Unit 3 - Historical Fiction Book Clubs

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit, students practice reading analytically, synthesizing complicated narratives, comparing and contrasting themes, and incorporating nonfiction research into their reading. This can be a beautiful intellectual journey, where the stories sweep children along with their exciting dramas. Each club reads several novels set within a historical time period, supported by researching nonfiction. At the beginning of this unit, readers analyze complicated settings and multiple plot lines, moving up levels of text complexity. They learn to consider how one part of a text is related to other parts, thinking and talking deeply about craft and structure. The next part of the unit shines a light on interpretation, helping students to engage in ambitious intellectual work and building on earlier work on interpreting characters. Later, readers think about how the information from nonfiction texts enlarges their historical knowledge, as well as their understanding of character's struggles, perspectives, and insights. Children learn to think across fiction and nonfiction, across story and history, across the books they have read, and across their own lives.

Standards

LA.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
LA.RL.4.6	Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
LA.RL.4.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
LA.RL.4.10	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.4.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words.
LA.RF.4.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
LA.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
LA.SL.4.2	Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
LA.SL.4.3	Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Essential Questions

- How do readers tackle complex texts?
- How do readers work in book clubs?
- How do readers interpret complex texts?
- How do readers become more complex because of reading?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- books become more sophisticated, the setting becomes significant. It may function as part of the problem that a character has to overcome, it can be an emotional space that creates the tone or mood of a place, or the setting can operate at a symbolic level.
- readers pay attention to the beginning of the story where a tremendous amount of crucial information will reveal the kind of place the story is set and also the kind of people who occupy the story.
- readers separate their perspective from that of the main characters and discern the various perspectives of different characters within a story, imagining the different points of view that characters in that scene bring to the action.
- readers should value their own ideas about books and hold onto these as they read, because each reader brings their own history to a book, and they should share these ideas with others while remaining open to new ideas, and the possibility of revision.
- readers understand that characters exit in a relationship with history, and are affected by the social pressures, community norms, and historical atmosphere around them.
- readers work in clubs to synthesize as many details as possible, and it is important to listen carefully to each other, build on each other's comments, and honor relationships so that every club member feels valued.
- strong readers know that as their books get harder, they have to work harder and can use tools such as timelines, graphic organizers, and lists of characters to enhance comprehension.

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

- determine themes and support them with evidence from across the story
- figure out the main character's timeline and the historical timeline
- notice universal themes and ideas across books
- read analytically, studying parts that clue them into the facts, feelings, or setting
- realize that a character's perspective is shaped by the times and by his/her roles
- take into account minor characters
- turn to nonfiction to deepen understanding

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from the Historical Fiction Clubs unit; *Grade 4;* part of the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project. These serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their student's needs.

Teaching Points

- teach students that readers pay particular attention at the start of a book to analyze the setting- when the story takes place, where, and what this place feels like
- teach students that readers keep track of story elements as they read, continually building their understanding of what's going on
- teach students that readers keep track of the ways in which characters' timelines fit with the historical timelines, deepening understanding of both characters and historical events
- teach students that to deepen their understanding of characters and perspective, readers step into characters' shoes and realize their thoughts and decisions are shaped by the times in which they live and their roles
- teach students that strong readers read complex texts alertly, poised to interpret as they read. To do this, they recognize when a passage is significant and think about how that passage connects to other parts of the text, and then figure out what is is really saying
- teach students that when readers think or write about big ideas from a book, they support their ideas with small moments, small details, and small objects found in the text
- remind students that when readers have developed an interpretation of a book, they keep it in mind, using it like a lens, growing and shaping that interpretation as they read on
- teach students that readers are open to new idea, both as they read and in conversation with other readers, and they can use these ideas to make their interpretations more powerful
- teach students that one way readers broaden or deepen their interpretation of a text is to attend to the perspectives of minor characters
- teach students that readers build interpretations, they draft and revise their ideas by comparing them to qualities of a strong interpretation
- teach students that historical fiction readers often deepen their sense of an unfamiliar era by studying images- photographs and illustrations from the time period
- teach students that readers make their reading into a project, particularly by researching on the run as they read
- teach students that readers learn facts and information from historical narratives, and that as they do so, they organize their thinking and their notes to gather and sort these facts
- teach students that as readers come to know people's perspectives, they are careful not to make assumptions or to overgeneralize
- teach students that as readers deepen their thinking by investigating power dynamics in their stories
- teach students that readers look for similar themes across different books to deepen their thinking

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 downloadable, 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 5th grade Reading Learning Progressions:

- base predictions on what the readers knows about the genre of fictional texts and predict not just what will happen to the main character, but also to the secondary characters across multiple plotlines.
- realize that in more complicated stories, the reader sometimes has to wait longer for the parts to fit together or for things to become more clear, At these points, the reader may reread to figure out how the parts of the story fit together, but also read on with questions in mind.
- alert that stories are not always told sequentially; note backstory, gaps in time between scenes, flashback and flash-forward, and subplots.
- name a theme and then summarize the most important parts of the story that support that theme.
- see places in a story where the characters are not what they seem at first.

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

Mentor Texts

Revolutionary War

Buttons for General Washington by Roop, Peter

The Fighting Ground by Avi

George Washington's Socks by Woodruff, Elvira

George, The Drummer Boy by Benchley, Nathaniel

Guns for General Washington by Reit, Symour

The Keeping Room by Myers, Anna

Meet Felicity, An American Girl by Tripp, Valerie

Molly Pitcher, Young Patirot by Stevenson, Augusta

Pre and Post Civil War

Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine

The Blue and the Gray by Eve Bunting

Follow the Drinking Gourd by Jeanette Winter

Molly Bannaky by Chris Soentpiet

Westward Expansion/ Prairie Life

Cheyenne Again by Eve Bunting

Orphan Train by Verla Kay

What You Know First by Patricia Maclachlan

World War II

The Butterfly by Patricia Polacco

A New Coat for Anna by Harriet Ziefert

Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki

Pre-Columbian through American Revolutionary War (Including Colonial Period)

Katie's Trunk by Ann Turner

Encounter by Jane Yolan

The Civil Rights Movement

Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins by Carole Boston Weatherford

A Sweet Smell of Roses by Angela Johnson

The Great Depression

The Babe and I by David Adler

Pop's Bridge by Eve Bunting

Resources

Units of Study for Teaching Reading:

- *Building a Reading Life* by Lucy Calkins and Kathleen Tolan
- *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

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.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal.

They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.