

# Unit 3: The Book Thief & Literary Analysis

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**  
Course(s): **English Language Arts 8, Advanced English Language Arts 8**  
Time Period: **January**  
Length: **Estimated - 10 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Transfer

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Each unit is designed with the overall goal of shaping students into lifelong readers--students who recognize the advantages/opportunities that reading provides; who know how to find the right books for themselves and are motivated to read them; and who have the skills and strategies to navigate a wide range of texts successfully, both alone and in a reading community.

Each unit is designed with the goal of shaping students into motivated and and multifaceted writers--students who recognize the power of sharing experiences, ideas, and opinions in writing; who can develop their own writing topics; who can recognize and emulate writer's craft; who can write in and integrate a variety of writing genres; and who can find ways to improve their writing through reflection and feedback.

## Essential Questions

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### Content

- How can tragedy reveal both the best and worst in humanity?

### Reading

- Why is reading important, and what habits and skills define an independent reader?
- Through what lenses can readers analyze literature?

### Writing

- What is the purpose of literary analysis writing?
- What elements and "moves" characterize literary analysis writing?

## Enduring Understandings

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### Content:

- Tragedies--especially global one, like genocide--bring out both the best and worst in humanity.

### **Reading:**

- Reading provides a way to better understand--as well as escape from--ourselves and our world. Reading also provides a number of academic opportunities (i.e. access to more knowledge, building fluency, enhancing vocabulary, building writer's craft). To become a strong and lifelong reader, it's important to read as much and as often as possible; to know how to find books of interest and be willing to explore different types of books; and to be able to comprehend and analyze text (literary elements, craft, lenses) both independently and in a community.
- Literature can be analyzed through a variety of critical lenses (formalism, historical, race, social, psychological, philosophical, etc.). These lenses allow us to understand how literature reflects human nature and society.

### **Writing:**

- Literary analysis provides an avenue to explore an author's choices (literary element and techniques) and the effects of those choices.
- Literary analysis writing includes a clear thesis (based on theme/effect); evidence from text(s); an analysis of how that evidence supports the thesis; a clear organizational structure; and strong word choice. Strong literary analysis essays also integrate elements from other genres to engage the reader and develop voice.

## **Resources**

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### **Anchor Texts:**

The Book Thief

Independent Novels

### **Supplemental Texts:**

Texts (movies, songs, shows, art, poetry, literature excerpts) & Analytical pieces about those texts incorporated into mini-lessons as writing 'seeds' [ideas for for writing topics] and skills practice [for literary analysis writing].

The Book Thief Film

*Note: Supplemental texts selected may vary from year to year depending on what's current and students' abilities, needs, and interests.*

## **Skills**

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### **Spiral Skills:**

- Developing reading engagement and stamina by reading as much and as often as possible
- Comprehending & Analyzing text
- Citing text evidence
- Developing ideas for writing
- Identifying elements of writing genre and writer's craft
- Developing writing skills and stamina through quick writes, SCR's, and the full writing process
- Using criteria, feedback, and models to revise writing

### **Reading Skills:**

- Analyzing literary elements/theme
- Analyzing through critical lenses - Archetypal, Formalism, Historical, Psychological, Race, Socioeconomic, Philosophical

### **Writing Skills:**

- Developing 'seeds' for writing
- Establishing purpose/thesis
- Selecting best structure for conveying ideas
- Incorporating and analyzing examples that support thesis
- Incorporating "moves" from other genres to add voice to literary analysis writing

### **Speaking/Listening Skills:**

- Socratic Seminar expectations

### **Vocabulary Skills:**

- [For Word Nerd vocabulary & The Book Thief vocabulary] Interpreting vocabulary in context, through examples, based on parts of words, and using resources.

### **Grammar Skills:**

- Homophones
- Commonly Confused Words

*Note: Lessons [skills] taught may vary each year, as they are dependent on students' abilities, needs, and interests.*

## Standards

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### Reading:

- RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.8.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
- RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- RL.8.6. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.
- RL.8.7. Evaluate the choices made by the directors or actors by analyzing the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script.
- RL.8.9. Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.
- RL.8.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

### Writing:

- W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
  - A. Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia).
  - B. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
  - C. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
  - D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
  - E. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
  - F. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
- W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W.8.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
- W.8.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### Speaking/Listening:

- SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  - A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
  - B. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and

define individual roles as needed.

- C. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

### **Language:**

- L.8.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.8.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
  - C. Spell correctly.
- L.8.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- L.8.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
  - A. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  - B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
  - C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
  - D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.8.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
  - A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
  - B. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- L.8.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

## **Instructional Practices**

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### **Reading Workshop Model**

- Creating a balance of choice reading (independent and book club novels) and whole-class novels
- Book Talks & Read-Alouds
- Mini-Lessons
- Conferences & Feedback
- Book Club Discussions & Socratic Seminars
- Writing/Creating in response to literature

### **Writing Workshop Model**

- Creating a balance of choice writing and assigned writing
- Mini-Lessons
- Studying mentor texts & models
- Using Writer's Notebook & Creating polished pieces
- Conferences & Feedback
- Sharing & Celebrating writing

### **Language Practices**

- Using mentor texts (including assigned/choice novels) to study vocabulary and conventions

- Word Nerds Initiative

### **Differentiation**

- Providing variety and student choice (i.e. Book Clubs, independent reading, topics for writing assignments).
- Mini-Lessons, Conferences, and Feedback tailored to students' specific needs.
- Students held to expectation (in reading and writing) of establishing their own goals, taking ownership of their learning, evaluating their own work and progress, and taking risks.
- 504/IEP accommodations

### **Technology Integration**

- Google [Search, Classroom, Drive, Slides, Sites, Drawing, Forms, etc.]
- YouTube/iMovie/Etc.
- FlipGrid, Seesaw
- Padlet, Canva
- Newsela
- Vocab.com
- NoRedInk.com

## **Assessments**

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The Book Thief Thematic Found Poem & Analysis

Literary Analysis Essay [Based on The Book Thief or Student Choice]

MP3 Quarterlies