

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

GRADE 7 ENGLISH
LANGUAGE ARTS EXTENDED
WORKSHOP

Board of Education Approved 01/22/2008

GRADE 7 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS EXTENDED WORKSHOP

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this course is to develop students as readers, writers, and thinkers. The focus of this course is to invite the students into the world of ideas by requiring them to look for evidence and ask questions as they read and articulate positions and organize their evidence for those positions as they write.

Course Description

This course is developmentally appropriate for 7th Graders because it is designed to introduce them to higher order thinking in order to grow as readers and writers. The students will concentrate on three main endeavors: analyzing character development, asking thoughtful questions, and writing in the persuasive mode. Each of these will require students to evaluate information, create meaning, and express their thinking with organization and elaboration. Through these endeavors, students will take an important step in moving from concrete thinkers to more abstract, critical thinkers.

Course Goals

Students will learn to:

- read more deeply and thoughtfully by analyzing character development.
- present evidence for their thinking as they read and write.
- be active learners by asking plot and interpretive questions as they read.
- use strategies for persuasive writing.
- make meaningful connections with literary texts.
- use writing as a way to learn about literature, as a way to become stronger readers.
- find or further their enjoyment in independent reading.
- begin to generate their ideas and deepen their thinking by sharing with others in small and large group discussions.
- find or further their enjoyment in writing.
- produce individual portfolios.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

Reading

- complete daily independent reading.
- choose personally challenging reading selections and reflect on those choices.
- make meaningful personal connections to the main character and explain these connections by referring back to text with specific quotations to support their thinking.
- identify character traits of characters and give specific examples of how characters grow and develop.
- compare and contrast themselves with characters in literature.
- compare where they live to the setting in which main character lives.
- compare characters in the same text.
- identify events in the characters' lives that defined their character and identify events in their own lives that have defined their own character.

- independently practice active reading strategies with dependent reading on a daily basis. (summarizing, predicting, visualizing, and note-taking)
- formulate their own interpretive questions as they read.
- write responses to literature which explore character motivation and character development, using the reading strategies of creating thought questions, and noting surprises and confusions.
- choose key lines to describe character and analyze text.
- reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers.
- describe how character in the story changes.
- explain how the author makes the character seem real.
- identify words or phrases which help them to imagine what the characters see, hear, taste, touch, or smell.
- draw inferences about characters by analyzing the characters' actions and considering how others interact with them.
- analyze the title of the text as it applies to the development of a character.
- select quotations from the text which support their interpretation of a character.
- identify features of fiction for the purpose of writing in that genre. (point of view, methods of characterization, plot development)
- analyze how point-of-view gives information about a character.
- distinguish between plot and thought questions.
- analyze character development by identifying the character's thoughts, words and actions.
- determine which part of the story is most important, interesting, or surprising using details from the story and their own life to explain why they chose that part.
- analyze how dialogue reveals character.
- analyze character development by identifying how others respond to and interact with the character.
- examine the motivation of the character's actions.
- use imaginative writing in order to interpret character (e.g. retell story from another character's point of view, add a sequel, invent a prequel).
- recognize and analyze when humor is being used to describe a character.
- recognize and analyze how flashback gives information about a character.
- recognize and analyze how similes and metaphors describe a character.
- see themselves as readers by selecting their own independent reading books.
- complete daily independent reading.
- understand and analyze non-fiction by determining the main idea in contemporary, journalistic essays.
- use evidence from non-fiction texts to draw and support a conclusion.
- make connections between non-fiction texts and personal experience and prior knowledge.
- use relevant information from non-fiction texts to write a personal response.
- identify personality traits of people in nonfiction texts.
- recognize and analyze how humor functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.

- recognize and analyze how imagery functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.
- recognize and analyze how simile functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.
- recognize metaphor function to communicate ideas and persuade an audience.
- develop an awareness of bias in writing.
- review characters met thus far this year in both in-class reading and independent reading.
- compare and make connections between two characters in same text.
- compare and make connections between characters from different texts to each other.
- avoid stereotypical thinking by:
 - examining personal assumptions (e.g. about all boys, all girls, all teachers, all oldest children in the family, all Italians, all Irish)
 - discussing how characters challenge or reinforce those assumptions
 - discussing how assumptions can limit what we see and affect our understanding of characters
- analyze what fictional characters tell us about ourselves, people in general, and the world in which we live.
- make text to world connections through written responses and in class discussions.
- review reading logs to determine their growth as readers.

Writing

- take a position and develop a thesis statement.
- utilize strong leads in their writing.
- organize their thinking into an essay with well-structured paragraphs.
- support their thinking with specific evidence and elaboration.
- reflect on writing goals after completing book review and personal narrative.
- analyze literary texts as models for developing characters in their own inventive writing.
- use dialogue, point of view, and character interactions to demonstrate character development.
- compare characters in the same text.
- create a thesis statement which demonstrates an interpretation of a character.
- support an interpretation, using textual evidence.
- elaborate with specific details in order to explain textual evidence.
- reflect on writing goals after completing each writing piece which goes through the steps of the writing process.
- identify features of non-fiction texts for the purpose of writing in that genre.
- draw on background knowledge to support/explore a topic.
- take a position and develop a strong thesis statement about a contemporary issue.
- articulate specific evidence which fully supports a position.
- become familiar with and practice the application of a variety of elaboration techniques (anecdote, examples, reasons, or responding to a question) to support a position.
- become familiar with how humor, imagery, and metaphor are used to communicate ideas and persuade audiences and practice those techniques in their own writing.
- acknowledge the situation which necessitates an action when persuading an audience.
- choose a method of organization which is best suited for particular questions and prompts.

- maintain focus in their writing.
- avoid repetition of ideas in their writing.
- use a consistent and personal voice in their writing.
- write with an awareness of audience by providing all of the details that the audience needs to know.
- establish a connection between the evidence and the position that is being advocated.
- use transitions to link ideas and to connect one idea to the next.
- organize ideas into an effective essay which includes an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- anticipate the counterargument of the audience and address that counterargument.
- write conclusion which does not repeat and also brings the advocacy to a new level.
- use a variety of sentence structures in their writing.
- use specific and sophisticated words in their writing.
- reflect upon important ideas, both in discussions and in writing, that text to world connections offer.
- use methods of characterization (i.e. what character does, what character thinks and feels, what character says, what others say about character, and how other characters interact with that character) and literary techniques (e.g. point of view, flashback, humor, simile, metaphor, or imagery) to create a character who challenges or typifies stereotypical thinking.
- review and select written pieces for the portfolio which reflect growth.
- write entry slips for each item in the portfolio.
- write a letter to reader to introduce the portfolio.
- create a portfolio (menu includes: favorite piece, persuasive piece, reader response, written piece from discipline other than English language arts, and a creative/inventive piece).

Habits of mind

- set writing goals based on review and reflection of sixth grade portfolio/writing folder.

Collaboration

- demonstrate active listening in a literary discussion by responding directly to the ideas of others.
- pose thought questions and bring those questions to discussions.
- demonstrate active listening in literary discussions by responding to the interpretive questions of others.
- reflect upon important ideas, both in discussions and in writing, that text to world connections offer.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- become familiar with the Grade 7 Revision List and identify individual and collective gaps in knowledge and practice.
- review gaps through mini-lessons and/or individual conferences.
- demonstrate proficiency on concepts addressed through mini-lessons and teacher conferences.
- identify and use transitions in their writing.

- identify appositives and punctuate them correctly.
- use commas with a series of prepositional phrases.
- recognize and use consistent verb tense within paragraphs.
- demonstrate sentence variety by using simple and compound sentences in their writing and punctuate compound subjects, compound verbs, and compound sentences correctly.
- use the semi-colon correctly in compound sentences.
- consistently use the same person (1st or 3rd) in their writing.
- become familiar with and practice test-taking strategies for writing in the persuasive mode.
- become familiar with and practice test-taking strategies for editing and revising (CMT-4).
- effectively use out-of-order adjectives.

State of Connecticut English Language Arts Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

Students use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading in order to construct meaning.

Students will draw conclusions and use evidence to substantiate them by using texts heard, read and viewed.

Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.

Students will generate and respond to questions.

Students will discuss and respond to texts by making text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

Students will choose a variety of genres to read for personal enjoyment.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will identify and analyze the differences between the structures of fiction and nonfiction.

Students recognize and appreciate that contemporary and classical literature has shaped human thought.

Students will explain how and why literary conventions and techniques contribute to their understanding of and experience with a text

Students will discuss and analyze how characters deal with the diversity of human experience and conflict.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students will write to delight in the imagination.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Information and Technology Standards (to be added)

Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- How do I choose reading material that interests me?
- How can I understand characters in literature better?
- How can I organize and support my ideas when I write?
- How are characters in fiction similar and different from me and the people that I know?
- How does my sixth grade portfolio suggest literacy goals for seventh grade?
- How do authors create and develop characters?
- How can I develop my own literary character?
- How will asking interpretive questions help me to interpret literature?
- How can I support and organize my thinking about characters so that I can communicate my thinking to others?
- How do writers communicate their ideas about contemporary topics and issues?

- How can I convince others about my ideas regarding contemporary issues and ideas?
- What are some of the similarities and differences in characters?
- How can I be a stronger thinker if I recognize and avoid stereotypes?
- How do literary characters tell us about our world and the people in it?
- Who am I now, at the end of the school year, as a reader and a writer?
- How can I tell the story of my growth as a reader and a writer?

UNITS of STUDY

Unit 1: Establishing A Community of Readers and Writers

English Language Arts Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

Students use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading in order to construct meaning.

Students will draw conclusions and use evidence to substantiate them by using texts heard, read and viewed.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- How do I choose reading material that interests me?
- How can I understand characters in literature better?
- How can I organize and support my ideas when I write?
- How are characters in fiction similar and different from me and the people that I know?

- How does my sixth grade portfolio suggest literacy goals for seventh grade?

Core Topics

- Building a Community of Learners in our Classroom
- Understanding Character Development in Order to Be Better Readers
- Supporting a Thesis with Quantity and Quality of Support
- Review of 6th Grade Portfolio/W writing Folder

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- describe how character in the story changes.
- draw inferences about characters by analyzing the characters' actions and considering how others interact with them.
- select quotations from the text which support their interpretation of a character.
- analyze character development by identifying the character's thoughts, words and actions.
- analyze character development by identifying how others respond to and interact with the character.
- examine the motivation of the character's actions.
- set writing goals based on review and reflection of sixth grade portfolio/writing folder.
- complete daily independent reading.
- choose personally challenging reading selections and reflect on those choices.
- identify character traits of characters and give specific examples of how characters grow and develop.
- independently practice active reading strategies with independent reading on a daily basis. (summarizing, predicting, visualizing, and note-taking)
- formulate their own interpretive questions as they read.
- choose key lines to describe character and analyze text.
- take a position and develop a thesis statement.
- choose key lines to describe character and to analyze the text.
- utilize strong leads in their writing.
- organize their thinking into an essay with well-structured paragraphs.
- support their thinking with specific evidence and elaboration.
- reflect on writing goals after completing book review and personal narrative.
- reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers.

Skills Objectives

Students will:

- become familiar with the Grade 7 Revision List and identify individual and collective gaps in knowledge and practice.
- review gaps through mini-lessons and/or individual conferences.
- demonstrate proficiency on concepts addressed through mini-lessons and teacher conferences.
- identify and use transitions in their writing.
- identify appositives and punctuate them correctly.

- use commas with a series of prepositional phrases.

Assessments

- Responses to literature that develop personal connections to characters
- * Essay, including textual evidence, which interprets a work of literature by demonstrating how a character grows, develops, or changes or which describes a prominent character trait of one of the main characters (Revise for strong lead, clear thesis statement and appropriate quantity and quality of support)
- *Book review essay for independent reading book in which students provide evidence for a position that they take (Revise for strong lead, clear thesis statement and appropriate quantity and quality of support)
- District-wide response to literature assessment for baseline data
- *District-wide persuasive writing assessment for baseline data (Revise as appropriate for students improvement in focused areas, strong leads, clear thesis statement, appropriate quantity and quality support)
- Portfolio reflection (letter to self including goals)
- Summer reading assessment
- Setting of reading goal, based on reflection of reading behaviors

*These will be formal pieces which will go through all the steps of the writing process.

Pacing

September and October

Unit 2: Exploring Character Development in Fiction

English Language Arts Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

Students use appropriate strategies before, during, and after reading in order to construct meaning.

Students will make and justify inferences from explicit and implicit information.

Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.

Students will generate and respond to questions.

Students communicate with others to create interpretations of written, oral, and visual texts.

Students will respond to others and recognize the validity of differing views.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will analyze literary conventions that an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students will listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in various modes.

Students will write to delight in the imagination.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- How do authors create and develop characters?
- How can I develop my own literary character?
- How will asking interpretive questions help me to interpret literature?
- How can I support and organize my thinking about characters so that I can communicate my thinking to others?

Core Topics

- Analyzing How Characters in Texts Are Developed
- Creating Our Own fictional characters
- Asking Interpretive Questions While Reading and Discussing Those Questions With Others
- Essay Writing to Analyze Fictional Characters

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- make meaningful personal connections to the main character and explain these connections by referring back to text with specific quotations to support their thinking.
- compare and contrast themselves with characters in literature.
- compare where they live to the setting in which main character lives.
- identify events in the characters' lives that defined their character and identify events in their own lives that have defined their own character.
- demonstrate active listening in a literary discussion by responding directly to the ideas of others.
- write responses to literature which explore character motivation and character development, using the reading strategies of creating thought questions, and noting surprises and confusions.
- explain how the author makes the character seem real.
- identify words or phrases which help them to imagine what the characters see, hear, taste, touch, or smell.

- choose personally challenging reading selections and reflect on those choices.
- analyze the title of the text as it applies to the development of a character.
- identify features of fiction for the purpose of writing in that genre. (point of view, methods of characterization, plot development)
- analyze how point-of-view gives information about a character.
- distinguish between plot and thought questions.
- pose thought questions and bring those questions to discussions.
- determine which part of the story is most important, interesting, or surprising using details from the story and their own life to explain why they chose that part.
- demonstrate active listening in literary discussions by responding to the interpretive questions of others.
- analyze how dialogue reveals character.
- use imaginative writing in order to interpret character (e.g. retell story from another character's point of view, add a sequel, invent a prequel).
- recognize and analyze when humor is being used to describe a character.
- recognize and analyze how flashback gives information about a character.
- recognize and analyze how similes and metaphors describe a character.
- analyze literary texts as models for developing characters in their own inventive writing.
- use dialogue, point of view, and character interactions to demonstrate character development.
- compare characters in the same text.
- create a thesis statement which demonstrates an interpretation of a character.
- support an interpretation, using textual evidence.
- elaborate with specific details in order to explain textual evidence.
- reflect on writing goals after completing each writing piece which goes through the steps of the writing process.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- recognize and use consistent verb tense within paragraphs.
- demonstrate sentence variety by using simple and compound sentences in their writing and punctuate compound subjects, compound verbs, and compound sentences correctly.
- use the semi-colon correctly in compound sentences.
- consistently use the same person (1st or 3rd) in their writing.

Assessments

- Responses to literature which explore interpretive questions
- *Personal essay, explaining their own most prominent character trait or a character trait of someone whom they know or compare two characters in a text in which students take a position and support it with examples from their own lives (Revise for strong lead, clear thesis statement and appropriate quantity and quality of support)
- * Vignette or short story which uses dialogue, point of view, character interactions (as well as other conventions that a student might want to use such as flashback, humor, or metaphor) to demonstrate character development
- Interpretive questions and active listening in discussions

- Portfolio reflection
- Assessment of independent reading either through written reader responses, oral book chats, or written book reviews
- * Timed persuasive writing with revisions for focused areas (thesis statement, appropriate evidence, elaboration about evidence, and paragraph organization)

*These will be formal pieces which will go through all the steps of the writing process.

Pacing

November and December

Unit 3: Non-Fiction Reading and Persuasive Writing

English Language Arts Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will identify and analyze the differences between the structures of fiction and nonfiction.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Essential Questions

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- How do writers communicate their ideas about contemporary topics and issues?
- How can I convince others about my ideas regarding contemporary issues and ideas?

Core Topics

- Reading non-fiction
- Writing persuasive essays

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- see themselves as readers by selecting their own independent reading books.
- complete daily independent reading.
- understand and analyze non-fiction by determining the main idea in contemporary, journalistic essays.
- use evidence from non-fiction texts to draw and support a conclusion.
- make connections between non-fiction texts and personal experience and prior knowledge.
- use relevant information from non-fiction texts to write a personal response.
- identify features of non-fiction texts for the purpose of writing in that genre.
- identify personality traits of people in nonfiction texts.
- recognize and analyze how humor functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.
- recognize and analyze how imagery functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.
- recognize and analyze how simile functions to communicate ideas and persuade audiences.
- recognize metaphor function to communicate ideas and persuade an audience.
- develop an awareness of bias in writing.
- draw on background knowledge to support/explore a topic.
- take a position and develop a strong thesis statement about a contemporary issue.
- articulate specific evidence which fully supports a position.
- become familiar with and practice the application of a variety of elaboration techniques (anecdote, examples, reasons, or responding to a question) to support a position.
- become familiar with how humor, imagery, and metaphor are used to communicate ideas and persuade audiences and practice those techniques in their own writing.
- choose a method of organization which is best suited for a particular question or prompt.
- acknowledge the situation which necessitates an action when persuading an audience.
- choose a method of organization which is best suited for particular questions and prompts.
- maintain focus in their writing.
- avoid repetition of ideas in their writing.
- use a consistent and personal voice in their writing.
- write with an awareness of audience by providing all of the details that the audience needs to know.
- establish a connection between the evidence and the position that is being advocated.
- use transitions to link ideas and to connect one idea to the next.
- organize ideas into an effective essay which includes an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- anticipate the counterargument of the audience and address that counterargument.
- write conclusion which does not repeat and also brings the advocacy to a new level.
- use a variety of sentence structures in their writing.
- use specific and sophisticated words in their writing.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- become familiar with and practice test-taking strategies for writing in the persuasive mode.
- become familiar with and practice test-taking strategies for editing and revising (CMT-4).

Assessments

- * District-wide timed persuasive prompt revised for focus areas (acknowledging the situation which necessitates the action, choosing method of organization which is most appropriate, applying an effective elaboration techniques, establishing a connection between the evidence and the position being advocated, creating effective transitions, and writing a conclusion which bring the advocacy to a new level)
- * Multi-paragraph persuasive essay which has a strong personal voice, supportive details, and audience awareness, emphasizing revision for word choice, sentence variety, focus, and lack of repetition
- Assessment of independent reading either through written reader responses, oral book chats, or written book reviews

*These will be formal pieces which will go through all the steps of the writing process.

Pacing

January and February

Unit 4: Inquiry and Invention

English Language Arts Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.

Students will discuss and respond to texts by making text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize and appreciate that contemporary and classical literature has shaped human thought.

Students will discuss and analyze how characters deal with the diversity of human experience and conflict.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use appropriate forms of persuasive, narrative, expository, or poetic writing.

Students will write to delight in the imagination.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- What are some of the similarities and differences in characters?
- How can I be a stronger thinker if I recognize and avoid stereotypes?
- How do literary characters tell us about our world and the people in it?

Core Topics

- Comparing characters
- Making text to world connections
- avoiding stereotypes

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- see themselves as readers by selecting their own independent reading books.
- complete daily independent reading.
- review characters met thus far this year in both in-class reading and independent reading.
- compare and make connections between two characters in same text.
- compare and make connections between characters from different texts to one other.
- avoid stereotypical thinking by:
 - examining personal assumptions (e.g. about all boys, all girls, all teachers, all oldest children in the family, all Italians, all Irish)
 - discussing how characters challenge or reinforce those assumptions
 - discussing how assumptions can limit what we see and affect our understanding of characters
- analyze what fictional characters tell us about ourselves, people in general, and the world in which we live.
- make text to world connections through written responses and in class discussions.
- reflect upon important ideas, both in discussions and in writing, that text to world connections offer.
- use methods of characterization (i.e. what character does, what character thinks and feels, what character says, what others say about character, and how other characters interact with that character) and literary techniques (e.g. point of view, flashback, humor, simile, metaphor, or imagery) to create a character who challenges or typifies stereotypical thinking.

Skill Objective

Students will:

- effectively use out-of-order adjectives.

Assessment

- Reader response, focusing on character comparisons
- * Vignette or short story with a character who challenges or typifies a stereotype

- * Thesis-based essay which makes a statement about life of people and supports it with examples from two or more texts

*These will be formal pieces which will go through all the steps of the writing process.

Pacing

March, April, and ½ of May

Unit 5: Coming Full Circle: Recognizing Our Growth As Readers and Writers

English Language Arts Standards

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency, and clarity.

Students will apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral, or visual piece.

Applying English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Essential Questions

- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Questions

- Who am I now, at the end of the school year, as a reader and a writer?
- How can I tell the story of my growth as a reader and a writer?

Core Topics

- Connections
- 7th Grade Portfolio

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- see themselves as readers by selecting their own independent reading books.
- complete daily independent reading.
- review reading logs to determine their growth as readers.
- review and select written pieces for the portfolio which reflect growth.
- write entry slips for each item in the portfolio.
- write a letter to reader to introduce the portfolio.

- create a portfolio (menu includes: favorite piece, persuasive piece, reader response, written piece from discipline other than English language arts, and a creative/inventive piece).

Assessments

- District-wide response to literature assessment
- Portfolio, including entry slips and the letter to reader
- Assessment of independent reading either through written reader responses, oral book chats, or written book reviews

Pacing

4 weeks

Texts such as the following:

Unit 1

Stargirl
Seedfolks
Freak the Mighty
House on Mango Street
Worlds of Fire
The Rifle
Selected poems

Unit 2

Monkey Island
Ties That Bind, Ties That Break
Breadwinner
Chinese Cinderella
Gold Cadillac/The Friendship
China Son
The Great Brain
Selected poetry

Unit 3

Short Story selections
Non-fiction readings from contemporary periodicals
Shells
Smart Ice Cream
Sunday in the Park
The White Circle
They Cage the Animals at Night

Unit 4

The Giver
Midsummer's Night Dream
Short story selections
Poetry

Unit 5

Touching Spirit Bear