

Unit 3: Narrative Reading: Character Studies, Grade 3

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

Unit 3 brings a return to fiction for a close study of characters. The third graders will continue to develop the narrative reading skills they started working on during the first unit but will now dig deeper, analyzing characters and trying to understand what motivates them. The children will be studying the big lessons the characters are learning and they will look closely at how these lessons are a part of the theme or message of the story. Phonics and word study instruction will continue with the use of *Foundations*, Level 3, (2012, Wilson Language Training Corporation). The basic skills developed in Levels K-2 are built upon in Level 3 where students progress further into the study of word structure with a focus on advanced spelling rules and morphology. This instruction will contribute greatly to fluency, vocabulary development, and the applications of strategies for understanding text. All are necessary for the successful development of reading comprehension. Students will come to see that as characters grow and change, the problems those characters encounter in the story evolve.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4.a	Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.6	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.RF.3.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.3.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.2	Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.5	Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on

	earlier sections.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.6	Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.7	Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.9	Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.2	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.3.3	Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.5	Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.6	Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

Essential Questions

How do readers walk in other character's shoes?

How do readers build theories about characters?

How do readers grow and learn lessons alongside the characters in the books they read?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- readers compare the way characters handle problems to other characters, other stories, and their own lives.
- readers have skills and strategies for building theories while they read.
- readers have skills and strategies to help them tackle complex texts and hard words.
- readers infer about characters by thinking about what the characters are doing, saying, and thinking/feeling.
- readers pay attention to the challenges characters face and how they resolve these challenges.
- readers think about how the problems characters face relate to the theme of the story.

- readers use skills to envision and predict while they read.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- compare characters and the lessons they learn within and across stories.
- describe and grow theories about the characters in books.
- describe how characters solve their problems and the lessons they learn.
- envision and make predictions about the characters and the story.
- explain the importance of the details in a story.
- talk and write about what they are reading to show understanding.
- track the changes characters go through.
- use strategies and skills to tackle complex texts and hard words.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from the *Character Studies (Grade 3)* unit of the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading (Calkins et al., 2015)* and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- Teach students that readers set goals for themselves, especially at the beginning of a new unit.
- Teach students that readers get to know characters by paying attention to how they act and what they say.
- Teach students that readers ask themselves, "What is my character like?" and then look for evidence to back up what they think.
- Teach students that readers pay attention to patterns of character behavior and as they see more they begin to grow theories about these characters.
- Teach students that as they grow theories about characters readers pause and ask themselves, "Why?" and then their theories about the characters grow bigger.
- Teach students that as readers get to really know their characters, they use their knowledge to make predictions.
- Teach students to examine how a text's illustrations contribute to the meaning of a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
- Teach students that readers can use a variety of strategies for checking on how they are doing as readers, like looking at checklists to notice their strengths and weaknesses and setting new reading goals.
- Teach students that readers pay attention to the flow of a story, how it goes up- and down.
- Teach students that readers expect their characters to have to face, and react, to trouble.
- Coach students to notice the secondary characters in a story, and the roles they play in the main character's journey.
- Model for children to pay attention to illustrations and the role they play in the story.
- Teach students that readers anticipate and pay close attention to the climax of a story to see how their character is tested.
- Coach students to notice how a character resolves the big trouble in the story.

- Teach students that readers learn lessons from reading right along with their characters.
- Coach students to apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- Coach students to look back and analyze the author's craft; what did the author do to engage and thrill the reader?
- Teach students that readers compare characters; noting the similarities and differences between them.
- Coach students to distinguish their own perspective of the story from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
- Teach students that readers compare the problems characters face, and the reactions the characters have to those problems.
- Coach students to engage in text-based mini-arguments about characters; using a, "How can you say that?" response to defend characters' actions and motives.
- Coach students to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from non-literal language.
- Teach students that readers compare the lessons characters learn.
- Teach students that readers celebrate learning.

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- create and refer to anchor charts
- study pages from exemplar reader's notebooks
- provide and present mentor texts as models
- teach the *Work of Readers Charts*
- teach children strategies for holding onto text, for example by using Post-its and graphic organizers
- model (Talk Aloud) the strategies good readers use
- model, provide, and use a reader's notebook
- tap, sketch, or jot across a story as a way of retaining information and details
- study book introductions and endings
- practice creating mental movies as you read
- investigate figurative language and descriptive vocabulary and how authors use them
- Turn and Talk the dialogue in a story to bring the characters' feelings alive
- set mini-reading goals for engagement, print work, fluency, comprehension, and/or conversation
- provide checklists and reading progressions to assess and develop on-going reading goals
- scaffold skills with strategies, for example using Post-its to identify key elements of a chapter
- write long about reading
- practice alternating the speed a text is read to reflect tone and mood
- plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom reading projects
- use technology in the reading classroom; for example digital journals

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. The resource *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5*, provides reading progressions, performance assessments, rubrics, tools for collecting data, a system for conducting running records, There are also digital versions of the assessment tools available through the online resources at; www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources. Teachers may also develop their own rubrics and assessments in order to include more specific elements of knowledge and skills listed in this unit summary.

Student self-assessment and peer assessment should take place whenever possible--again, in all three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Removing the traditional emphasis on teacher assessment enables students to take more initiative and become self-directed.

On-going teacher assessment will take place in the context of a conference. Conferences, both small group and one-to-one conferring, are used to reinforce expectations, provide advice and/or assistance, and ultimately, to support growth.

Diagnostic Assessments

Running Records

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/running-records

Spelling Inventory

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/spelling-assessments

Individual beginning of the year "How's It Going?" conferences

Formative Assessments

Teacher-student conferences including: individual, small group, strategy group, and guided reading

Daily observation of students' participation during the active engagement segment of each mini-lesson.

Students' conversation with partners during Turn and Talk segment of mini-lessons.

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, Writing About Reading evidence (Post-its, journal entries, writing long about reading, for example)

Summative Assessment

Teacher-student conferences

Running Records

Spelling Assessments

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, and other evidence of students improving skills

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Note: These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extending the learning for higher level students.

- provide leveled books appropriate for all reading levels
- provide support as needed through conferencing
- provide support as needed through strategy groups
- provide support as needed through guided reading groups
- provide individualized copies of teaching charts
- provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics to scaffold or stretch learning
- scaffold or stretch learning through the use of various strategies
- provide appropriate reading partners

Challenge gifted students to incorporate more complex reading techniques based on the 4th grade Reading Learning Progressions:

- base predictions on how stories tend to go, explaining reasons for predictions
- pay attention to structure while reading, note sequence words that may indicate a back-story or gaps in time between scenes.
- read complex sentences correctly by paying attention to punctuation
- talk about the big ideas/themes that a story teaches
- support ideas with details from several parts of a text and discuss how the details actually do support those ideas

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Writing Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts
- apply spelling strategies
- identify areas of spelling needs
- apply grammar skills
- identify areas in need of addressing (spelling, grammar, mechanics)
- expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading
- model sentence and paragraph structure after mentor texts

Content Areas: Science, Social Studies, Health

- read just right books in the content areas
- use mentor texts to deliver Social Studies content
- compare content area ideas and issues to what our characters deal with in our read alouds and mentor texts
- apply reading skills and strategies to the reading we do in the content areas

Study Skills

- use graphic organizers to support reading
- use checklists and rubrics to monitor progress
- use Venn diagrams and t-charts to gather, compare, and contrast events
- use highlighters, note cards, post-its, and other tools to keep track of story events, details, and ideas
- keep a log and notebook

The Arts

- analyze illustrations in books for details
- compare illustrations to other forms of art
- illustrate a passage that was just read to show details, ideas, and lessons
- act out a scene from a book to better visualize how a character feels

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

Units of Study for Teaching Reading:

- *Character Studies* by Julia Mooney and Kristin Smith
- *A Guide to the Reading Workshop, Intermediate Grades*; Lucy Calkins
- *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum: Assessment-Based Instruction, Grades 3-5*; Lucy Calkins; Julia Mooney; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Online Resources for Teaching Writing*; Lucy Calkins
- website: www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources

The Art of Teaching Reading; Lucy Calkins

The Reading Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers; Jennifer Serravallo

Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching; Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Reading Miscue Inventory: From Evaluation to Instruction; Yetta M. Goodman

Miscue Analysis Made Easy: Building on Student Strengths; Sandra Wilde

Around the Reading Workshop in 180 Days; Frank Serafini

The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child; Donalyn Miller

Mindsets and Moves: Strategies That Help Readers Take Charge; Gravity Goldberg

Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3-6; Irene C Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Some Suggested Mentor Texts

**Peter's Chair*; Ezra Jack Keats (J)

**Make Way for Dymonde Daniel*; Nikki Grimes

Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse; Kevin Henkes (M)

Mr. Williams; Karen Barbour (L)

The Grudge Keeper; Mara Rockliff (M)

Knots On a Counting Rope; Bill Martin (P)

Salt in His Shoes: Micheal Jordan in Pursuit of a Dream; Deloris Jordan and Roslyn Jordan

A Day's Work; Eve Bunting (O)

Harvey Potter's Balloon Farm; Jerdine Nolan

Follow the Drinking Gourd; Jeannette Winter (M)

Kitchen Dance; Maurie J. Manning

Fox; Margaret Wild

The Jester Has Lost His Jingle; David Saltzman

Fireflies; Julie Brinckloe (K)

William Steig Author Study books

Patricia Polacco Author Study books

Part of Reading Street Anthology

When Charlie McButton Lost Power; Suzanne Collins

Prudy's Problem and How She Solved It; Carey Armstrong-Ellis

Suki's Kimono; Chieri Uegaki (M)

Jalapeno Bagels; Natasha Wing (L)

My Rows and Piles of Coins; Tololwa M. Mollel

Some Suggested Read Aloud Novels

**Stone Fox*; John Reynolds Gardiner (P)

**Because of Winn Dixie*; Kate DiCamillo (R)

Charlotte's Web; E.B. White (R)

The One and Only Ivan; Katherine Applegate (S)

A Series of Unfortunate Events, The Bad Beginning; Lemony Snickett (V)

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory; Roald Dahl (R)

***Part of Third Grade Trade Book Pack**