Unit 2: From Butter Battles to Big Brother

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**
Course(s): **Lost Literature**
Time Period: **September**
Length: **10 blocks**
Status: **Published**

Transfer Skills

Everything from children's stories to classic novels will fall under the scrutiny of the public eye, and in the end we learn lessons from both the literature and the context by which it is challenged.

Enduring Understandings

Though a children's book may contain a great deal of art and rhythmic prose, it has the potential to bring sociopolitical issues to the forefront.

Authors utilize the canvas of their writing to paint a picture of future, and current, concerns in the areas of politics, the environment, and societal norms.

The criticism of American literature may be a slippery slope. The list of banned or challenged titles increases each year and the angles that are taken to rid the shelves of such books increases as well.

Essential Questions

Why is a children's book banned if it made it through the processes of editing and publishing?

How can a work of fiction depict both future and current social, political, and environmental concerns?

Is criticism and scrutiny of American literature an exercise in civil liberties or a danger to national stability?

Content

The Lorax (Book and Film), The Sneetches, and *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss

Dr. Seuss Goes to War (A master collection of Seuss' political cartoons)

"The Political Dr. Seuss" - documentary

1984 by George Orwell

Why Orwell Matters by Christopher Hitchins

Amusing Ourselves to Death: *Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* by Andrew Postman

"The Island" Directed by Michael Bay

"V for Vendetta" Directed by James Teague

Skills

Analyze how works of a given period reflect historical and social events and conditions (national security, environmental issues, civil, rights, etc.).

Analyze moral dilemmas in works of literature, as revealed by characters' motivation and behavior.

Analyze how Seuss and Orwell's use of words creates tone and mood, and how choice of words advances the theme or purpose of the work.

Differentiate between fact and opinion by using complete and accurate information, coherent arguments, and points of view.

Resources

Vocabulary: thneed, sneetch, zooks, yooks, big brother, thoughtcrime, doublethink, newspeak, ownlife, and many other Orwellian terms.