book

Advertisement: Visit Cultural Hawaii

Despite Hawaii's Queen Liliuokalani's formal protest, Hawaii became part of the United States of America. Most people today visit Hawaii to experience a tropical vacation, but students will research Hawaiian culture and create an advertisement encouraging visitors to learn about the history and culture.

Ask students to:

- Conduct informal research to learn about Hawaiian history and culture.
- Create an advertisement (on paper or online) to encourage future visitors to learn about the culture of Hawaii.
 - Who are important people to the history of Hawaii?
 - What key events happened in Hawaii?
 - What celebrations should visitors partake in to learn about the culture?
 - What foods, customs, and language should visitors experience?
- Share the advertisements with the rest of the class.

To reflect, ask students:

- Which advertisements most convincingly highlight Hawaii's rich culture?
- Why is it important to preserve our ancestral identity?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Queen Liliuokalani boldly outlines her protests against the treaty that gives Hawaii “to the territory and dominion of the United States.”

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can consider how Queen Liliuokalani used language to confront those who sought to separate her from her land and her people, and how language can be used to confront injustice in times of personal struggle or wider conflict.



The Federalist Papers: No. 10

by James Madison

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1787

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- *The Federalist Papers* were written in 1787, prior to the Constitution. This text is intended to persuade citizens to ratify the Constitution.
- At least nine of the thirteen states had to ratify the Constitution before it went into effect.

Sentence Structure

- Madison uses long sentences and a variety of challenging sentence structures to communicate his ideas.
- Struggling readers may benefit from rereading certain paragraphs or sentences several times, or paraphrasing as they read.

Specific Vocabulary

- Technical language relating to politics and government, such as *faction*, *interest*, and *regulation*, may present a challenge to some readers.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1410

Word Count: 1,522



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Primary and Secondary Sources; Arguments and Claims; Language, Style, and Audience; Analyzing Enlightenment Literature

Close Read Prompt

Argumentative: Do you think Madison’s arguments, concerns, and values are still relevant today? For example, do you think that factions, or groups that represent people who share the same interests and have a common political cause, are still likely to agitate against the public good today? Do you agree that elected politicians are enlightened individuals who can be trusted to make decisions for the public good, or is that an old-fashioned belief? Was Madison right, or was he just stuck in the beliefs of his historical moment? Select two points from Madison’s essay and write a response in which you explain whether you think the points are still valid in today’s society.

Beyond the Book

Photography: Nothing to Something

Students will relate Swift’s thoughts on English political parties to America’s two major parties.

Ask students to:

- In small groups, analyze the text for details and characteristics about the two parties that are mocked in the story, the Tories and the Whigs.
- Conduct informal research and discuss the characteristics and general ideals of the two major parties in American politics, Democrats and Republicans.
- Compare these two parties to the two parties in *Gulliver’s Travels*.
- Write a satire about Democrats and Republicans without using those labels.

To reflect, ask students:

- Have political parties changed through the years?
- How does the tension between political parties affect citizens?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Students will read this selection to consider how Madison’s arguments for a republican government helped some groups while challenging others

Connect to Extended Writing Project

An author’s use of words is deliberate and is intended to convey meaning and messages to readers. Consider how Madison uses words to clarify and convince his readers.



Self-Made Men

by Frederick Douglass

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1872

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Frederick Douglass uses figurative language, or language that's not intended to be literal that requires interpretation to move beyond the literal meaning.
- Teachers may wish to read aloud an example of figurative language and have students discuss what they think it might mean. Teachers may ask volunteers to share their interpretations with the class.

Sentence Structure

- Sentences in this text are often complex, combining ideas by using multiple clauses.
- Teachers may find it helpful to look at examples of particularly long sentences to show students how to break down the sentence into simpler sentences.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,346



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Frederick Douglass is an important figure in the abolitionist movement. "Self-Made Men" is one of the author's most famous speeches. What is the message of the speech? Connect this message to your own experiences: how does this speech change your understanding of what it means to be a self-made person pursuing the American Dream? Support your response with evidence from the text as well as from your personal experiences.

Beyond the Book

Art: A Cinematic Self-Portrait

Ask students to create a cinematic self-portrait designed to explore their complex identities. Encourage them to think about and include images that reveal how their identities have been impacted by the following:

- Trauma and challenges
- Social status
- Gender
- Family dynamics
- Belief systems

Students can use an online video creator tool to combine original photography and/or artwork with music to design a dynamic film exploring their individual identity.

Once students have completed their films, they can share them with the class or post them online.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Frederick Douglass's "Self-Made Men" offers a nuanced reflection on the meritocratic claims of men. This text empowers students to reflect on the ways in which personal choices can lead to future transformations.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can research more about leaders who fight for their ideas and share what they've learned with others.



I Am Prepared to Die

by Nelson Mandela

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1964

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- To understand many of the references in the text, students need basic information about Nelson Mandela's life and activism. They should also know something about South Africa's history, including apartheid.
- Discuss some of these topics with students and encourage them to do their own research.

Purpose

- Mandela delivered this text as a statement at his trial, where he was expecting to be convicted of political crimes and sentenced to prison.
- Ask students what they think Mandela hoped to achieve with this speech. Ask whether they think he was immediately successful. Discuss whether he was ultimately successful.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1310

Word Count: 1,273



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote the *Rhetoric*, one of the most famous works on the art of persuasion. In the treatise, he outlines the main rhetorical appeals to an audience: ethos (author credibility), pathos (emotions), and logos (logic and reasoning). How does Mandela use these appeals to advance his argument? Use specific textual evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Discussion: Powerful Ideals

Regardless of the ramifications for standing up for his ideals, Nelson Mandela never wavered in his convictions. Students will think about and discuss ideals they feel are most important in their own lives and explore how far they would go to stand up for what they believe is right.

Ask students to:

- Discuss Mandela and other historical figures who have stood up for what they thought was morally and ethically correct, regardless of the consequences.
- Generate a list of historical figures and the ideals they each fought for.
- Ask students to think about and discuss how far they are willing to go to defend their ideals.
 - If your principles were being threatened, what would you do?
 - Would you sacrifice your freedom for your cause?
 - What would you expect from others? How would you get their support?
 - What guidelines and boundaries are important when you are taking a stand?

To reflect, ask students:

- Is it important to stand up for what you think is right?
- What is our role as a member to society when our values are being threatened?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Mandela describes how the South African leader was sentenced to life in prison after trying to overthrow the state through violent means.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Nelson Mandela uses truths to support his arguments and activism. Students can use their reflections on Mandela's use of factual details and real-life examples to help them determine how best to approach their own writing.



Leadership During a Crisis

by Point/Counterpoint

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Argumentative essays aim to persuade their readers. Students may be confused by the differences between these types of texts and informational texts.
- Direct students to argumentative sentences in the text and ask students if they have encountered other argumentative texts, such as editorials or opinion pieces, which seek to persuade their audiences.

Purpose

- Students may have difficulty understanding that the two authors are writing to convince their readers on opposite sides of an issue.
- Remind students that text features can help them determine a text's purpose. In this case, the main title reveals the issue while the headers for each section describe the authors' contrasting viewpoints.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1360

Word Count: 1,577



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Informational Text Structure, Media, Technical Language

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: Which side of the argument do you agree with? Why do you agree with that side? Do you fully agree with the writer, or do you notice any weaknesses in the writer's use of media, evidence, and counterarguments? Which argument is more substantial? To prepare for your debate, use the graphic organizer to write down your ideas about the prompt. Support your ideas with evidence from the text, referring to specific graphs, images, and examples. After your discussion you will write a reflection in the space below.

Beyond the Book

Graphs As Evidence

The Point article includes a bar graph and a line graph to support the author's argument with visual representations of evidence. Research an issue that interests you and create a graph that displays quantitative evidence in support of your point of view.

Ask students to:

1. Identify an issue that they are interested in researching.
2. Find reliable quantitative information about that issue, using at least three credible sources.
3. Create a graph of the data that supports their point of view about the issue.
4. Present their opinion and graphic support to their classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- What made the graphs effective in relaying information?
- Which graphs did you find the most convincing? What made them persuasive?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

How should leaders respond during a crisis? Are peaceful or aggressive tactics the most effective? Two authors explain and defend their opposing points of view.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the Point/Counterpoint selection as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. They may adopt some of the writers' methods for supporting their arguments as they write their persuasive essays.



A Warrior's Daughter

by Zitkála-Šá

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1921

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- This story takes place among Native Americans at a time before white settlers and hunters had arrived.
- Many of the incidents in the story deal with specific Native American traditions and customs, which are not always explicitly explained in the text.

Specific Vocabulary

- The story was first published in 1921, and some of the terms used in the narrative were common during that era but are now outdated; the word “ejaculated” for “explained” is one example.
- Some of the terms used in the story are Native American words and exclamations, such as “Howo! Hetchetul,” and students must determine the definitions from the cultural context of the story.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 960

Word Count: 129



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: What do you think "A Warrior's Daughter" suggests about courage and determination? What cultivates those qualities in a leader? Consider the values and norms of the culture depicted in the story. Then write a response using textual evidence and original commentary to support your ideas.

Beyond the Book

In "A Warrior's Daughter," a young Native American woman uses her femininity to demonstrate strength and courage usually reserved for men in order to rescue her loved one. Students will write about an event from their childhood to teach a lesson.

Ask students to:

- Brainstorm events from their childhood that taught a lesson or explained an idea.
- Choose one of the moments to inspire an allegorical fiction based on that moment.
 - Identify a clear theme for the event you will be writing about. How will you present and develop this theme in your story?
 - Create dynamic characters. What are their specific motivations?
 - Include actions that represent a deeper meaning. How do they relate to the underlying theme?
 - Use symbols and clues to reveal information about the theme without explicitly stating it.
- Share their writing with classmates and see if they can guess the theme or message of the piece.

To reflect, ask students:

- How is meaning in allegorical fiction shared?
- How can you recognize allegory in fiction texts?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In "A Warrior's Daughter" by Zitkala-Sa, a young woman needs to make a choice: she can either wait for someone else to save her lover, or she can take action. This short story helps readers understand what it means to draw inspiration from others and find leadership qualities within yourself.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can consider conflicts in their own lives or that are important to them in relation to the protagonist of "A Warrior's Daughter," and how she defied restrictive gender norms to assert her independence and sense of justice.



Extended Writing Project

Against the Wind

Essential Question

How do leaders fight for their ideas?

Writing Form

Argumentative

Extended Writing Project Prompt

What is one truth you are aware of that many members of your community don't know? Write a persuasive essay with the intent of showing others how much this truth matters. That might involve describing a problem or calling attention to a valuable person or business. Research your topic and include details to support each part of your argument.

EWP Mentor Texts

I Am Prepared to Die, Self-Made Men, Leadership During a Crisis

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Organizing Argumentative Writing, Thesis Statement, Reasons and Relevant Evidence, Introductions, Transitions, Conclusions, Style

Grammar Skills

Subject-Verb Agreement, Commas, Semicolons, Colons, and Dashes



Writing Overview

The Extended Writing Project (EWP) in Grade 12 Unit 3 focuses on argumentative writing. Students probe the unit’s essential question—How do leaders fight for their ideas?—as they write an argument that persuades readers to take action about a truth in their community of which they most likely are not aware. The unit’s selections about how leaders fight for their ideas provide a context for students and serve as mentor texts for students to analyze and emulate. Over the course of the EWP, students engage in the writing process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. At each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress and development of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student’s writing changes and improves over time.

Skill lessons on Organizing Argumentative Writing and Thesis Statement teach concepts specifically called out in ELA standards, while the additional Skill lessons Reasons and Relevant Evidence, Introductions, and Conclusions focus on characteristics of the argumentative writing genre. A revision lesson guides students as they revise their drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, and diction. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards. After each skill lesson, students have the opportunity to practice the skill using created student writing, authentic texts, and their own work.

Each Independent Read and Close Read lesson culminates with a writing or speaking prompt in which students reflect on the text or apply the skills they have learned in conjunction with that text. In the Independent Read “Preamble to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights,” students are asked to write an explanation of the goals established in the Preamble and how the amendments in the Bill of Rights advance those goals, while the prompt for *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen* asks them to imagine that they are a reporter researching and writing an article. Close Read prompts specifically ask students to conduct a focused analysis using the skills taught in conjunction with texts in the unit. After students read “Liberty Tree” and “To His Excellency, General Washington,” they use the techniques from the Compare and Contrast and Theme Skill lessons to analyze and compare how the two poems address themes of freedom.

Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions about political candidates using social media, as well as offering them the opportunity to self-select texts for independent reading. Writer’s notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing. In their writer’s notebooks, students write to think, reflect, and practice skills they’re learning. In the Conclusion lesson, they brainstorm the emotions they would like their readers to feel when they finish reading their argument. In each Close Read, students first write in their writer’s notebooks to reflect on the text before they engage in a collaborative conversation and write their short constructed response.





Unit 4

Sculpting Reality

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Unit Overview

Unit 4 Title

Sculpting Reality

Essential Question

What is the power of story?

Literary Focus

Romanticism and Victorianism

Genre Focus

Poetry

Introduction

From *Cinderella* to *Harry Potter*, everyone has a favorite story. Stories have the power to sweep audiences into fantasy worlds as well as bring a sense of clarity as we struggle with our own mundane problems. We connect with storytellers as they create cherished heros and heroines, unravel surprising plots, and guide us through unforgettable settings.

How can stories teach us important lessons? How can stories change our hearts and minds? What do readers learn by reading about fictional characters and events? What do stories teach us about ourselves and our society?

In this unit, students will think about the theme and essential question as they focus on Romanticism and Victorianism. They will explore examples of Romantic literature, including the poems “Ozymandias,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” and “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.” They will also review Victorian literature through the poem “The Cry of the Children” as well as excerpts from the seminal classics *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Jane Eyre*. In addition, students will study the genre of poetry while reading poems from other literary periods, including “Facing It,” “Stung,” “Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude,” and “Dear Mama.” Furthermore, the nonfiction texts “Jabberwocky Baby,” “Freedom,” and “Why I Write” encourage students to think about the power of storytelling in other areas of life.

Students will begin this unit as readers, and they will finish as writers, as they apply what they have learned about story elements to their own argumentative research writing projects.



Text Complexity

In Unit 4 students will explore a range of texts with a genre emphasis on poetry. Throughout this unit students will utilize skills they acquired in previous units, while also improving their ability to analyze poems. The selections in this unit fall in a Lexile® band of 1140-1610, with most texts residing in the 1280-1320 range. The featured vocabulary, sentence structures, content, and relationships among ideas make these selections accessible to twelfth graders, encouraging them to think broadly about the power of stories.

Unit 4 begins with Percy Bysshe Shelley’s “Ozymandias.” The celebrated poem requires several readings and provides a nuanced answer to the unit’s Essential Question, “What is the power of story?” The images described by the “traveller from an antique land” are brought into the contemporary world with a poignant documentary video featuring Paul Kalanithi, MD, who recites Shelley’s words as he contemplates the time he has left after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. A Skill lesson on Media as well as a StudySyncTV episode will help students unpack the timeless power of the poem, the story it tells, and its ironic twist ending.

The next two readings, “Facing It” and “Ode on a Grecian Urn” further explore the unit’s themes by exploring how physical reminders of mortality – a war memorial and an urn – can inspire intense emotions through the stories they represent. Yusef Komunyakaa’s contemporary language and free verse provides an accessible reading and thematic focus before students analyze John Keats’ more challenging and archaic poem. Through lessons on Poetic Elements and Structure as well as Figurative Language, students will begin to identify and interpret the dense imagery and language used by Romantic poets. Students will also be pushed to identify the formal and thematic connections between Keats and Komunyakaa’s poems in a comparative writing prompt.

Next, William Wordsworth’s “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye on a Tour, July 13, 1798” offers students a final exploration of Romantic poetry. Since it is arguably the most challenging of the three Romantic poems, students’ analysis is supported by a skill lesson in Context Clues to help them decode unfamiliar words and phrases and the nuanced meanings suggested by the poet’s word choice.

After considerable practice with analyzing challenging Romantic poems, students will apply the skills they have acquired in an independent reading of two contemporary poems: “Stung” by Heid E. Erdrich and “Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude” by Ross Gay. Both poems build on Romantic themes relating to the deep emotions evoked by nature, the passage of time, and the stories we tell.



The next two texts in this unit introduce Victorian literature and bring the exploration of the power of story to a more social and political context. Students will independently read the poem “The Cry of the Children,” in which Elizabeth Barrett Browning advocates for an end to child labor, as well as an excerpt from the novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, in which Charles Dickens vividly describes the brutalities of a divided society. This passage from Dickens is the most challenging in the unit, but the brief reading is supported by a SyncTV episode that models discussion and analysis of this challenging text.

Students will compare within and across genres as they read an excerpt of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* alongside Wanda Coleman’s personal essay “Jabberwocky Baby” and her poem “Dear Mama.” These texts provide different perspectives on what it feels like to be held back by society’s restrictions and expectations. Students will analyze how the stories we tell about ourselves can help motivate a resistance against those obstacles, while at the same time deepening our relationships with the ones we love.

Students will finish the unit with a final comparative pairing of “Freedom” by Ursula K. Le Guin and “Why I Write” by Joan Didion. Each author examines the power and responsibility of storytelling. While structurally and thematically complex, Didion’s essay lands within the lower Lexile® band for this unit. Students will be challenged to analyze the text’s layered meanings as well as its connections to “Freedom” through comparative Skills Focus questions and Skill lessons in Summarizing, Author’s Purpose and Point of View, and Figurative Language. These concluding informational texts will invite students to revisit the unit’s Essential Question explicitly.



English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “A Golden Coin” and “A Modern Man from the 1800s: The Influential Life of Charles Dickens,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing Skill lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension to the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will plan and present a researched informational presentation. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner.



Ozymandias

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1818

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Prior Knowledge

- Students may be unfamiliar with the Pharaoh Ramses II and the rise and fall of his empire.
- Explain to students that Ozymandias is a Greek form of the name Ramses II, the pharaoh who ruled Egypt during the thirteenth century B.C., and that much of our knowledge of Ramses II is derived from the large-scale monuments he built to glorify his reign.

Connection of Ideas

- Students need to analyze how descriptions and images work together to imply a meaning, and then infer the overall meaning of the poem.
- Remind students to annotate descriptions or images they find striking or important while they read. After reading, they can review their annotations as they infer the general meaning of the poem.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 112



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Media

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: The scholar and literary critic Donald H. Reiman has stated that Shelley “dedicated his efforts to the destruction of tyranny in all its forms.” In the video “A Strange Relativity,” Dr. Paul Kalanithi invokes “Ozymandias” while reflecting on his new relationship with time, which he describes as “peculiar and free.” Write a short essay indicating whether you find evidence of a philosophy of destroying the tyranny of time in “Ozymandias.” How accurate is the interpretation put forth in the video? Remember to use textual evidence to support your claim.

Beyond the Book

Research and Write: A Lasting Legacy

Ozymandias is the Greek name for Ramses II, also known as Ramesses the Great. In this poem, Shelley uses the statue of Ozymandias as a metaphor to explore themes relating to power and time.

Break students into small groups and ask them to:

- Revisit their research or further research the life, achievements, and legacy of Ramses II.
- Use the poem as inspiration for your own poem. Use the following questions to brainstorm before you write:
 - Who is someone alive today from a different continent that you think will be remembered in 3,000 years?
 - Imagine that you are writing a poem about this person 3,000 years from now. What would you say? How would their legacy impact the themes of your poem?
- Share your poem with your research group.

To reflect, ask students:

- How did learning about the life and legacy of Ramses II and writing your own poem contribute to your understanding of “Ozymandias”?
- What makes a person’s legacy endure?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The speaker of the poem meets a traveler from Egypt and tells an ironic story about the ravages of time and the legacies of powerful rulers.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can reflect on the power of the artist to convey messages about human experience.



Facing It

by Yusef Komunyakaa

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1988

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Students may find the content of this poem unsettling. Explain that the poem is an elegy. In an elegy, the speaker reflects on a serious topic such as a death.
- Discuss why this poem was written and what ideas and feelings the poet wanted to express.

Prior Knowledge

- Students may wonder how the poet is connected to the Vietnam War. Explain that Komunyakaa wrote for a U.S. military newspaper in Vietnam. He earned a medal — the Bronze Star — for his writing.
- Students may not be familiar with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Show them a picture and explain that it consists of black granite walls bearing the names of U.S. military personnel killed or missing in Vietnam.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 168



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Poetry: In the poem “Facing It,” the speaker describes his experience at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Write a poem that expresses your thoughts and feelings as you imagine yourself at the site of a memorial that you have personally visited or that you have researched.

Beyond the Book

Art: Making a Memorial

Architect Maya Lin received high praise for her Vietnam Veterans Memorial. She intended it to be “an interface, between our world and the quieter, darker, more peaceful world beyond.” Ask students to design their own memorial honoring one or more persons who have died.

Encourage them to write a statement that tells the following information:

- why the person or persons should be remembered
- what the memorial looks like, including what it is made of
- where it should be placed
- how people should respond to it.

Students can submit a drawing or a computer model to show what they envision. Once students have completed their memorials, they can share them with the class.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

“Facing It” tells the story of a war veteran who visits the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. In the poem, reality blurs with memory as the speaker tries to make sense of the tremendous loss of human life that resulted from the war

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Yusef Komunyakaa for their informative essays. Have them work to convey specific emotions or ideas through the connotations of their words.



Ode on a Grecian Urn

by John Keats

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1820

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- An ode is a type of lyric poem that is often serious with a formal style and tone.
- Explain that many odes celebrate people or objects. These odes normally use apostrophe, which is to address a personified thing or an absent person.

Connection of Ideas

- Students might need some context to understand the poem's details. The speaker addresses the ode and describes what is depicted on it.
- Students will need to understand the connection between stanzas to trace the theme of the poem.

Specific Vocabulary

- The poem includes many words not commonly used today, such as “thou” and “Sylvan historian.”
- Students should use context clues and a dictionary to help define any unfamiliar words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 373



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Poetic Elements and Structure, Figurative Language

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: “Ode on a Grecian Urn” is a famous ode devoted to an ancient Greek urn. “Facing It” is an elegy written by a contemporary American poet about a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Write an essay that analyzes how these texts use figurative language as well as poetic elements and structure to express ideas about art, culture, and society. Support your analysis with textual evidence from “Ode on a Grecian Urn.”

Beyond the Book

Art: Everyone’s a Critic

The speaker in “On a Grecian Urn” praises the object’s figures and its value to generation after generation. Identify a work of art that appeals to you. It might be a painting, drawing, sculpture, fountain, mural, building, or installation. Write a brief essay of art criticism that assesses the piece.

In your paper, you should:

- include a photo of the piece
- describe what it looks like in words
- explain why it is well done
- explain what the work inspires in viewers
- tell what the work says to you
- include something the artist has said about the work, if possible

You might choose to give your opinion in a video, rather than a paper. This could require you to collaborate with classmates.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” the speaker praises an ancient vase. The decorations on the vase tell a story about life, love, and happiness that has been captured in time through art. The poem reflects on the timelessness of art and ends with a statement about truth and beauty that is still discussed and debated today.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “Ode on a Grecian Urn” as inspiration for their Extended Writing Project. Have students think about the descriptions of nature and beauty in the poem. Encourage students to use their feelings about nature to help them choose a topic for their essay.



Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey

by William Wordsworth

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1798

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Students may not know Wordsworth's purpose in writing the poem.
- Explain to students that he was heavily influenced by nature and that the poem is a reflective meditation on time spent at Tintern Abbey five years before. Wordsworth wrote this poem on a second visit.

Prior Knowledge

- Students may not know that the poem is written about the area surrounding Tintern Abbey, which was founded in 1131.
- Explain that the poem's full title is "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798." Have students work in groups to analyze sensory details about the setting.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,228



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Context Clues, Figurative Language

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: The essence of Romantic poetry is the precise choice of language that invokes the emotional response of the individual in relation to nature. Wordsworth revolutionized the literary form by exploiting the power of words to reveal the emotional depth of everyday experiences. Write an essay in which you analyze and evaluate Wordsworth's use of figurative language to contribute to the poem's message and emotional effect. Use context clues to analyze language and ideas that might be challenging.

Beyond the Book

Writing: A Special Place

This poem expresses the author's remembering the good and bad of a place that is special to him. Students will reflect on a place that is special to them.

Ask students to:

- Generate a list of places that hold a lot of memories to them.
- Choose one of the places and write three special memories of the place.
- Write a poem, dedicating a stanza to each memory, add a final stanza to reflect on the place as a whole.
 - What senses are activated by the memory?
 - Who is present?
 - How do you feel about this memory?
- Set the writing to music or create a visual for the poem.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- What memories created powerful poems?
- How are poems useful in documenting emotions?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The speaker of the poem revisits an old childhood haunt, the beautiful landscape surrounding Tintern Abbey. Nature serves as a source of inspiration as the speaker reflects on his own personal story and philosophy of life.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the poem to inform their ideas about nature when writing their essays.



Stung

by Heid E. Erdrich

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2016

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- The poem is written in free verse and thus does not rhyme or follow a steady meter. Students may struggle to understand this poetic form.
- Remind students to read the poem as if it were a paragraph. Guide them to connect ideas across line breaks instead of stopping at the end of each line.

Connection of Ideas

- The poet uses simple language to describe a common occurrence: getting stung by a bee. Students may wonder why the author chose to commemorate such an event in a poem.
- Remind students that poets choose their language carefully to develop mood and theme. Guide students to identify concrete details that reveal the speaker's attitude toward the bee.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 120



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Poetry: Write a poem about your own encounter with a bee or another animal. Include details that make clear the kind of encounter it was—frightening, awe-inspiring, or comical, for example. You can model your poem after Erdrich’s, writing 15 lines of free verse. And like her, you can include lines from the perspective of the animal. After your first draft, evaluate your details to make sure they are well-chosen, and replace words that are too general.

Beyond the Book

Performance: Pantomimed Encounters

Heid Erdrich does a good job of showing what it feels like when a person interacts with a frightened bee. Challenge students to act out, alone or in pairs, the encounter with an animal they wrote about. The audience can guess what animal is being portrayed, how the person feels, and where the scene takes place.

Ask these questions to get students to reflect:

- Did the performer(s) convincingly portray the person and the animal?
- Did the encounter seem realistic?
- How was the pantomime similar to and different from the poem?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Native American poet Heid E. Erdrich tells a story about a common occurrence: getting stung by a bee. This poem demonstrates how an everyday experience can reveal the unintended harm humans can cause in the natural world.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Heid Erdrich for their informative essay. Have them work to describe the natural world and detail its value.



Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude

by Ross Gay

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2015

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Remind students that authors always have a purpose in their writing, and may express more than one purpose. Ask them to analyze the poem for the author's multiple purposes, whether explicitly stated or not.
- In addition to describing the joys of building a community orchard, this poem encourages readers to feel gratitude even in small things.

Connection of Ideas

- The poem connects a variety of ideas and images, from vignettes of people interacting with each other in the orchard to scenes from the poet's childhood.
- The ideas in the poem center on the image of the orchard and the steady growth of the trees, flowers, and fruit it contains.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,927



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Write a personal response in which you examine the speaker's argument and state whether you agree or disagree with his message about gratitude. Remember to cite relevant textual evidence and include original commentary to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Advertisement: Catalog of Gratitude

The general meaning of *catalog* is an organized list. A particular meaning of *catalog* is a publication showing photos and written descriptions of items for sale; for example, a clothing or fashion catalog. Challenge students to revisit their discussion of things they are grateful for and create a printed catalog depicting these things and describing why they inspire gratitude. It might be difficult to come up with a visual image for an abstract source of gratitude, such as recovery from illness, but encourage students to try.

Have students reflect by asking them:

- Which items in the catalogue were the most unusual or surprising?
- What insights have you gained about gratitude from assembling the catalog?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This award-winning poem by contemporary poet Ross Gay presents a catalog of events from the speaker's life, some tragic and some lovely. Throughout this dramatic monologue, the speaker is able to tell a story of gratitude that triumphs over all his experiences.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Ross Gay for their informative essay. Have them illustrate their ideas about nature with specific examples.



The Cry of the Children

by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1843

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Specific Vocabulary

- Word forms such as *lieth* and *ere* (*lies* and *before*) are common in the poetry of Barrett Browning's time, but may be unfamiliar to modern readers.
- Barrett Browning was writing in the 1840s, and some of her vocabulary is now considered archaic. For example, *kirk-chime* refers to the ringing of church bells. Discuss with students the meanings of archaic terms.

Prior Knowledge

- Though child labor is uncommon in the modern developed world, it was a fact of life among the lower classes in the 1840's, and continues to be a cause for concern in many underdeveloped parts of the world today.
- Some reformers pushed back against the custom of hiring very young workers in factories and mines, but many people accepted child labor as a given.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,326



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Poetry: This is a protest poem written to call attention to the terrible conditions endured by children who worked in British coal mines in the nineteenth century—conditions that endangered their souls as well as their health. Think about a cruel situation you would like to end. Perhaps you can find information about modern-day child labor or envision a way to help homeless students succeed in school. Write a poem, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning did, to raise awareness of the issue and persuade the reader that the situation should not be tolerated. Be sure to describe the situation as you see it, using figurative language to stir the sympathies of your readers and persuade them to take action.

Beyond the Book

Storytelling: The Industrial Revolution Revealed in Primary Sources

This poem articulates Browning's outrage with children working during the Industrial Revolution. Students will find, analyze, and discuss primary sources about child labor from the Industrial Revolution.

Ask students to:

- Conduct informal research on child labor during the Industrial Revolution using primary sources exclusively.
- Choose three different primary sources (e.g., photographs, letters, documents) that explain what life was like for a child.
- Analyze the sources and make inferences about the child's life.
- Weave these sources together in a journal entry through the perspective of a child.
- Share the story with the class.

To reflect, ask students:

- How can studying primary sources help shed light on the past?
- How is reading a primary source document different from reading a history book on a topic?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This poem is a protest poem that expresses a strong condemnation of child labor practices during the Industrial Revolution.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the alienation from nature the child workers experience in “The Cry of the Children” to inspire their informative essays on the importance of nature.



A Tale of Two Cities

by Charles Dickens

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1859

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Specific Vocabulary

- This text uses archaic and unfamiliar words that may prove challenging for students.
- Encourage students to look for synonyms, antonyms, and other context clues in the text to infer word meaning.

Prior Knowledge

- The text makes references to a number of people, places, and events that may be unfamiliar to contemporary American readers.
- Encourage students to do some research on the French Revolution and the period leading up to it. Have students share their findings with the class.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1610

Word Count: 1,003



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale of Two Cities* explores many different dualities in ideas, settings, and characters. Write a response in which you describe the dualities and contrasts presented in Chapter 1. Make sure to support your response with textual evidence.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Build the Setting

In Chapter 1, Dickens sets up the time period and locations for the reader. Students will create either France or England, using all aspects of setting.

Ask students to:

- Choose either France or England and reread the text, paying attention to all the details.
- Conduct informal research on the chosen location and the time.
 - When does the story take place?
 - What is the physical geography and location to the rest of the world?
 - What are the people like? How do they dress? What is the weather? How do they socialize?
 - What major historical events are occurring in the location at the time of the novel?
- Create a visual display of the setting chosen.
- Share with classmates, explaining the specific details that express the setting.

To reflect, ask students:

- Besides where and when, what elements make up the setting of a story?
- How will the characters' lives be affected by the setting?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The first chapter of *A Tale of Two Cities* begins with one of the most quoted and memorable openings in English literary history. The rest of the chapter sets the historical background for the events that will unfold before and during the French Revolution. Through this masterpiece, Charles Dickens uses the power of story to champion the poor and fight for social justice.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration in the urban depictions in *A Tale of Two Cities*. Ask students to consider how experiences in nature can help alleviate some of the ills and stresses of life in urban settings, such as London or Paris.



Jane Eyre

by Charlotte Brontë

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1847

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Sentence Structure

- *Jane Eyre* was written in 1847 and features a complicated sentence structure commonly used during that time period. Students may struggle to follow long sentences that contain multiple phrases and clauses.
- Guide students to break down longer sentences into shorter “chunks” that are easier to understand.

Specific Vocabulary

- Difficult vocabulary, such as *injudicious* (unwise), and words with antiquated meanings *freak* (whimsical behavior), may need contextualizing and defining.
- Remind students to use context clues while reading and to use a dictionary to define unfamiliar words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1280

Word Count: 781



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Argumentative: In this excerpt, Jane mentions many positive and negative aspects of her current situation at Thornfield Hall. Considering the evidence, is Jane content with his current situation? Using textual evidence to support your claim, write a response arguing whether or not Jane is happy at Thornfield Hall.

Beyond the Book

Graphic Story: Dreams vs. Reality

In this excerpt Jane is describing her surroundings, but shares how she is bored and desires more action in her life. Students will create a graphic story, or short comic book, showing the contrast between Jane Eyre's reality and what she is longing for.

Ask students to:

- Create a T-Chart: for the first column, select textual evidence that explains Jane Eyre's reality, and, for the second column, select textual evidence that explains her wishes.
- Use the details in the T-chart to inspire a graphic story, or short comic book, that shows Jane Eyre going through the motions of her life while dreaming about what could be.
- Share their stories with classmates explaining what textual evidence inspired each decision.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The excerpt from the novel *Jane Eyre* by English writer Charlotte Brontë and the essay “Jabberwocky Baby” by African American poet Wanda Coleman are paired together to provide different perspectives on what it feels like to be held back by society's restrictions and expectations.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from *Jane Eyre* for their informative essays. Have students review the last paragraph of the excerpt and analyze the claim the narrator makes about social restrictions on women. Ask students to consider what makes the writing persuasive and compelling.



Jabberwocky Baby

by Wanda Coleman

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2005

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- Tell students that this excerpt is organized like a memoir, in which the author narrates an event from her childhood while occasionally inserting thoughts from the time when she was writing it.
- Explain to students that they can note these changes by paying attention to when verbs shift between past and present tense.

Specific Vocabulary

- Students may not be familiar with many of the works mentioned by Coleman in this excerpt.
- Have students work in groups to identify the works mentioned. Assist them as needed to understand the difficulty level of the works Coleman read at different ages.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1290

Word Count: 739



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Write a short personal response about a poem or any other work of art that is meaningful to you. Choose details about this work of art carefully so that they point to key ideas that you absorbed. What impact did the work have on you? Consider if there was a line that sounded so true, it would not leave your head.

Beyond the Book

In “Jabberwocky, Baby,” the author describes how books, specifically Lewis Carroll’s works, like *Alice in Wonderland* and “Jabberwocky” had a profound impact on her.

Have students conduct informal research about Carroll’s works, and the messages or key ideas his works inspired.

To reflect, ask students:

- What themes or ideas does Carroll discuss? What do his characters confront or experience?
- What can we learn about life from his stories?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Before reading Wanda Coleman’s poem “Dear Mama,” students will read the essay “Jabberwocky Baby,” by the poet. In this essay, Coleman recalls her own struggles to fit into a society that discriminated against her and describes finding solace in literature, particularly in the works of prominent Victorian writer, Lewis Carroll.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use the themes of individualism and self-reliance in “Jabberwocky; Baby” to inform the writing of their informative essays on the value of nature and the individual’s relation to it.



Dear Mama

by Wanda Coleman

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1987

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Students may have difficulty connecting the figurative language in the last stanza of the poem to the content of the other stanzas.
- If students struggle to connect these ideas, have partners discuss the last stanza and how it might relate to the theme of the poem.

Specific Vocabulary

- “Spanish eight” in line 20 is likely unfamiliar to students.
- Explain that “spanish eight” refers to the Spanish silver dollar used in many countries from about 1600 to the mid-1800s. People sometimes broke a coin into eight pieces to use for smaller purchases. Pirates considered the coins valuable treasure because they were accepted in so many countries.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 137



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Language, Style, and Audience

Close Read Prompt

Correspondence: Using Coleman’s poem as a model, write a letter (in prose or poetry) to someone important to you and include enough details for the reader to understand why this person is important in your life. Title the letter “Dear (blank) _____” and begin the body with a question, as Coleman does with “when did we become friends?” Answer the question in your letter and use figurative language to express the unique relationship you have with the person to whom you are writing.

Beyond the Book

I Remember When . . .

The speaker in “Dear Mama” reflects on the value of memories. Have students choose a single photograph or create a collage of photographs that reflect an important time in their lives. Ask students to write a brief narrative in prose or poetry to provide contextual details.

Display the photographs and narratives.

To reflect, ask students:

- What do the photographs and words make you think about?
- How does the work of others connect to your own life?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

After comparing the theme of social restrictions explored in the excerpt from *Jane Eyre* and Wanda Coleman’s essay “Jabberwocky Baby,” students will read Coleman’s poem “Dear Mama.” This poem showcases Coleman’s poetic style and demonstrates how her love of literature led to her becoming a poet.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “Dear Mama” as inspiration for their Extended Writing Project. Have students think about the descriptions of relationships, memory, and time in the poem. Encourage students to connect these topics to nature to help them choose a focus for their essay.



Freedom

by Ursula K. Le Guin

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2014

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- It may not be immediately clear to students how this speech connects to the other texts of this unit.
- Remind students that Romantics valued art and that publishing became a profitable business during the Victorian Age. Ask students to consider how Le Guin's ideas support and conflict with both those of Romantics and Victorians.

Prior Knowledge

- Students will likely have limited familiarity with the process of publishing and may be surprised by the description in the speech.
- Explain or have students do internet research on how a book becomes published. Discuss how the process differs from what students had originally imagined.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1320

Word Count: 423



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: In her acceptance speech, Ursula K. Le Guin argues passionately against the profit motive in book publishing. Think about the effects of the profit motive on society. Do you think its effects are good, bad, or neutral overall? What are the positive aspects of the profit motive and what are the negative aspects? What can be done to prevent those pursuing profit from exploiting other members of society? To prepare for the discussion, use the graphic organizer to write down your ideas about these questions. After your discussion, you will write a reflection in the space below.

Beyond the Book

Interview: My Favorite Author

Ursula Le Guin expresses her disdain for publishers excessively profiting from the authors' work and explains that writing is not about the financial reward, it is about freedom. Students will choose their favorite author and interview them on why they write and how they feel about publishers.

Ask students to:

- Choose a favorite author.
- Generate a list of questions they can use to interview this author that will uncover why they write, what their long-term goals are, and how they feel about the publishing process.
- Choose the top three questions and send them to the author via social media, their blog, or email.
- Present questions and/or answers with the class.

To reflect, ask students:

- What information was the most surprising?
- Should authors be focused on profit or the art?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Read together, the informational texts “Freedom” by Ursula K. Le Guin and “Why I Write” by Joan Didion help students explore the power and responsibility of storytelling. Originally given as an acceptance speech for an award, “Freedom” challenges an audience of readers and writers alike to consider what is lost when creativity gives way to marketing and other financial concerns.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from “Freedom” for their informative essays. Encourage students to analyze how Le Guin makes a claim and uses evidence throughout her speech to inform the reader.



Why I Write

by Joan Didion

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1976

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- “Why I Write” does not follow the traditional organization of an expository essay with a clear thesis statement in the first paragraph. Students may struggle to identify and connect familiar structural elements of informational texts in the essay.
- Encourage students to keep the title of the essay in mind as they follow Didion’s ideas from paragraph to paragraph.

Specific Vocabulary

- Difficult vocabulary, such as *baroque*, and anachronistic slang, such as *ball*, may be unfamiliar to students.
- Vocabulary, such as *bevatron* (a particle accelerator) reflects the 1950s when Didion was at college, and may require explanation or visual support.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1140

Word Count: 2,587



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Summarizing, Author's Purpose and Point of View, Figurative Language

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: Write a short paper analyzing what you learn about Joan Didion's writing style and point of view from this essay. Why does she write? What does she believe about herself? Her statements are not always simple or obvious, so you will have to look closely at how Didion's content and style, particularly her use of figurative language, interact to develop her point of view. Pay special attention to the last sentence, which seems to achieve the purpose of asserting why she writes. Be sure to explain your understanding of this sentence in your analysis. Use textual evidence from the essay to support your points.

Beyond the Book

The Power of Images

In "Why I Write," Didion explains that she thinks in images, preferring a "physical fact" to an abstract idea. Have students choose an image by doing online research. This image could be a photograph, a piece of art, a drawing, a company's logo, or anything visual that a student finds interesting or intriguing. Once students have chosen their image, encourage them to write a short story inspired by the image. Have students present their images and stories to the class or in small groups.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Likewise, the essay "Why I Write" inspires the audience to consider why and how writers tell the stories they do. Didion uses anecdotes from her own life and writing process to communicate her view that writing is a hostile act that conveys a writer's ideas into a reader's most private space: his or her mind. Given the power to change readers' hearts and minds, what responsibilities do writers have?

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use "Why I Write" as inspiration for their Extended Writing Project. Have students think about Didion's use of specific examples to help readers better understand complex statements and ideas. Encourage students to research and describe specific examples in their essays.



Extended Writing Project

Sculpting Reality

Essential Question

What is the power of story?

Writing Form

Research

Extended Writing Project Prompt

How can we better value nature through our daily behaviors? Think of a daily behavior that the average person may not know is damaging to nature. For example, people may not think about reducing their use of plastic bags when cleaning up after their dogs or may not consider the consequences of constantly upgrading their phones and other technology. Research your topic, and structure your essay to be clear, informative, and convincing. Then, write an informative research essay, using both informative text structures and source materials to support your claim and make your informative essay convincing.

EWP Mentor Text

Freedom

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Planning Research, Evaluating Sources, Research and Notetaking, Critiquing Research, Paraphrasing, Sources and Citations, Print and Graphic Features, Using a Style Guide

Grammar Skills

Sentence Variety, Basic Spelling Rules I, Apostrophes



Writing Overview

The Extended Writing Project (EWP) in Grade 12 Unit 4 focuses on research writing that informs readers of how they can better value nature in their daily behaviors. The unit's selections about the power and beauty of nature provide a context for students, and the multiple pieces of poetry, fiction, and informational writing in the unit serve as mentor texts for students to analyze and emulate. Over the course of the EWP, students engage in the writing process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. At each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress and development of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student's writing changes and improves over time.

Skill lessons on Print and Graphic Features and Evaluating Sources teach concepts specifically called out in ELA standards, while the additional Skill lessons on Planning Research, Sources and Citations, and Paraphrasing focus on characteristics of the research writing genre. A revision lesson guides students as they revise their drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, and diction. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards. After each skill lesson, students have the opportunity to practice the skill using created student writing, authentic texts, and their own work.

Student writing is not confined to the EWP. Each Independent Read and Close Read lesson culminates with a writing or speaking prompt in which students reflect on the text or apply the skills they have learned in conjunction with that text. In the Independent Read “The Cry of the Children,” students are asked to write a poem in the style of Elizabeth Barrett Browning in order to raise awareness about an issue, while the prompt for “Jabberwocky Baby” asks them to write a personal response about a poem, book, or story that was particularly meaningful to them. Close Read prompts specifically ask students to conduct a focused analysis using the skills taught in conjunction with texts in the unit. Students practice strategies from a variety of lessons for “Facing It” and “Ode on a Grecian Urn” to analyze how these works use poetic structures and figurative language to express ideas about art, culture, and society.

Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions about political candidates using social media, as well as offering them the opportunity to self-select texts for independent reading. Writer's notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing. In their writer's notebooks, students write to think, reflect, and practice skills they're learning. In the Skill lesson Planning Research, students practice by using a graphic organizer to strategize their research about an important event in a classmate's life, and in the Evaluating Sources lesson, they will write four statements and trade the statements with a partner. In each Close Read, students first write in their writer's notebooks to reflect on the text before they engage in a collaborative conversation and write their short constructed response.





Unit 5

Fractured Selves

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Unit Overview

Unit 5 Title

Fractured Selves

Essential Question

What causes individuals to feel alienated?

Literary Focus

Modernism

Genre Focus

Argumentative

Introduction

Most people love stories that end happily. The characters work out their differences, the hero saves the day, good defeats evil. But not all authors want to tell happy tales. Instead, they want literature and art to reflect real life more truthfully.

What does more realistic literature tell us about modern life? How did World War I and World War II change the way people viewed and experienced life? What causes individuals to feel alienated? How does Modernist art and literature explore the theme of alienation?

In this unit, students will think about the theme and essential question as they focus on Modernist art and literature. They will explore examples of Modernist poetry such as “The Great Figure” and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” They will also read the Modernist short stories “A Cup of Tea” and “The New Dress” and an excerpt from the play *The Glass Menagerie*. Poems “Miss Rosie,” “The Idler,” “Hurricane Season,” and “Pearl Divers’ Daughters” allow students to consider how feelings of alienation can result from a variety of situations. Furthermore, the nonfiction texts *A Room of One’s Own*, “Be Ye Men of Valour,” *Killers of the Dream*, and “Shooting an Elephant” encourage students to think about the power of the written word to reflect important historical events and the experience of alienation individuals experienced within them.

Students will begin this unit as readers, and they will finish as writers, as they apply what they have learned about story elements to their own literary analysis essays.



Text Complexity

In Grade 12 Unit 5, students will focus on Modernism and the genre of argumentative texts as they further the plethora of reading, analysis, and critical thinking skills they have acquired thus far. In addition to argumentative texts, students will also have the opportunity to read poems, two short stories, and a drama in addition to the genre focus of this unit. The selections in this unit fall in a Lexile® band of 620–1390, with most texts residing in the 1250–1350 range. The Modernist focus of the unit ensures that students are able to access sophisticated themes in iconic texts from the literary period that, in an initial read, are at times deceptively simple in their language. Modernist literature frequently explores the unsaid in its examination of alienation and disconnect, requiring readers to read critically for multiple levels of meaning, often navigating unconventional language conventions and involved structures at the same time. Students must draw on a knowledge of the literary period both to access the underlying meanings of the texts and engage with analytical writing tasks to demonstrate their understanding.

The essential question for this unit, “What causes individuals to feel alienated?” will encourage students to read with empathy in mind while also building on the exploration of identity, leadership, and storytelling sparked in previous units.

This unit opens with a comparative pairing of two poems, “The Great Figure” by William Carlos Williams alongside “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T. S. Eliot. While each poem is unique and formally different from the other, both poems are representative of the themes and stylistic elements described in the unit’s Literary Focus lesson. “The Great Figure” is pithy and conjures vivid images through accessible language and common, every-day subject matter. Williams’ writing thus provides an accessible introduction to Modernist themes and ideas. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” will prove more challenging for students as Eliot resorts to challenging sentence structures, stream of consciousness writing, and sometimes obscure figurative language. Students will need to resort to the skills they have acquired in previous units, but a StudySyncTV episode as well as Skill lessons in Poetic Elements and Language, Style, and Audience will support students’ analysis of this poem. In addition, the Skill lesson Compare and Contrast will deepen students’ understanding of the relationship between these two poems as well as their ties to the unit’s theme.

For the purposes of Comparing Within and Across Genres, students will read the poems “Miss Rosie” and “The Idler” alongside the short story “A Cup of Tea.” This comparative cluster of texts focuses on the alienation people experience across economic divides and the dangers of self-congratulating philanthropy. The two poems are written in an accessible language and describe everyday experiences that students will recognize as moments of alienation between people. While “A Cup of Tea” appears to be the easiest reading across all units with a Lexile®



of 620, students must analyze characteristics of Modernist literature to unpack the complex themes about alienation presented in the story's deceptively straightforward language. Read together, these three texts will allow students the space to confidently apply the skills they have acquired in service of a deep discussion of Modernist themes and stylistic elements.

Next, students will read Scene V of Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* in an exploration of how Modernist themes and formal elements influenced the theater. Again, students will find the language relatively accessible, and recognize the everyday conversations in which Williams' protagonists are engaged. Their analysis will find deeper challenges in unpacking the play's themes of alienation and unspoken conflicts between characters. A Skill lesson in Dramatic Elements and Structure will guide students in their analysis of how Williams' unconventional stage directions and multimedia productions influence the audience's experience of the dialogue. The Media Skill lesson for *The Glass Menagerie* also introduces an audiobook and a radio play of the same scene, pushing students to evaluate their own interpretation of the source text alongside these recordings.

Readings of two texts by Virginia Woolf – an argumentative excerpt from *A Room of One's Own* and the short story “The New Dress” – encourage students to independently practice the analysis skills they have acquired. *A Room of One's Own* generates thematic connections to previous units by imagining the unfair fate of William Shakespeare's fictional sister, rendering a challenging argument accessible and thought provoking. In “The New Dress,” a high Lexile® reading, Woolf uses fiction and stream of consciousness writing to explore themes of unfair expectations, loneliness, and a female protagonist's lack of self-confidence.

Students will then read a poem by Houston's second Youth Poet Laureate, Fareena Arefeen. As a first-generation immigrant living in Texas, Arefeen writes about her experiences seeking and finding a connection to the city of Houston, and her desire to wield language to create art. “Hurricane Season” energetically describes her own memories of the city's encounter with Hurricane Ike in 2008.

Winston Churchill's renowned radio address from May 19, 1940 argues for the necessity of British resilience in the face of German aggression. In “Be Ye Men of Valour,” Churchill refers to devastating battles while also calling for hope and belief in a more peaceful and unified future. Students will need to apply the reading skills they have already acquired to analyze the challenging rhetoric of this speech. Skill lessons on Central or Main Idea, Informational Text Structure, and Word Meaning will refine students' comprehension skills and push them to analyze the text's structure and meaning.



In “The Pearl Divers’ Daughters,” Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello explores the lives and legacy of haenyeo, the legendary female divers of South Korea’s Jeju province. Even in this brief poem, students will find a reflection on what happens when a new generation seeks a lifestyle that is different from that of their parents and how simultaneous feelings of alienation and connection can coexist.

Finally, an excerpt from Lillian Smith’s memoir *Killers of the Dream* is paired with George Orwell’s “Shooting an Elephant” to present two critiques on oppression and imperialism. Writing in 1949, almost twenty years prior to the Civil Rights Movement, Smith reveals that she learned to discriminate as a child and that these destructive lessons about maintaining white privilege were taught to her by people she loved and trusted—her own parents.

Similarly, Orwell’s “Shooting An Elephant” heralds the end of British colonialism by describing a personal encounter with its hypocrisies. Students must draw on historical knowledge to unpack Orwell’s allegorical message and are supported by Skill lessons on Author’s Purpose and Point of View, Connotation and Denotation, and Figurative Language.

English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “Fear of Missing Out” and “The Ribbons,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing skill lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension to the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will write and perform a monologue from the perspective of one of the characters they encountered in their reading of the texts in this unit. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner.



The Great Figure

by William Carlos Williams

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1921

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Explain to students that “The Great Figure” is an example of an Imagist poem.
- Imagist poems usually describe a single image, prioritizing sensory details over other poetic elements, such as meter or rhyme.

Sentence Structure

- “The Great Figure” is a very short poem with very little punctuation.
- Guide students through the poem line by line, highlighting which lines have single words, which lines are single phrases, and what these structural choices might mean.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 35



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Write about a seemingly minor event that affected you enough that you continue to remember it. Your response can be a poem, short story, or personal narrative. Be sure to provide specific details about the sights and sounds of the event, as Williams does in “The Great Figure.” You may also include your thoughts and emotions about the event and why you continue to remember it.

Beyond the Book

Reading versus Reality

Imagist poets focused on describing in words events that are normally experienced with our other senses, such as sight and sound.

Put students in small groups to discuss the following questions:

- How is reading “The Great Figure” different than seeing a fire engine pass by in real life?
- Did the poem make you think differently about the experience of seeing a fire engine? Why or why not?
- What are some other events that are different in real life compared with reading about them?

Invite groups to share their ideas to foster a class discussion about experiencing events versus reading about them.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

“The Great Figure” is a very short poem that relies on images. The speaker concisely describes the sights and sounds of the sudden appearance of a fire engine on a dark and rainy night.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students might want to use “The Great Figure” as one of the texts they focus on in their literary analysis. Encourage students to think about whether this poem explores the theme of alienation.



The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

by T.S. Eliot

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1915

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- The poem might seem random to students at first. Help them draw connections between each stanza.
- Explain that interjections such as “the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo” support the poem’s meaning.

Sentence Structure

- Some sentences are very long and hard to follow. Help students trace the flow of ideas by connecting pronouns with their antecedents.
- Ask students to consider how Eliot uses punctuation to structure the flow of ideas.

Genre

- Explain that the first six lines are an epigraph, or a short quotation that appears at the beginning of a literary work.
- The epigraph comes from Canto XXVII of Dante’s *Inferno* (the first part of *The Divine Comedy*), written in the early 1300s.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 1,145



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Language, Style, and Audience; Poetic Elements and Structure, Compare and Contrast

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: Some critics claim that the speaker in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” describes an atmosphere that is his own personal hell. What evidence in the poem do you find to support this claim? What is it about Prufrock’s existence that seems hellish, and how does that existence help define this poem as a Modernist poem? Write a response that answers these questions, using textual evidence to support your ideas.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Group Character Analysis

Have students find evidence of Prufrock’s character traits and select songs that reflect these traits.

Ask students to:

- Reread the poem and find three moments that reflect Prufrock’s personality.
- Write each action on a post-it note.
- In small groups of 4 to 5, combine the post-it notes and group similar pieces of evidence together.
- Use a thesaurus and/or a list of character traits to decide what each grouping of post-it notes reveals about Prufrock.
- As a group, select three songs that should be on his music playlist.
- Write a brief explanation for each song and why it might apply to Prufrock.
- Share ideas with classmates.

To make students reflect, have them discuss these questions:

- Were there songs that were common among more than one group? If so, what traits did these songs reflect?
- What revealed more about Prufrock’s traits—his actions or his words?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Eliot depicts the speaker’s isolation and disillusion in a stream-of-consciousness style, making the poem one of Modernism’s foundational texts.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can identify examples of Prufrock’s alienation and synthesize a statement about it as they craft their own literary analysis essay.



miss rosie

by Lucille Clifton

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1987

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Students might not recognize the tone of the speaker in the poem, and the shift in tone in the last two lines.
- Remind students that tone is the speaker's attitude toward the subject and that tone can be determined by analyzing word choice.

Connection of Ideas

- Students may be challenged to determine the meaning of the last three lines of the poem.
- Have students work together in a collaborative conversation, discussing the meaning of the last three lines.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 82



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: The poem “miss rosie” follows a dramatic structure as the speaker recounts the life of a person that society often ignores. Write a short response in which you analyze the effect the dramatic structure has on the meaning of the poem. In your essay, consider and respond to questions such as the following: What story does this poem tell? What relationship does the speaker of the poem have with Miss Rosie? How would the story be different if Miss Rosie were telling her own story? What message is being conveyed by this story? Remember to use textual evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Writing: Copy Change Poem

Challenge students to mimic the structure of “miss rosie” as they write their own poem about a person.

Have students reflect by answering these questions:

- Did the copy change format make it easier or more difficult to write a poem?
- What is the theme of your poem?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In “miss rosie” by Lucille Clifton, the speaker focuses on a homeless woman. Similarly, “The Idler” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson has an “idle lingerer” as its central figure, although the tone of the two poems starkly contrast each other.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Lucille Clifton’s poem for their literary analysis essays. Have students work in groups to discuss the theme of alienation in the poem.



The Idler

by Alice Dunbar-Nelson

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1895

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Some of the language in this poem usually has negative connotations, which may cause students to misinterpret the moral or theme.
- Encourage students to read the poem carefully and pay attention to the context.

Specific Vocabulary

- Some of the words, like *tiresome*, *infantile*, *mothling*, and *infinite*, may be unfamiliar to students.
- Remind students to remove suffixes to find the roots of these words.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 156



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: What is the speaker’s opinion of the idler’s approach to life? What makes you think so? Support your interpretation with textual evidence. What are your own thoughts about the idler’s way of living? Discuss with your classmates what you would want to tell him. Describe any personal experiences that led to your beliefs.

Beyond the Book

Activity: The Pursuit of Happiness

This poem shares contrasting views on what is needed to be truly happy. Students will compare and contrast their own point of view with those in the poem.

Ask students to:

- Reread the poem twice. Once to understand the speaker’s perspective on what is needed for happiness and the second time to understand the idler’s view on happiness.
- Use the evidence pulled from the poem to decide how each perspective is similar or different to their own perspective on happiness.
- Choose either the speaker or the idler and write a paragraph explaining how they think similarly or differently to this character.

To reflect, ask students:

- What major factors impact the quality of our lives?
- Where do our ideas for happiness come from?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In “miss rosie” by Lucille Clifton, the speaker focuses on a homeless woman. Similarly, “The Idler” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson has an “idle lingerer” as its central figure, although the tone of the two poems starkly contrast each other.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from Alice Dunbar-Nelson for their literary analysis essays. Have them pose a philosophical question instead of simply describing an alienated character.



A Cup of Tea

by Katherine Mansfield

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1922

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- The narrator tells the story, but doesn't comment on the events.
- Readers have to draw their own conclusions about the meaning. Remind them to connect ideas to help them infer information.

Prior Knowledge

- The story is set in early 20th-century Britain and includes details that reflect differences between social classes.
- To fully understand this class conflict, students may need to become familiar with the historical, social, and economic context of this setting.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 620

Word Count: 2,936



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Word Patterns and Relationships, Summarizing

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: Write a response in which you compare and contrast the ideas and attitudes expressed about wealth and poverty in “Miss Rosie,” “The Idler,” and “A Cup of Tea.” Remember to use textual evidence from “A Cup of Tea” to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Discussion: Motivations and Desires

Rosemary is adamant about looking after Ms. Smith until Philip returns home. Students will consider the motivation of Rosemary.

Ask students to:

- Break the text up into three sections; Rosemary’s first meeting with Ms. Smith, bringing Ms. Smith to her home and sitting with her by the fire, Rosemary conversing with Philip and sending Ms. Smith on her way.
- In three groups discuss Rosemary’s motivation and desires.
 - What decisions is she making?
 - Why did she make that decision?
 - What is controlling her desires?
- Come together as a whole class to discuss major ideas shared.

To reflect, ask students to write a paragraph reflecting on what impacted Rosemary’s decisions. Encourage them to draw from their conversations in their written reflections.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

A wealthy woman and an impoverished young girl meet in Katherine Mansfield’s “A Cup of Tea,” allowing Mansfield to explore issues of gender, class, and materialism.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “A Cup of Tea” as a model for their Extended Writing Project. They may study Katherine Mansfield’s methods for showing alienation through a character’s inner monologue as they craft their own literary analysis essay.



The Glass Menagerie

by Tennessee Williams

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1944

Genre: Drama

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Students may struggle to follow the action using only the dialogue.
- Williams uses unique features, including Tom speaking to the audience, music cues, and a large screen over the stage that shows words and pictures to accompany the action.

Connection of Ideas

- Students may need context to understand the excerpt.
- Tom wants to be a writer but stayed home to support his mother and sister after his father abandoned them. Amanda wants to find a husband to support Laura, who dropped out of typing school.

Prior Knowledge

- Students may wonder why Amanda wants Laura to find a husband rather than a job and why meeting men is limited to receiving “gentleman callers.”
- Explain that Amanda was raised in the South in the early 1900s and has traditional views.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 2,421



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Dramatic Elements and Structure, Media

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: Listen to the audio clips of *The Glass Menagerie*. How do these two versions differ from each other? How does each version interpret the source text of the play, making the dramatic elements work for that specific medium? Choose at least one substantial difference between the two versions, and explain and evaluate how each version interprets the source material. Support your writing with textual evidence and both audio recordings.

Beyond the Book

Literary Period

Ask your students to combine their knowledge of early 20th-century culture with their reading of *The Glass Menagerie*. Literary modernism was frequently classified by experimentation and feelings of alienation and disillusionment.

While Tom's character is disillusioned, Amanda is more optimistic about the expectation of marriage for Laura once she learns "a gentleman caller" is coming to dinner.

Have a class discussion about how the social pressure on each character in this scene causes them to be alienated.

Prompt students with questions such as:

1. What would have been the social expectations for a young man in the 1930s? How are these expectations alienating Tom and causing his disillusionment?
2. What is unusual about Amanda's marriage, and her current living situation? How might this be causing her loneliness and naive hope?
3. What would have been particularly challenging for a young woman like Laura in the 1930s? In what ways is she alienated?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The play that made Tennessee Williams famous is now an American classic. This excerpt from scene 5 portrays a mother's deep concern about keeping up appearances and finding a suitable husband for her daughter.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can find inspiration from *The Glass Menagerie* when writing their literary analyses. Have them reflect on Tennessee William's characterization of Tom, Amanda, and Laura, and how each character experiences alienation.



A Room of One's Own

by Virginia Woolf

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1929

Genre: Non-Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Sentence Structure

- Woolf uses complex sentence structures with parallelisms and participles, and these long sentences with multiple sections may overwhelm readers.
- Overlong sentences may require simplifying. Break down 2–3 complex sentences on the board as an example for students.

Specific Vocabulary

- Woolf includes proper nouns for people, such as Ovid, and places in London, such as the Elephant and Castle. She uses Anon (Anonymous) to refer to poets who chose not to sign their names to their works.
- Remind students to use print or digital sources to identify the people and places Woolf mentions and consider how using those proper nouns supports Woolf's argument.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1250

Word Count: 2,421



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Argumentative: Woolf states: “Genius like Shakespeare’s is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people.” Do you think this statement still holds true today? In an essay response, discuss whether you think “genius” among the “working classes” is possible in today’s society, and why or why not. How might this have been different in the time in which Woolf lived, and why?

Beyond the Book

Activity: Women Accused of Witchcraft

Woolf argues that if Shakespeare had a talented sister, she could never have followed her passions given the time period. She also claims that those women who were exceptionally talented were accused of being witches. Students will research women in history accused of being witches, research their talents, and predict what they might have accomplished if given the chance.

Ask students to:

- Work in partners to identify a woman from history who was accused of witchcraft.
 - Why were they accused of being a witch?
 - What special talents or abilities did she possess?
 - What do you know about this person’s life?
- Given the information learned, brainstorm who this person might have become if they had not been accused of witchcraft.
- Create a magazine cover page detailing this person’s accomplishments.
- Share covers with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why were these women accused of witchcraft?
- What did all these women have in common?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The poems “Miss Rosie” and “The Idler” and the short story “A Cup of Tea” all explore ideas about wealth and poverty.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Have students review the essay and highlight and explain three pieces of textual evidence that reflects a sense of alienation, a theme common in modernist literature.



The New Dress

by Virginia Woolf

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1927

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Virginia Woolf is known for her use of the stream-of-consciousness writing style. The narrative follows Mabel's thoughts and feelings. Plot is revealed through the character's thoughts. This writing style might be challenging for students.
- Have students highlight any passages they find challenging. Then work with students to paraphrase those passages.

Sentence Structure

- Woolf uses complex sentence structures with multiple phrases and clauses.
- Have students highlight any long sentences they find challenging. Then have them work in groups to rewrite each long sentence into a series of shorter, more accessible sentences.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1390

Word Count: 3,205



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Narrative: Compose a brief passage of a short story focusing on a character whose outward appearance does not match his or her feelings. Use “The New Dress” as a model, because the main character in the story secretly thinks she looks hideous while she tries to put a brave face on her situation. Consider how it might affect a person to hide his or her true feelings at a party or with a single person who is important to him or her.

Beyond the Book

Performance: Same Theme

In “The New Dress,” Mabel is battling her own insecurities and the fear of not fitting in with neighbors. Students will select a theme from the text to inspire an impromptu performance.

Ask students to:

- In small groups choose a theme present in “The New Dress.”
- Imagine a modern-day scenario that relates to this theme.
- Create a script that presents this scenario and emphasizes the characters’ emotions in this moment.
- Perform for classmates.

Have students reflect by asking them:

- Even though “The New Dress” is from a completely different generation, why can present-day readers connect with the emotions and feelings of the main character?
- How do the main character’s emotions in a work of fiction lead the reader to the theme?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This short story by Virginia Woolf was first published in a New York magazine in 1927. The story explores themes of gender, class, materialism, and beauty through Mabel’s point of view, who wears a handmade dress to one of Mrs. Dalloway’s famous parties.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “The New Dress” as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. They may show how the story’s stream of consciousness narration is effective at conveying alienation and discuss the technique in their literary analysis essay.



Hurricane Season

by Fareena Arefeen

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2016

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- This poem is written in free verse and includes metaphors, similes, and alliteration.
- Review these literary devices, and discuss how a poem's form and tone can affect its theme.

Connection of Ideas

- Students need to analyze how descriptions and images work together in order to infer the meaning of the poem.
- Remind students to annotate descriptions or images they think are important or symbolic while they read. After reading, they can review their annotations as they infer the general meaning of the poem.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 388



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: Arefeen uses the image of a hurricane to express a wide variety of personal experiences; at times the speaker seems to be the hurricane itself, while at other times the speaker seems to be in the midst of experiencing a hurricane. Is the image of a hurricane in this poem creative, destructive, or both? Cite textual evidence to support your argument.

Beyond the Book

Writing: I Am Phenomenal

Fareena Arefeen reflects on the disaster of Hurricane Ike and compares herself to the natural disaster. Students will compare themselves to a natural phenomenon.

Ask students to:

- Generate a list of their personal traits.
- Choose one trait and think of a moment in your life that best demonstrates this trait.
- Choose a natural phenomena (e.g. rainbows, specific storms, oxidation, etc.) that symbolizes this moment.
- Write a poem or short narrative using imagery inspired by a natural phenomena to write about this moment in their lives and the trait it reveals about them.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why would a poet use a natural phenomena to explain a moment in time?
- How did connecting your moment to a natural phenomena create a visual capable of inspiring a piece of writing?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This powerful poem was written by Fareena Arefeen, Houston's Youth Poet Laureate in 2016, about her complex relationship to the city she calls home and the natural disasters it has survived.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can draw inspiration from “Hurricane Season” in writing their literary analyses. They may consider how the author’s experience of extreme weather helped her to engage more fully with the world and stave off alienation.



Be Ye Men of Valour

by Winston Churchill

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1940

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- In some places Churchill implies France badly needs Britain's help; in others he suggests France and Britain are equal partners.
- Explain that France did need help, but Churchill feared that saying so might demoralize the British.

Sentence Structure

- Churchill's long sentences and complex syntax may confuse some readers.
- Suggest that students form small groups to look up unfamiliar vocabulary and "translate" Churchill's English into modern U.S. English.

Prior Knowledge

- Some readers may be unfamiliar with terms such as Flanders, the Western Front, and the Maginot Line.
- Help students do research to understand these references.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1350

Word Count: 1,342



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Informational Text Structure, Central or Main Idea, Word Meaning

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: Informational text structure can be used skillfully to compose ideas in a way that heightens the persuasive power of a speech or written work. Write a response in which you summarize the main argument of Churchill's speech and evaluate the structure of the speech. In your response, address the following question: Does the arrangement of ideas make the speech more persuasive? Remember to support your response with textual evidence.

Beyond the Book

Speech: Embody the American Spirit

Students will write a speech encouraging listeners to embody the spirit of the United States and be proud.

Ask students to:

- Form small groups and discuss the classical appeals and rhetorical devices that Churchill used in his speech.
- Brainstorm a list of ideals that embody the spirit of the United States.
- Think of a moment in history or in their lives when it was important for Americans to come together and be proud and strong.
- Write a speech, using classical appeals and rhetorical devices, to encourage the listeners to embody the American spirit.
- Practice and perform their speeches.

To reflect, ask students:

- Were there commonalities among their speeches? What were they?
- What appeals and/or rhetorical devices worked the best?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Churchill speaks honestly of the successes and shortcomings of German military aggression in France, encouraging British citizens to be prepared, confident, and devoted to the fight for freedom

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Students can use “Be Ye Men of Valour” as a model for strategic organizational structures pertaining to audience, topic, purpose, or context in their own literary analysis essays.



The Pearl Divers' Daughters

by Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2016

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Though this text is a poem, it includes details about pearl diving and its important place in a culture.
- Students can visualize the vivid imagery in the poem to better understand the experience of pearl diving and how it connects mothers and daughters.

Prior Knowledge

- Students may not be familiar with pearl diving.
- Ask if any students in the class know anything about pearls or diving. Have them share the information. Also, encourage students to closely read the poet's descriptions to understand the experience.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 177



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Explanatory Essay: Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello weaves references to pearl diving in the Korean province of Jeju throughout her poem “The Pearl Divers’ Daughters.” Analyze the images she presents to determine the actions and tasks that these pearl divers undertake as part of their job. Then, conduct informal research about pearl diving in another particular culture or time period. How do the methods and customs of pearl diving described in “The Pearl Divers’ Daughters” align with or depart from those of the culture or time period you researched? Remember to use textual evidence and your research to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Art: Art Interpretation

In her poem, Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello blends human and sea imagery to create emotion and meaning. Students will visualize a stanza and bring it to life through art.

Ask students to:

- Choose a stanza from the poem.
- Reread the stanza a few times while focusing on the imagery created.
- Choose an appropriate art medium that will capture the visual of the stanza.
- Using the chosen art medium, create a work that brings the stanza to life by showing how the poet blends human and sea imagery.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students to write a paragraph about how translating the stanza to a visual work changed their visualization of the poem.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This poem, by Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello, explores the lives and legacy of haenyeo, the legendary female divers of Korea’s Jeju province.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Have students explore whether they think the pearl divers are an example of physical alienation or, alternatively, one of the cultural connectedness that is lacking in modern society.



Killers of the Dream

by Lillian Smith

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1949

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- The primary purpose of Lillian Smith's memoir is to inform readers about her complicated experience as a white female in the segregated South in the twentieth century.
- Guide students to look for and highlight evidence that supports this purpose as they read.

Prior Knowledge

- Smith explores the painful legacy of slavery in the American South in the early twentieth century. Though slavery had officially ended in the 1860s, racial discrimination against African Americans still regularly occurred.
- Provide students with any historical context they may need in order to understand the main ideas in Smith's memoir.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1270

Word Count: 1,116



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: Near the beginning of the passage, Smith says “The human heart dares not stay away too long from that which hurt it most.” Do you agree with this claim? Do you think people are somehow drawn back to places, events, or circumstances that have hurt them in the past? Present your response to this idea using textual evidence as well as experiences of people you have researched or learned about.

Beyond the Book

Game: Social Norms

The author, Lillian Smith, reflects on the negative childhood lessons she learned from her parents. Students will create a game that challenges players to think about the social and familial norms in other cultures.

Ask students to:

- Get in small groups and conduct informal research on social norms in various cultures. What are the social norms for eating, greeting, lining up, school?
- Create a game that will challenge players to think about social norms from around the world.
- Write detailed rules for the game.

Spend a class period playing all the group’s games.

To reflect, ask students:

- How are social norms similar and different around the world?
- How do we learn the social norms expected of us?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The first chapter of Smith’s 1949 memoir describes the confusing contradictions children learned while growing up in the segregated South.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

Have students analyze Smith’s essay to identify the causes and effects of her feeling of alienation from her home and family.



Shooting an Elephant

by George Orwell

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1936

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Contemporary American readers may find it hard at times to discern Orwell's meaning; he is writing for early twentieth-century British readers familiar with topics such as imperialism and words like *sub-inspector*, *orderly*, and *sahib*.
- Encourage students to use context clues to make inferences about words and events to be sure they understand Orwell's narrative.

Prior Knowledge

- The term *imperialism* describes a system in which a country establishes colonies to increase its wealth and power. Imperial Britain colonized several countries, including India, Nigeria, Jamaica, and Burma.
- Explain to students that imperial nations often establish military bases in their colonies and extract valuable resources from them.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1070

Word Count: 3,283



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Author's Purpose and Point of View, Connotation and Denotation, Figurative Language

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: What do you think is the point of view Orwell is expressing in his essay “Shooting an Elephant”? Analyze the literary elements and figurative language in the text to determine the author's point of view. Then write a short essay, responding to this question. Remember to use textual evidence to support your response.

Beyond the Book

Infographic: Imperialism

George Orwell writes about a memory he had while working for the British in Burma. He tells the story of shooting an elephant and how it gave him insight into the nature of imperialism. Students will choose one example of imperialism to research.

Ask students to:

- Form small groups.
- Choose an example of imperialism from history to research in depth.
- Organize the information in an infographic that combines facts, figures, and images to explain the topic.
- Share infographics with the class.

To reflect, ask students:

- What are some common political motives for imperialism?
- Can imperialism ever benefit the people who are subjugated?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The essay “Shooting an Elephant” stems from Orwell's experiences as a police officer in Burma (now Myanmar) in the 1920s when it was a British colony. Orwell uses a specific event to address the complexities, violence, and human costs of imperialism and oppression.

Connect to Extended Writing Project

As students work on their literary analysis paper, they may discuss Orwell's technique of showing alienation through a character's discomfort in a foreign land.



Extended Writing Project

Fractured Selves

Essential Question

What causes individuals to feel alienated?

Writing Form

Literary Analysis

Extended Writing Project Prompt

Why is alienation such a common theme in modernist literature? Consider all the texts you have read in this unit, and reflect on how alienation impacts those who experience it. Then, select three characters or speakers from the texts. Write a literary analysis essay to examine how the authors explore the theme of alienation through these three characters or speakers. In your conclusion, synthesize the ideas in these texts about alienation in the modern world.

EWP Mentor Texts

The Killers of the Dream, Be Ye Men of Valour

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Reasons and Relevant Evidence, Thesis Statement, Organizing Argumentative Writing, Introductions, Transitions, Conclusions, Using a Style Guide

Grammar Skills

Modifiers, Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement, Basic Spelling Rules II



Writing Overview

Literary analysis writing is the focus of the Extended Writing Project (EWP) in Grade 12 Unit 5. Students will consider the following question: Why is alienation such a common theme in modernist literature? The prompt for this EWP asks students to choose a position that expresses their stance on the question and then write a literary analysis essay in which they state a clear claim and support it with reasons and evidence from unit texts. The Modernist selections in the unit serve as example texts for students to analyze. Over the course of the EWP, students engage in the literary analysis writing process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. During each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress and development of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student's writing changes and improves over time.

Skill lessons on Thesis Statement and Reasons and Relevant Evidence teach concepts specifically called out in ELA standards, while the additional Skill lessons Introductions, Transitions, and Conclusions focus on characteristics of the literary analysis writing genre and help students develop their essays. Students revise their drafts for clarity, development, organization, word choice, and sentence effectiveness, by being led through a series of skill lessons. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards. After each skill lesson, students have the opportunity to practice, using created student writing, authentic texts, and their own work.

Student writing is not confined to the EWP. Each Independent Read and Close Read lesson culminates with a writing or speaking prompt in which students reflect on the text or apply the skills they have learned in conjunction with that text. In the Independent Read *Killers of the Dream*, students will argue whether or not they believe people are somehow drawn back to places, events, or circumstances that have hurt them in the past. Close Read prompts specifically ask students to conduct a focused analysis using the skills taught in conjunction with those texts. For example, in their reading of “Miss Rosie,” “The Idler,” and “A Cup of Tea” students write a response in which they compare and contrast the ideas and attitudes expressed about wealth and poverty in these three texts.

Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions about political candidates using social media, as well as offering them the opportunity to self-select texts for independent reading. Writer's notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing. In their writer's notebooks, students write to think, reflect, and practice skills they're learning. In the Skill lesson Reasons and Relevant Evidence, students practice by writing a short dialogue in which they include reasons and relevant evidence to support their argument for why everyone should watch their favorite TV show or movie. In each Close Read, students first write in their writer's notebooks to reflect on the text before they engage in a collaborative conversation and write their short constructed response.





Unit 6

Times of Transition

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Unit Overview

Unit 6 Title

Times of Transition

Essential Question

How are we shaped by change?

Literary Focus

Postmodernism and Postcolonialism

Genre Focus

Fiction

Introduction

Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher, once said that change is the only constant in life. People change their clothes, their locations, and their attitudes daily. Some changes are small and have a low impact on your life, but others can change everything.

What happens when life changes? How can outside forces change who we are inside? What can we learn from reading about how other people respond to significant changes in their own lives?

In this unit, students will think about the theme and essential question as they focus on the literary periods of postmodern and postcolonial literature, analyzing excerpts from postmodern texts, such as “The Mysterious Anxiety of Us and Them,” and postcolonial works, such as “A Small Place” and “Ghosts.” They will also study the genre of fiction by reading the graphic short story “ARK” as well as the short stories “The Museum” and “A Temporary Matter.” Students will consider how our world is changing today through the argumentative texts *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People*, “News Literacy in the Misinformation Age,” and “Honesty on Social Media.” In addition, the speeches “Tryst with Destiny” and Zadie Smith’s “Commencement Address at the New School” and the poems “Love After Love” and “Dawn Revisited,” will encourage students to think about the lasting effects of change as they read across genres.

Students will begin this unit as readers and finish it as writers and speakers, as they apply what they have learned about argumentative writing to their own argumentative oral presentations.



Text Complexity

The last unit of the year allows students to apply the critical thinking and text analysis abilities they have been developing all year to a variety of texts. In this unit, the focus moves back to works of fiction, though the unit also provides ample opportunities for students to apply their skills in analyzing informational texts, along with two examples of poetry. Students will open the unit with a study of postmodernist and postcolonial literature, a focus they will revisit throughout. The Lexile® range for this unit is a broad 720–1360, with most texts falling between 1280–1360L. The postmodern and postcolonial focus of the unit supports students in accessing the nuanced messages in the texts, which present an appropriate challenge given the period’s frequent use of unconventional, innovative text structures such as manipulations of chronology and intentionally ambiguous language. Students will further draw on the literary focus as they analyze postmodern and postcolonial themes through writing and discussion tasks.

The final unit begins with “The Mysterious Anxiety of Them and Us” by Ben Okri. With its unconventional story structure – which the author describes as part short story and part haiku, a “stoku” – this text will introduce students to the direct language, innovative formal elements, and criticism of colonial dynamics that they will be analyzing throughout this unit. Students will apply their learning from this unit’s Literary Focus lesson on postmodernism and postcolonialism. While Okri’s story appears to be short and simple, its allegorical significance demands several readings, which are guided by Skill lessons on Story Structure and Context Clues. Students are challenged to draw their own conclusions in Close Read Skills Focus questions and writing prompts. This unit’s Essential Question – how are we shaped by change? – compels even further analysis of this text, as the story’s speaker seems to actively ignore change.

Next, students will read Derek Walcott’s “Love After Love.” Applying their reading and analysis skills independently, students will again analyze the powerful self-referentiality common to postcolonial literature. The poem encourages readers to love themselves in the aftermath of change.

Two short stories are paired for the purposes of Comparing Within and Across Genres. Leila Aboulela’s “The Museum” tells the story of a Sudanese woman studying abroad in Scotland and encountering issues of identity, spirituality, and migration. Jhumpa Lahiri’s “A Temporary Matter” narrates the daily lives of an Indian-American couple finally confronting the sadness they’ve long avoided. Despite being on the lower end of the Lexile® range, this challenging short story uses nonlinear storytelling and nuanced language to implicitly convey a theme about love and loss. Both stories present readers with wide-ranging cultural references and unresolvable questions around identity, belying their lower Lexile®. Skill lessons on Theme and Story Elements, along with SkillsTV and StudySyncTV, ensure students understand each text’s themes.



Next is a speech by India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. "Tryst With Destiny" announces India's independence from British rule. Students will read this text independently, applying the reading and analysis skills they have acquired throughout the year.

The unit's literary focus on postmodernism and postcolonialism is apparent in the choices of *A Small Place* and "Ghosts." Read first, the high-Lexile® "A Small Place" will challenge students with Jamaica Kincaid's sometimes difficult syntax and shifting, confrontational tone. This brief excerpt will help students establish a deeper and more personalized understanding of the long-term consequences of colonialism as they begin to read Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story. "Ghosts" weaves factual characters and events from the author's own history into the fictional story of a university professor who encounters an old colleague he'd presumed dead in the Nigerian Civil War, thirty-seven years earlier. The low Lexile® of the story is misleading: considerable references to historical events as well as challenging themes complicate this text. Skill lessons in Textual Evidence and Story Elements as well as StudySyncTV and SkillsTV episodes will help students draw connections between these two texts and continue their exploration of the unit's essential question.

The webcomic "ARK" introduces the second half of the unit, sparking questions about the changes we are experiencing in the world today. Students will independently read Ehud Lavski and Yael Nathan's fantastic journey into a post-apocalyptic world, drawing connections to the unit's essential question and creating their own three-panel comic.

Three informational texts comprise the next Comparing Within and Across Genres grouping. *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People*, "News Literacy in the Misinformation Age," and "Honesty on Social Media" all examine how our relationship with truth, lies, and technology are changing the way we view one another, ourselves, and our world. All three texts are within the higher Lexile® band for this unit. Skill lessons in Informational Text Elements and Media will guide students as they explore text structures, graphs, and other media to prepare for a discussion about social media use.

Rita Dove's poem "Dawn Revisited" brings a hopeful and energetic tone to the final texts of the unit – and of the year. Reading independently, students will uncover similarities between Dove's short poem and several texts from throughout the unit, ultimately finding motivation to embrace and initiate change. Zadie Smith's "Commencement Address at the New School" offers a final, hopeful, and humorous missive to students: work together, not in isolation, to make changes in the world. Skill lessons in Textual Evidence, Summarizing, and Language, Style and Audience will push students to unpack the significance of Smith's anecdotes and stylistic choices throughout her speech.



English Language Learner Resources

Lessons in the English Language Learner Resources section offer explicit language instruction. These lessons share a thematic and genre focus with all other lessons in the Core ELA unit.

The twenty ELL Resources are developed around two texts, “Hope” and “When the World Sleeps,” and an Extended Oral Project. Each text is written at four distinct levels. For ELLs, these texts serve as structural and thematic models of authentic texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section of the unit. Thus, teachers may use the ELL texts in place of or as extensions for texts within the unit.

ELL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the Integrated Reading and Writing section. Explicit vocabulary instruction is emphasized, and reading and writing skill lessons focus strongly on language acquisition and reading comprehension.

The Extended Oral Project can be used in place of or as an extension to the Extended Writing Project. In this unit, students will write and present an argument in favor including a topic, issue, person, or event in future high school instruction. Throughout these lessons, students will interact with texts and their peers as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners to maximize comprehension and provide multiple access points for every learner



The Mysterious Anxiety of Them and Us

by Ben Okri

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2009

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Students may be confused by the mysterious setting and story that function on the allegorical level.
- Explain to students that Okri was very interested in issues of social justice. Students can work in pairs or groups to figure out what the characters, conflict, and setting might represent.

Genre

- Okri explained that he was merging two genres together in what he called a stoku: “A stoku is an amalgam of short story and haiku. It is a story as it inclines towards a flash of a moment, insight, vision or paradox.”
- Have students discuss how this quotation helps them interpret the meaning of the story.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 530L

Word Count: 518



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Story Structure, Context Clues

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: This work is written in an allegorical, dreamlike structure with little explanation of what is happening and why. What do you think is the “mysterious anxiety”? Who do you think are the “them and us”? Write a brief literary analysis that explains the events and the theme as you see them, which may not be the way your classmates see them. Tell what you think of the narrator and point out connections between the text and the real world. Support your ideas with textual evidence when you can.

Beyond the Book

Adaptation: Dramatic Performance

Students will recreate a scene from the text in a dramatic performance.

In small groups, ask students to:

- Reread the story through the lens of a director.
- Create a performance of this story that captures the mood and events.
- Share finished performances with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- How do performances capture the written words?
- Which performance captured the emotions of the character best? How?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

How do changes in society affect the way people see each other? In this “stoku,” a genre of the author’s own invention, a nameless narrator and his wife attend a grand feast only to discover that the guests have been divided into two groups: those who are sitting at the table and those who are not.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can adopt the technique of telling a story to argue a point, as Ben Okri does, rather than providing only reasons and evidence.



Love After Love

by Derek Walcott

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1976

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Explain to students that the tone of the poem matches its purpose to give advice to readers.
- Have students work in groups to identify the tone of the poem and highlight words and phrases that express this tone.

Genre

- Remind students that poets use figurative language and imagery to express ideas in memorable ways.
- Have students discuss the examples of figurative language and imagery in the poem and explain what makes them effective.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 98



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: Derek Walcott's poem "Love After Love" is a free verse poem written in a conversational style that gives advice to readers. Work in pairs and groups to analyze the form, sound, and graphics of the poem. Notice the graphical elements of enjambment and punctuation as well as the repetition of words and phrases. Consider how these elements affect the sound of the poem. Have one volunteer read the poem aloud. Then work in pairs or as a group to change the graphical elements. For instance, you might take out the enjambment or rewrite the text to avoid a comma or period within a line. In other words, change the shape and look of the poem on the page. Then have another volunteer read aloud the revised poem. Finally, discuss the effects of a poet's choice of form and graphics on the sound of the poem and the expression of meaning.

Beyond the Book

Writing: A Letter to Future Me

Derek Walcott's poem asks readers to look back on old photographs and notes to learn more about themselves. Students will write a letter to their future selves.

Ask students to:

- Brainstorm who they are now.
- Write a friendly letter to themselves 5 years in the future.
- Include the letter and a current photograph and seal it in an envelope to read in five years.
- Set a calendar reminder for a date 5 years in the future and include a note to help them remember where the letter is stashed.

To reflect, ask students:

- Do you believe this letter will be interesting or relevant in five years? Why or why not?
- How can looking at your past explain events that are current?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Walcott's poem challenges readers to consider how love relationships change the way they see themselves.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can find inspiration for their argumentative essays by using Walcott's poem and the advice it provides to help them reflect on themselves over the last few years.



The Museum

by Leila Aboulela

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1999

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Students will deepen their understanding of the text if they can make connections between the events in the story and history and society.
- Have students discuss the events in the story in relation to the social, cultural, and historical background of the characters and places.

Prior Knowledge

- Students may benefit from developing their background knowledge about Sudan and the colonization of Africa in general.
- Have students research the term “scramble for Africa” and discuss their findings.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 720

Word Count: 6,272



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: Divide yourselves into groups of four or five. Discuss these questions: How do Shadia and Bryan view each other? What is the main reason they find it so hard to communicate with each other? Support your ideas with textual evidence. Take notes as answers are suggested, and be prepared to share your group's notes with the rest of the class. If you have time, talk about your own experiences with cross-cultural friendships.

Beyond the Book

Speech: Stereotypes Everyday

Shadia is caught between stereotypes people have about her and stereotypes she harbors about other groups. Students will write a speech that explains a group of people who have been stereotyped in media.

Ask students to:

- Conduct informal research on stereotypes in media (cartoons, texts, songs, commercials, etc.)
- Choose one group of people and collect facts and evidence of the stereotypes being perpetuated.
- Write a short speech that informs the general public about how this group is portrayed is nothing more than stereotypes. Make sure to include information about how they are much different than how they are portrayed.
- The speech should include a call to action.
- In small groups, give the speech and receive feedback.

To reflect, ask students:

- Are any groups of people free from being stereotyped in media?
- How are the messages we hear and see on a daily basis harmful to our society?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

“The Museum” focuses on an unexpected relationship between a young Sudanese woman and a classmate she meets studying abroad in Scotland. This story encourages students to consider how relationships change in response to internal and external challenges.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

In “The Museum” Shadia is experiencing great change in her life—change of setting, status, and lifestyle. Have students analyze how these changes shape her worldview and characteristics.



A Temporary Matter

by Jhumpa Lahiri

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1999

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- The main action of the story takes place during a week in March, when Shoba and Shukumar learn that their power will be disrupted. The story also includes flashbacks about the events leading up to the death of the couple's baby six months earlier.
- Encourage students to track the order of events to support their predictions of what will happen next in the story.

Connection of Ideas

- The narrator of the story does not directly tell the reader everything about the characters. For example, nowhere does the text explicitly say that Shukumar is depressed.
- Explain that the reader needs to make inferences, based on textual evidence, to draw conclusions about the characters and the theme.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 990

Word Count: 7,184



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Theme, Story Elements

Close Read Prompt

Literary Analysis: Critic Christopher Tayler once described Jhumpa Lahiri’s stories in this way:

“Unflashily written, long, almost grave in tone, her new stories patiently accumulate detail, only gradually building up a powerful emotional charge.” Do you agree that “A Temporary Matter” is like this? Examine the traits named and find passages of the story that either prove or contradict Tayler’s opinion.

Beyond the Book

Performance: Life after Loss

Shukumar and Shoba navigate life together after losing their baby. Students will explore loss by creating a performance in which two people cope with and move beyond a significant loss.

Ask students to:

- Form acting troupes of four.
- Discuss loss and decide on a type of loss to focus on in their scene (e.g., loss of a friend or family member, loss of a pet, loss of a home).
- Design a scene in which the actors face this loss and use dialogue to move through the loss.

To reflect, ask students:

- What are some of the ways people cope with loss? Which coping strategies are healthy and which are not?
- Why does loss sometimes divide people? How can loss bring people together?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

In Jhumpa Lahiri’s short story “A Temporary Matter,” a married couple trade secrets under the cover of darkness when the power company shuts off their electricity for an hour each evening. This story invites readers to wonder, “How can relationships change the way people see themselves?”

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can use their written Close Read response to “A Temporary Matter” as practice for preparing and delivering a persuasive Extended Oral Project. They will get practice supporting an opinion with evidence as they craft their argumentative essay.



Tryst with Destiny

by Jawaharlal Nehru

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1947

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Students may struggle to connect essential ideas across both parts of the speech.
- Remind students to annotate important details as they read and think about how these details work together to develop a main idea.

Prior Knowledge

- This speech celebrates the occasion of India's Independence from British rule, yet Nehru makes no direct mention of British rule or colonialism.
- Explain that winning independence from Britain was a very different process for India than it was for America, and Nehru did not consider Britain an enemy.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1230

Word Count: 1,096



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Rhetorical Analysis: Write an essay explaining what makes this speech memorable and important. Why is it “recognized as one of the greatest of the 20th century”? Identify the audience and what the speaker wants from them. How do rhetorical devices such as personification and repetition likely affect the crowd’s emotions?

Beyond the Book

Art: Rights and Responsibilities

Students will discuss and analyze the connections between responsibilities and freedom.

Ask students to:

- Brainstorm a list of freedoms or rights we enjoy as U.S. citizens.
- Choose one from the list to focus on.
- In small groups, discuss the freedom or right that was chosen and the responsibilities that come with it.
- Create a graphic that identifies and explains the right they have selected and outlines the responsibilities associated with that right.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- What do our legal rights have to do with justice and fairness?
- To what extent do our freedoms and responsibilities reflect our society and culture?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

This speech helps students consider how large-scale change on a national level can affect the people of a particular country.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students reflect on what is most valuable to them in their lives today that wasn’t covered, addressed, or emphasized enough in their formal studies so far.



A Small Place

by Jamaica Kincaid

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1988

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- *A Small Place* is creative nonfiction, largely based on the author's experiences and opinions of Antigua, the small island nation where the author was born and raised. The author expresses her thoughts and feelings about Antigua's colonial past.
- Students are reading a very small excerpt from the book, so some context might be helpful.

Prior Knowledge

- Students will benefit from background information on the colonial and postcolonial history of Antigua.
- Present the historical information provided in the Entry Point notes and support students in researching answers to any follow-up questions.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1360

Word Count: 637



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Correspondence: Like Jamaica Kincaid, write a letter protesting a great wrong. Direct the letter to the person you hold responsible, such as a government official, a business executive, a criminal, or a bully. You might emulate Kincaid's tone or other techniques she used to make her message effective, or you might deliberately choose different techniques if you think they work better. Be sure your ideas flow logically. You want to make it clear to the person you are writing to why he or she is in the wrong.

Beyond the Book

Research: The Effects of Privilege

Jamaica Kincaid shares how the privilege of the wealthy has wronged her and her people. Students will explore how privilege is awarded, how it affects others, and how equality could be restored.

Ask students to:

- Get into groups of three and research privilege in the United States.
 - How is privilege awarded?
 - Are the privileged aware of their station?
 - How are people on both sides—those with a lot and those with little—affected by privilege?
 - What specificities in life (e.g., education, employment, health care, etc.) are only provided to select individuals or groups?
 - What are people doing to combat the unequal treatment?
- Create a presentation that explains their research and present to classmates.

To reflect, ask students to write a plan of action for combating privilege in their community.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Both *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid and “Ghosts,” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, explore the changes and struggles that take place when previously colonized countries start to rebuild. *A Small Place* reflects on the lasting impression European colonialism left on the author's Caribbean homeland, Antigua. How can an event continue to affect people long after it is over?

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can use their experience drafting an explanatory correspondence to inform the techniques they will employ in their speeches. Have them work to use various argumentative techniques to express a point of view.



Ghosts

by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2009

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- The narrator's motivations and actions are implied and not explicit.
- Remind students to trace details about the narrator's observations and reactions as they read and use these details to make inferences about characters and events.

Prior Knowledge

- The story is set after the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafran War (1967-1970). Students may be unfamiliar with the historical and cultural context of the setting.
- Explain that Britain granted independence to Nigeria in 1960, resulting in ethnic conflicts a few years later that led to atrocities against the Igbo and other ethnic minorities.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 940

Word Count: 5,004



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Textual Evidence, Story Elements

Close Read Prompt

Compare and Contrast: In many ways, “Ghosts” has two main characters: James Nwoye, the narrator, and Ikenna Okoru, James’s former colleague. How are the personalities and experiences of these two men different? How are they similar? What do their stories, taken together, tell you about the Nigerian Civil War and its inevitable effects on Nigeria? Support your ideas with textual evidence.

Beyond the Book

Writing: The Hidden Truth Uncovered

James Nwoye runs in to an old colleague he thought was dead, and the two men recount the events in their lives. Students will investigate a person whose death has been disputed and write an article explaining that this person is, in fact, alive and well.

Ask students to:

- Create a list of famous people whose deaths have been disputed (e.g., Elvis, Tupac, Jim Morrison).
- Choose one person and conduct informal research about the dispute and the mystery.
- Write an article to detail the discovery that this person is still alive and to explain what he or she is doing today.
- In small groups, share the articles and receive feedback.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why is it hard for society to accept the passing of these famous people?
- How easy was it to make believe the person was still alive?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s short story “Ghosts” is set in Nigeria thirty-seven years after its civil war ended. The narrator, James Nwoye, runs into an old colleague he believed had been killed during the war and reflects on how life in the country has changed over the course of the previous decades. How can a major event, such as a civil war, have a lasting impact?

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can consider the legacy of colonialism and postcolonial inequity in “Ghosts” to inform their oral presentations on what they feel has not been given enough focus in their formal studies.



ARK

by Ehud Lavski and Yael Nathan

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2016

Genre: Fiction

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- Comic strips and graphic novels can be challenging because meaning is conveyed through both the illustrations and words. Students may focus too much on the artwork and skip the narration and dialogue, or vice versa.
- Encourage students to take their time reading. They should make sure they read every text bubble and study the art before moving on the next panel.

Organization

- The intended order of panels and text bubbles may be unclear or confusing to readers, especially if the reader's first language is read right-to-left.
- Explain that a well-constructed comic positions the text so it can be read left-to-right, top-to-bottom. If text is placed in opposite corners of the panel, look at the art before reading the second text box.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 192



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Narrative: If you are familiar with graphic novels or comics, you know that each panel communicates an idea, even if there are no words on it. The art does most of the work. Create your own narrative in the form of a graphic novel, like “ARK.” You don’t need to write the whole story, just three panels. Alternatively, you could illustrate a story you read in class or a favorite story you read on your own time. Share your work with the class and see if they understand what is happening on the page.

Beyond the Book

Graphic: History; Dystopian Style

In this story the protagonist is rescuing animals that have not been affected by radiation. Students will choose a historical story and turn it into a graphic dystopian tale.

Ask students to:

- Choose a popular historical story and outline the major events.
- Retell these events with a dystopian twist.
- Create a comic that retells the historical story with a dystopian twist.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- Is a dystopian society created by a sense of fear or some other source?
- How do radical ideas in text affect society?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

The graphic story “ARK,” created by Ehud Lavski and Yael Nathan, explores a dark, dystopian future in which one survivor strives to preserve wildlife in the face of widespread mutation and illness. How can change have a negative effect on society, and what can people do to counteract harmful consequences?

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can reflect on the different literary and artistic devices they used to accomplish their purpose.



Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People

by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2013

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- Students may not understand the intended effect of short paragraphs of questions and answers within a larger body of writing. They may assume that the questions are not meant for them.
- Encourage students to engage with the text by asking them to pause when they get to a question, and then answer it to themselves as if they were a test subject in this study.

Purpose

- The author does not immediately identify but instead builds up to the main idea of the text.
- Coach students through the reading to point out tools that the author uses to build up from the introduction of "blue lies" and "impression management" to "the problem of distortion of survey data."

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1320

Word Count: 775



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Narrative: Banaji and Greenwald describe lies that people tell because they believe they more wholly represent the truth than the actual truth, even though that sounds illogical. In a narrative, describe a “blue lie” (as defined by the authors) of your own. Your narrative should include the reasoning behind your lie—such as why you believed it to be more “true” than the actual truth—whom you told it to, and what happened as a result.

Beyond the Book

Game: Truths and Untruths

Students will create a game that challenges players to think about truths and untruths.

Break students into small groups and ask them to:

- Generate a list of the types of untruths people tell.
- Design a game that challenges players to distinguish between truths and untruths.
- Decide on the format of the game.
 - Will it be a card game, board game, or role playing game?
 - Will the players draw cards, roll a die, or spin a wheel?
 - What materials will be needed?

Once students have had time to play their games, ask groups to provide each other with feedback on their game designs.

To reflect, ask students:

- After reading the text and playing the games, do you think you are now more likely to notice when you are telling an untruth?
- Is there harm in telling unconscious fibs that represent how you picture yourself?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Along with “News Literacy in the Misinformation Age” and “Honesty on Social Media,” this text shows how honesty and truth are complicated by changes in the modern world.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can use ideas from the excerpt to evaluate sources for their presentation. They can also draw inspiration from the unique structure for their presentation outlines.



News Literacy in the Misinformation Age

by The News Literacy Project in partnership with StudySync

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Informational

Access Complex Text Features

Organization

- This feature consists of three related articles. Students might struggle to understand the connection between the articles.
- Have students identify the main idea of each article, and then discuss the relationships between the main ideas of all three articles. A graphic organizer may be useful to students.

Prior Knowledge

- Students might benefit from background information on journalistic practices and the ideal of objectivity in news reporting.
- Encourage students to research and discuss the core principles of journalism. Study several articles with students and discuss whether the articles meet common journalistic standards.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1280

Word Count: 2,504



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Personal Response: What do you think motivates certain sites or organizations to release fake news and information? What do you think makes individuals susceptible to believing fake news and information? And what measures can one take to avoid being fooled? Remember to support your ideas with textual evidence and your own background knowledge and experiences.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Validity Check

This informational text presents strategies for reading critically and analyzing text for validity. Students will design and conduct a validity test on a news article.

Ask students to:

- Reread the text on how to analyze a text for validity.
- Design a test that any reader could use to determine validity when they come across news articles.
- Choose a current news article from social media or online.
- Exchange validity tests with other students and check articles for validity.
- Provide feedback to their partners on the effectiveness of the tests.
- Reflect, in writing, whether the tests were able to detect misinformation in their articles.

To reflect, ask students:

- Why do social media users need to evaluate the validity of online resources? What is the danger of “fake news”?
- What is your role in sharing news?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

How do people distinguish fact from fiction online? “News Literacy in the Misinformation Age” asks readers to think about ways they can challenge misinformation, bias, and inauthenticity on the Internet.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can learn from this selection how to support their claims with evidence, as they will have to in their extended oral presentations that share facts about an important topic that deserves more attention. To practice, have students highlight the strongest pieces of evidence in this selection.



Honesty on Social Media

by Point/Counterpoint

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2018

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Genre

- In reading an argumentative text, students will need to evaluate evidence and reasoning.
- Assign groups of students one article. Have each group determine the strongest and weakest pieces of evidence. Have them also determine which reason is most logical and well supported, and which is least. Invite groups to discuss their evaluations with the class.

Connection of Ideas

- Students will have to analyze charts and make connections between the charts and the text of each article.
- Have students work in pairs to discuss the information provided in each chart and how that information relates to the article.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 1300-1400

Word Count: 833



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Informational Text Elements, Media

Close Read Prompt

Discussion: Which article did you find the most convincing? Do you believe we suspend our usual honesty when we are on social media? How do the graphs and media influence your opinion? Discuss how the writers’ use of evidence and language contribute to the persuasiveness of the text.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Social Media Honesty

These two argumentative essays argue whether social media portrays honest representation of people. Students will create two different interpretations of a personal social media post.

Ask students to:

- Choose a recent event from their life.
- Analyze what happened and what emotions were involved.
- Choose a social media outlet and create two different posts for this event; one positive and one negative.
 - How can this be a negative experience?
 - How can this event be viewed as a positive experience?
 - What needs to be altered to change the point of view (picture, text, etc.)
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- How easy was it to create a completely different slant on the same experience?
- Do you feel complete transparency is possible on social media?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Like “News Literacy in the Misinformation Age” and *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People*, this Point/Counterpoint article adds to the ongoing debate about how our relationship with honesty is changing in society: one author argues that social media encourages people to be dishonest, while another author sets out to prove that there is a greater need for honesty in the digital era.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can use “Honesty on Social Media” as a mentor text for their Extended Writing Project. They may adopt some of the writers’ methods for integrating key ideas as they construct their argumentative oral presentations.



Dawn Revisited

by Rita Dove

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 1999

Genre: Poetry

Access Complex Text Features

Connection of Ideas

- Students need to analyze how the poet uses figurative language in order to understand the poem's meaning and message.
- Remind students to annotate descriptions or images they think are important or symbolic while they read. After reading, they can review their annotations as they infer the underlying meaning of the poem.

Sentence Structure

- The poet uses enjambment across lines and stanzas.
- Have students read the poem silently to themselves as if there were no line breaks, pausing only when they reach punctuation that signals the end of an idea, and encourage them to paraphrase each complete sentence as they go.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: N/A

Word Count: 86



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

N/A

Close Read Prompt

Narrative: Imagine you're the speaker, waking up to a new day. Write out the rest of your day as you would if you were starting a new chapter in a book. Use details from the poem to show how your past would affect your present—and your future.

Beyond the Book

Ask students to:

- Generate a list of fictional characters who took advantage of a new day to turn their lives around.
- Choose on character and a point of view.
- Write an editorial explaining or praising this character's choices. Make sure to include facts and information to back up statements.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students:

- What characteristics are most prevalent among the characters who took advantage of a new day?
- Is everyone who chooses to seize every moment always successful?

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Rita Dove's poem "Dawn Revisited" calls attention to the feelings a person experiences during a time of transition. Is it better to look back at where you came from or to jump ahead into the future?

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students can find inspiration from Rita Dove's poem "Dawn Revisited" for their own writing. Have them think about their present lives and envision their future selves as they gather writing ideas for their personal essays.



Commencement Address at The New School

by Zadie Smith

Qualitative Features

Publication Date: 2014

Genre: Argumentative

Access Complex Text Features

Purpose

- Commencement speeches are given when students graduate from high school or college. These speeches typically give graduates ideas to think about as they move into the next phase of their lives.
- Guide students to understand that Smith achieves this purpose by contrasting her own generation's experiences with the experiences of her audience.

Connection of Ideas

- Commencement speeches often include references to multiple people and events. For instance, this speech references the author's family background and her experiences as a college student as well as the views of Margaret Thatcher.
- Guide students to notice how Smith uses these events, people, and experiences to support and illustrate her ideas.

Quantitative Features

Lexile®: 970

Word Count: 3,138



Reader and Tasks

Skill Lessons

Language, Style, and Audience; Textual Evidence; Summarizing

Close Read Prompt

Personal Essay: Most of Smith’s commencement speech is about seeing oneself as one of the few or one of the many. React to this speech in a short essay. Use the examples she gives to determine her central idea about individualism. Tell whether you plan to be one of the few or one of the many when you leave school. Explain your choice, using examples from your own life and textual evidence from Smith’s speech.

Beyond the Book

Activity: Quote Elaboration

Zadie Smith promotes social interaction and collaboration in her commencement speech. Students will analyze selected quotes and connect them to their own lives.

Ask students to:

- Pull a quote from Smith’s speech that is powerful and speaks to them.
- Analyze the quote and connect it to their life.
 - What does Smith mean?
 - What is being asked of people by this quote?
 - How does this quote make you think of your own life or events that have occurred in the world?
 - Why is this quote powerful?
- Create a visual display of the quote and its meaning.
- Share with classmates.

To reflect, ask students to write a paragraph about how the quote they chose will shape who they become in the future.

Unit Connection

Connect to Essential Question

Smith draws on her own experiences as she encourages the graduating class to stay connected and work together. Smith invites students to consider their priorities as they prepare to enter—and possibly even change—the world after graduation.

Connect to Extended Oral Project

Students may adopt Zadie Smith’s technique of using personal experiences as evidence in her argument about how people should behave.



Extended Oral Project

Times of Transition

Essential Question

How are we shaped by change?

Writing Form

Oral Presentation

Extended Writing Project Prompt

What do future students need to know? As your high school years now come to a close, think back on the last several years and consider the topics you have covered in all of your subjects. Then, consider the world around you now and select a topic, issue, person, or event that is important to you, but that was not covered in your formal studies. Develop an argument to support the claim that this topic, issue, person, or event should be included in future high school instruction so that the details and significance will be heard and remembered.

EWP Mentor Text

Commencement Address at the New School

EWP Process Steps

Plan; Draft; Revise; Edit and Publish

Writing Skills

Organizing an Oral Presentation, Evaluating Sources, Considering Audience and Purpose, Persuasive Techniques, Sources and Citations, Communicating Ideas, Reasons and Evidence, Engaging in Discourse

Grammar Skills

Subject-Verb Agreement, Commas, Semicolons, Colons, and Dashes



Writing Overview

In Grade 12 Unit 6 students work on a culminating Extended Oral Project (EOP). Throughout the unit, students will have the opportunity to practice presentation skills via a variety of lessons and activities as they respond to this question: What do future students need to know? The prompt for this unit's EOP asks students prepare a presentation on why a topic, issue, person, or event should be included in future high school instruction.

The unit's selections about the postmodern and postcolonial world, as well as times of transition, provide a context for students, and the multiple genre selections in the unit serve as mentor texts. Over the course of the EOP, students engage in the presentation process with specific lessons for planning, drafting, revising, editing, and presenting their work. During each of these process steps and in the skills lessons throughout, students will follow the progress and development of an on-grade-level Student Model to see how another student's writing changes and improves over time.

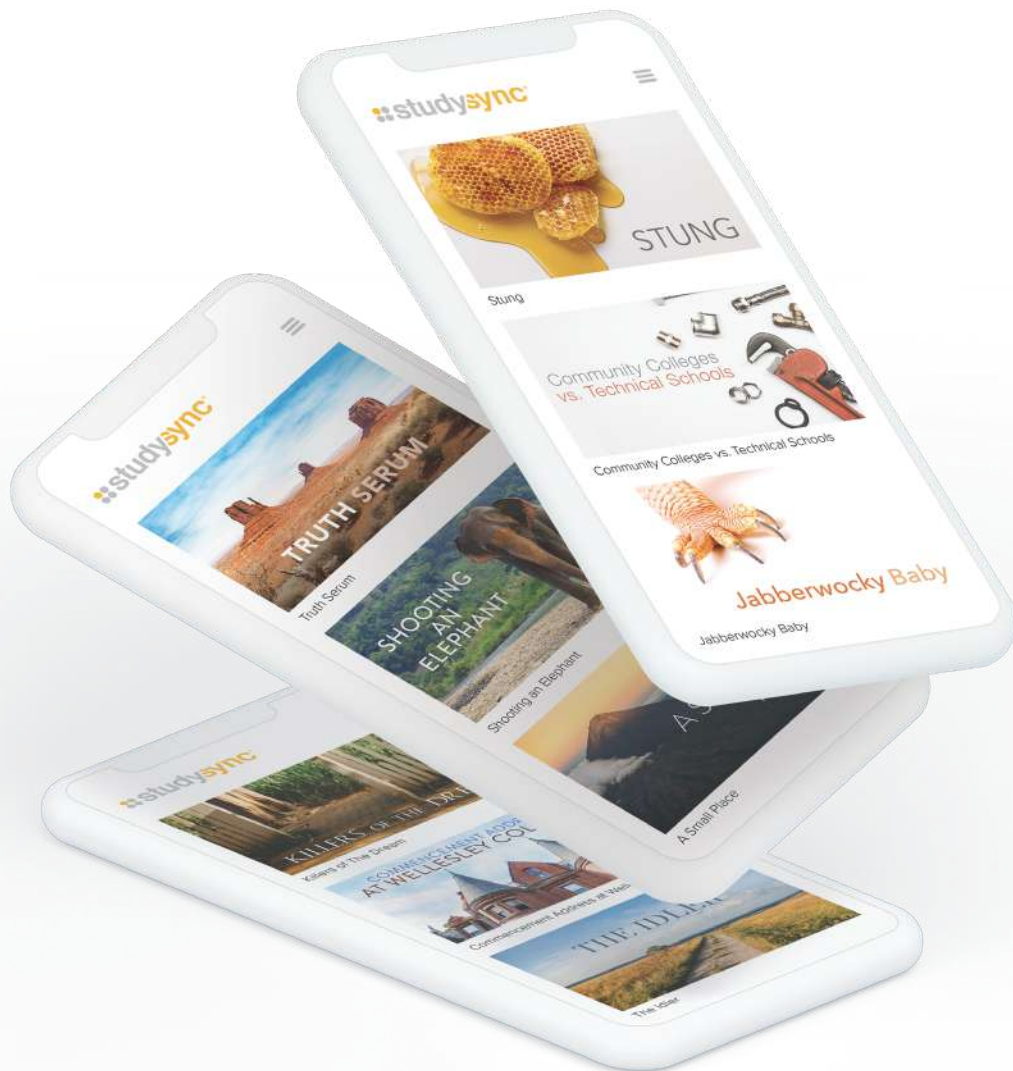
Skill lessons on Organizing an Oral Presentation and Evaluating Sources teach concepts specifically called out in English Language Arts standards, while additional Skill lessons on Considering Audience and Purpose, Communicating Ideas, Reasons and Evidence, Sources and Citations, and Engaging in Discourse focus on characteristics of the presentation genre. Turn and Talk activities and StudySyncTV episodes further model how students should effectively express their ideas through speaking. In addition, students will learn techniques for integrating media into their presentations. Targeted Grammar Skill lessons instruct to the specific grammar skills identified in ELA standards.

Students have many opportunities throughout the unit to develop skills that will help them plan, write, and deliver their oral presentations. For example, after completing the Independent Read "Love After Love," students must participate in a collaborative conversation about the poem's meaning. The speech "Commencement Address at the New School" will give students a model for effective rhetoric and use of evidence, while the Skill lesson Language, Style, and Audience will help students learn how to use language skillfully to engage an audience and achieve a purpose.

Blasts throughout the unit allow students to practice sharing their opinions. Writer's notebook activities in Blast, Close Read, and Writing Skill lessons provide students with the opportunity for low-stakes, ungraded writing with an emphasis on sharing their ideas through speaking activities. In the Skill lesson Persuasive Techniques, students practice by writing a short script for a commercial for a product of their choosing, including at least one appeal to logic, emotion, or ethics. And in each Close Read, students always engage in a collaborative conversation and turn-and-talk activities.



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