Unit 5: Book-Length Nonfiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **Ongoing**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

Students will read and discuss works of book-length nonfiction. Activities revolve around daily class reading. Students typically pair up in order to take detailed literary notes. Students have daily opportunities to share insights, questions, and observations with the class. Teachers may group students in Literature Circles in order to investigate concepts in greater depth. Additionally, teachers may make vocabulary lists a collaborative effort and apply the Writing Workshop approach to essays connected with this unit. The social interaction of these activities ensures a wide field of viewpoints and ideas; students demonstrate their learning in collaboration with each other, but they must also do so on an individual basis as they apply vocabulary words, compose articulate and analytic essays, and identify literary elements at work in the text.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.3	Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.5	Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.7	Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.9	Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.a	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g.,

	charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.b	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.c	Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.d	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.e	Establish and maintain a formal style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.f	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.b	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.c	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.d	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2.c	Spell correctly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.b	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.c	Consult general and specialized 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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.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).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.b	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.c	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

Essential Questions

How do extended works of nonfiction organize information around central ideas?

How can real-life people in a nonfiction work be similar in their transformations to literary characters?

Why do some works of nonfiction carry more informational authority than others?

Why does a reader's individual response to a work of literary nonfiction provoke thought and growth?

How does group discussion influence and individual's response, thought, and

growth?

Application of Knowledge and Skills...

Students will know that...

- as individuals, we can grow as we engage with a text and analyze it.
- individuals, events, and concepts develop and interact throughout a nonfiction text.
- information in a work of extended nonfiction supports a central idea.
- the social act of literary discussion enhances not only the participants' learning and growth with respect to one book but also each individual's understanding of additional literature that they read on their own.

- works of nonfiction vary in their credibility and authority.

Students will be able to...

- analyze a text and synthesize concepts in spoken and written response to critical questions.
- analyze and explain the conceptual structure of a work of nonfiction with respect to its central ideas and its author's likely intent.
- apply insights revealed in group discussions to their own analysis of literature and express those insights verbally and in writing.
- assess the validity of information and the persuasiveness of arguments presented in a work of nonfiction.
- trace and evaluate the development of events and arguments in a work of nonfiction.

Assessments

Reading Exploration Sheets
Formative: Other written assessments

After daily class reading, students work together to compose notes on each chapter. These notes include a short summary, questions, comments, literary devices, and challenging vocabulary. The teacher periodically assesses the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of these notes.

Literature Circles
Formative: Other oral assessments

Roughly once a week, students get into their Literature Circles in order to discuss questions, insights, and literary elements. Students use their Reading Exploration Sheets to keep track of what they wish to contribute, but they must take care that their discussion is not a mere recitation of what is on their sheets. The discussion must be dynamic and energetic.

At times, students consult each other regarding strategies for writing essays connected with the reading. This is acceptable so long as the discussion does not become little more than a Writing Workshop conference.

Some teachers may desire more structure for Literature Circles in their classes. If so, they can assign the following roles to each student: master of ceremonies, literary term wizard, vocabulary czar, summarizer, and passage picker.

Vocabulary Assessments
Summative: Written Test

Students collaborate with the teacher on vocabulary lists at various stages in the unit. The teacher then publishes an official list, and students must take tests requiring them to put words into sentences that show

each word's correct meaning and use.

Comprehension Quizzes
Summative: Written Test

For some chapters, students will read individually and answer questions that demonstrate comprehension of main idea, literary devices, vocabulary, and making inferences.

Essay Responses to Open-Ended Questions
Formative: Extended Essay

Students must respond to open-ended questions with thoughtful, thorough, elaborate essays that demonstrate basic comprehension, critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and adherence to formal writing guidelines.

Literary Term Test
Summative: Written Test

After reading for the text has concluded, students must identify literary terms whose examples from the story are provided.

- Assessment Rubric for Reading Exploration Sheets
- Reading Exploration Sheets
- Assessment Rubric for Literature Circle Participation
- Blank Vocabulary Test
- Assesment Rubrics for Self-Assessment, Peer Assessment, and Teacher Assessment

Activities

Possible classroom activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Daily review of Essential Questions

Classroom reading, note-taking, discussion

Independent reading and note-taking

Deep inquiry into vocabulary, literary devices, social/cultural influences, and text structure in the text

Investigation of cross-curricular connections

Literature Circle discussions between small groups of peers

Vocabulary assessments

Essay responses to open-ended questions with peer conferences to assist with composition and editing

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Differentiation for special education:

- General modifications may include:
  - Modifications & accommodations as listed in the student's IEP
  - Assign a peer to help keep student on task
  - Modified or reduced assignments
  - Reduce length of assignment for different mode of delivery
  - Increase one-to-one time
  - Working contract between you and student at risk
  - Prioritize tasks
  - Think in concrete terms and provide hands-on-tasks
  - Position student near helping peer or have quick access to teacher
  - Anticipate where needs will be
  - Break tests down in smaller increments
- Content specific modifications may include:
  - Leveled short stories
  - Leveled Selection Tests
  - Reader's Notebook: Adapted Version
  - Hear It! Audio CD
  - Leveled Vocabulary Warm Ups
  - Leveled Selection Support
  - Leveled Skills Development
  - Teacher-constructed notes
  - Structured activities between peers (class discussions, paired note-taking sessions) activate the social element of learning.
  - Discussion(auditory), notes and handouts (visual), and SmartBoard contributions (kinesthetic) allow for a variety of induction modes
  - Peer-review of essays, paired note-taking sessions, and Literature Circle discussions all enable

students of different conceptual perspectives to combine resources.
    - Structured activities between peers (Literature Circles, paired note-taking sessions, committee presentations) activate the social element of learning.
    - Discussion(auditory), notes and handouts (visual), and online investigation of Internet resources (kinesthetic) allow for a variety of induction modes.

Differentiation for ELL's:

- General modifications may include:
    - Strategy groups
    - Teacher conferences
    - Graphic organizers
    - Modification plan
    - Collaboration with ELL Teacher
- Content specific vocabulary important for ELL students to understand include:

    - Character, plot, setting, point of view, theme, fiction, nonfiction, conflict, irony, symbolism, foils, figurative language

Differentiation to extend learning for gifted students may include:

- Leveled short stories
- Leveled Selection Tests
- Reader's Notebook: Adapted Version
- Leveled Vocabulary Warm Ups
- Leveled Selection Support
- Leveled Skills Development
- Peer-review of essays, paired note-taking sessions, and Literature Circle discussions all enable students of different conceptual perspectives to combine resources.
- Structured activities between peers (Literature Circles, paired note-taking sessions, committee presentations) activate the social element of learning.
- Discussion(auditory), notes and handouts (visual), and online investigation of Internet resources (kinesthetic) allow for a variety of induction modes.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Teachers (or the Connections Committee, for teachers who set up Literature Symposium Committees) may wish to include investigations of various cross-curricular topics that come up in connection with the texts

covered this year.

Resources

Teacher Website (for assignments and expectations)

Pearson Prentice Hall *Literature*, Grade 8--Unit 3 Introduction

Approved book-length works of literary nonfiction:

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* 1160L

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. 1140L

Essential questions related to the texts.

Assignment guidelines, activity objectives, and scoring rubrics provided by teachers.

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different

	ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP11.1	Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring new technology. They are proficient with ubiquitous technology applications. They understand the inherent risks-personal and organizational-of technology applications, and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.