



Grade 3 - Unit 5 Reading - Readers Study Important People

Unit Focus

In *Readers Study Important People*, students explore biographies to better understand how individuals can shape history, solve problems, and inspire change. Through reading about the lives of influential people from a variety of backgrounds and time periods, students learn to distinguish between fame and true significance by examining perseverance, innovation, leadership, and personal impact. Using inquiry and discussion, students analyze the challenges these individuals faced, the choices they made, and the lasting contributions they left behind. This unit encourages students to reflect on the qualities they admire in others while considering how individual actions can positively influence communities and the wider world. By the end of the unit, students not only learn about history, they learn how people's actions can inspire change and make a difference.

Instruction is grounded in the Science of Reading, integrating systematic instruction in phonics, morphology, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension to support the development of skilled, independent readers and writers. Structured literacy instruction is delivered through Foundations, which provides explicit instruction in phonics, morphology, spelling patterns, and encoding; Bookworms, which builds background knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension, and structured discussion through shared reading and read-aloud experiences; and Geodes, which supports application of taught phonics patterns in connected, decodable texts to strengthen fluency, accuracy, and automaticity.

Students engage with high-quality texts that build knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension while supporting close reading of grade-level standards, including *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba & Bryan Mealer, *The Boy Who Invented TV: The Story of Philo Farnsworth* and *Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Women* by Kathleen Krull, *Spring After Spring* by Stephanie Roth Sisson, *Who Says Women Can't Be Doctors? The True Story of Elizabeth Blackwell* by Tanya Lee Stone, *The Story of Ruth Bader Ginsburg* by Susan B. Katz, *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark* by Debbie Levy. Students will also read a variety of books from *The Story of Biographies Series*.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)	Transfer	
Common Core English Language Arts: 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.1)Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.2)Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/ effect. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.3)Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.4)Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.5)	<i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i> T1 Effectively use a chosen medium to communicate evidence-based ideas about their topic.	
	Meaning	
	Understanding(s)	Essential Question(s)
	<i>Students will understand that...</i> U1 Biographies are a type of nonfiction that present true information about a person's life. U2 Authors choose to write biographies for a reason, often to highlight impact, character, or contributions. U3 A person's importance is determined by their actions, choices, and contributions, not just their fame.	<i>Students will keep considering...</i> Q1 What makes a person important? Q2 How is being famous different from being important? Q3 How do sounds, letters, and patterns work together to help me read and spell words? Q4 How does reading with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression support comprehension?

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.3.6)
- Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI. 3.7)
- Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.3.9)
- By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 23 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.3.10)
- Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8)
- Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.2)
- Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.3)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., After dinner that night we went looking for them). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.6)
- Decode multisyllable words. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.3.3.C)
- Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF. 3.3.D)
- Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF. 3.4.A)
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RF.3.4.C)
- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.A)
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.B)
- Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.C)

U4 Sounds, letters, and patterns work together to support decoding and spelling of words.
U5 Reading accurately, smoothly, and with expression helps readers focus on meaning and better understand the text.
U6 Vocabulary knowledge supports making meaning from text and deepening understanding.

Q5 How can the words I know help me understand what I read?

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge

Students will know...
K1 Biographies are organized around a person's life events (early life, challenges, accomplishments, impact).
K2 Asking questions before, during, and after reading helps to deepen understanding.
K3 Criteria for determining importance: Solving problems Helping others Overcoming hardships Demonstrating strong character traits Creating impact (past and present)
K4 Taking notes helps readers record and organize important information from a text.
K5 Different texts about the same person may include similar and different information depending on the author's purpose and sources.
K6 Sounds, letters, and spelling patterns work together to form words, supporting accurate reading and spelling.
K7 Reading with accuracy, fluency, and expression supports understanding of text.
K8 Vocabulary supports understanding of text and builds deeper meaning.
K9 Foundations:

- All sounds of ar, er, ir, or, or ur, including /er/ (schwa sound) for ar and or (for ex. solar or sailor)

Skill(s)

Students will be skilled at...
S1 Reading biographies closely to gather key details.
S2 Asking and answering questions using evidence from the text.
S3 Determining whether a person is important, famous, or both.
S4 Analyzing a real person's traits, challenges, contributions, and impact using text evidence.
S5 Taking organized notes using graphic organizers or journals.
S6 Comparing information across multiple texts about the same person.
S7 Decoding unfamiliar words and spelling words correctly using their knowledge of sounds, letters, and patterns.
S8 Reading aloud with accuracy, smoothness, and expression to focus on comprehension.
S9 Using known words, context clues, and new vocabulary to understand and make meaning from texts.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.D)
- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.A)
- Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.B)
- Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.C)
- Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.D)

Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Product Creation: Effectively use a medium to communicate important information. (POG.3.2)

- Combining r-controlled syllables with er, ir, and ur with other syllable types
- war and wor
- Spelling option procedure for /er/ (shwa) sound
- Dictionary skills
- r-controlled exception (rr)
- spelling rule with r-controlled words
- Double vowels
- Double vowel syllable
- Sounds eigh, ei, ea, ie, igh, oo, ui
- Contractions