# 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 *Fundations*, 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

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| LA.RL.3.1 | Ask and answer questions, and make relevant connections to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. |
| LA.RL.3.2 | Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message/theme, lesson, or moral and explain how it is revealed through key details in the text. |
| LA.RL.3.3 | Describe the characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot. |
| LA.RL.3.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language. |
| LA.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. |
| LA.RL.3.6 | Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters. |
| LA.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). |
| LA.RL.3.9 | Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the central message/theme, lesson, and/or moral, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series). |
| LA.RL.3.10 | By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed. |
| LA.RF.3.3 | Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words. |
| LA.RF.3.4 | Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. |
| LA.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. |

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| LA.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. |
| LA.SL.3.3 | Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail. |
| LA.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. |
| LA.SL.3.5 | Use multimedia to demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details. |
| LA.SL.3.6 | Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. |
| LA.L.3.1 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. |
| LA.L.3.2 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. |
| LA.L.3.3 | Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. |
| LA.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. |
| LA.L.3.4.A | Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. |
| LA.L.3.5 | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings. |
| LA.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). |

## 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 charactes'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

The design of reading workshop allows for individualized instruction and independent growth for every child. At the heart of differentiation in Reader's Workshop is data and the analysis of data. Through the usage of monitoring student progress during independent reading, analysis of formal and informal running records, and other assessments such as high-frequency word lists and spelling inventories, teachers should be able to delineate which students are in need of additional supports, in what areas those supports should be targeted at, and which students are ready to be pushed further in their reading work.

Some methods to use to support struggling readers as well as advanced readers:

- 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 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
- Utilize charts to provide a visual reminder for students throughout the mini-lesson.
    - Add drawings and visuals to charts
    - Provide individualized copies of teaching charts
    - Depending on the concept, the chart may be most effective to visually break the concept into parts and touch each part during a demonstration
- For students needing more support at the end of the mini-lesson, keep them at the rug for an extra minute after dispersing the rest of the class and clarify the main topic of the mini-lesson or work one-on-one with them to start their reading
- Set reading goals for students and follow-up with the reading goals after an appropriate amount of time.
- Create group and one-on-one conferencing calendars to ensure that students are being met with on a regular basis and working toward individualized goals
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen
- Assign roles to partners (Partner 1/Partner 2) to help scaffold which student should speak first and avoid one partner dominating the conversation and the other partner becoming a passive listener
    - For ELL students, creating a triad instead of partnership may be beneficial
- Provide students access to RAZ Kids which will provide students more reading options for leveled texts, access to technology, and the ability to have books read to them while they follow along or for students to record their reading

Supports for ELL students:

- Provide consistent teaching structures
- Use consistent teaching language
- Offer plentiful opportunities for reading practice
- Provide access to a broad variety of texts
- Use assessment to provide extra support
- Support students in the preproduction and early production stages of learning English
- Use visual examples in your teaching
- Modify our mini-lessons to be as concise as possible
- Provide extra ?active engagement? time in mini-lessons for extra practice
- Provide readers with topic-based text sets
- Provide opportunities for listening and learning the social language of the reading workshop
- Provide opportunities to read in both their home language and in English
- Plan instruction with the ELL teacher
- Extend the language ELLs are producing through questioning
- Provide explicit instruction in tenses, pronoun references, and connectives
- Support students in building vocabulary using their own reading as the context
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen

In order to support this differentiation work, teachers may want to consult the following materials:

- Units of Study books at lower or higher levels for teaching strategies that are appropriate to the support needed.
- The Reading Strategies Book by Jennifer Serravallo
- If. . . Then. .. Curriculum book for alternate units or teaching points to support the individual reading levels.
- A Guide to the Reading Workshop (Primary Grades) chapter 14 for more in-depth information on differentiation

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 Dyamonde 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**

## 21st Century Skills

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| 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.CRP8.1 | Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem. They are aware of problems when they occur and take action quickly to address the problem; they thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions. They carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others. |