Unit 5 - Reading History: The American Revolution

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 3**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The unit, Historical Fiction Tackling Complex Texts is complicated as it happens in a time and a place the reader has never inhabited, and the characters are entangled in historical and social issues which are related to real historical events. The goal of this unit is for students to emerge from the unit as knowledgeable readers who have learned how to build collective interpretations, know how to listen closely to each other as they read, and know how to carry ideas across time-both in their book club discussions and across more than one text. Important considerations include that the fact that because this unit includes complex texts it is best for students reading levels P and above. In addition, due to the complicated nature of this genre it is recommended that this unit be conducted in book clubs. It will be important to talk up the fact that reading clubs provide group solidarity and allow each member to grow. During the first half of this unit, students will focus on deep comprehension and synthesis of complex story elements and working in book clubs. Next, students will focus on interpretation, and paying attention to perspective and point of view in addition to carrying ideas across a text. Finally, readers will enhance their thematic understanding by comparing both fiction and nonfiction texts. In the beginning of the unit readers will figure out the nature of the setting, including the ways people live, and who the characters are, as well as the relationship the characters have to historical tensions. In addition, students will continue to read deeply to analyze characters, setting, and events in their stories. They will also push themselves to determine the relationships between those elements by keeping track of multiple plot lines, unfamiliar characters, and of shifts in time and place. Furthermore, students will work towards being able to compare and contrast structure and analyze multiple accounts of the same event on numerous texts of the same time period. Then, they will work towards thinking about those complicated themes and how they have recurred in human history and continue to be relevant today. The Historical Fiction unit will lend itself to lessons in social issues such as war and oppression and will teach lessons such as human endurance and social justice. It is important to note that students may need to see and feel the world of their stories, and could benefit from resources such as historical images, movie clips, and text books to help readers have a schema to envision the historical settings of their stories. Furthermore, it will be important to organize book clubs around one historical era so that students read several novels dealing with one era, and maintain their requisite reading volume in addition to building a familiarity with the historical era they are focusing on. One way to scaffold the understanding of the historical details is to have each book club start with at least one book that is a lower level than the reading levels of the club, so that it may serve as both a reference and a crutch when historical details are referenced in harder texts.

This is a unit on researching history, using the American Revolution as a case in point. You'll teach your students to build knowledge by reading accessible texts, lean on text structures to organize notes and thinking, synthesize new information with prior knowledge, and tackle primary sources. As students conduct their research, preparing to debate the question of independence from Great Britain, you'll teach that historians study multiple points of view to gain a complete picture of events. Students gather and angle evidence to support sides and then hone their skills to support a position with reasons and evidence. Then students work with partners to research the period after the Second Continental Congress. You'll teach strategies to tackle complex texts, preview and paraphrase, and study all parts of a text to extract main ideas. Vocabulary will have a special emphasis, including strategies for learning and using new domain-specific words. You will also teach students to consider new questions and answers about their topics, drawing on their growing knowledge

to see how the past and present are connected.

Standards

LA.RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.
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.RI.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.RI.4.3	Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
LA.RI.4.5	Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
LA.RI.4.6	Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.
LA.RI.4.7	Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
LA.RI.4.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
LA.RI.4.9	Integrate and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
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.RF.4.4.A	Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
LA.RF.4.4.B	Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
LA.RF.4.4.C	Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

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...

- As 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 ask themselves who has the power, how is power visible and what forms does power take in this story?
- 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 read nonfiction alongside fiction and notice how each text develops a theme and compare and contrast multiple books with the same theme, analyzing carefully and using details as evidence for their ideas.
- 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 use allusions, figurative language, and symbolism to convey ideas that are not easily contained in ordinary language.
- 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 cub 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…

- Compare and contrast information gathered from different texts.
- Organize the information gleamed from research so that they can synthesize across texts.
- Research a topic by paying close attention to the most important details.
- Synthesize learning in order to be able to teach others about the topic.
- Transfer and apply previous knowledge about a topic in order to take on independent research ventures.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from the Reading History*; The American Revolution* 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 students' needs.

Teaching Points

- teach students that researchers often learn about a topic by locating accessible resources through which they can build their own prior background knowledge and overview of the topic. They also skim to

pay attention to recurring subtopics
- teach students that when researchers preview a text, they try to identify the text structure, because knowing this can help them understand the important parts and organize their reading and note-taking
- teach students that researchers pay particular attention to people, geography, and chronology when they read history. By paying attention to who, where, and when, researchers begin to organize their new knowledge
- remind students that when researchers take notes, they read a chunk of the text straight through and pause to talk it over in their mind before they record important parts
- remind students that researchers synthesize information about a key subtopic by reading an overview text, then reading across several sources about that one subtopic, and thinking about how the new information fits with what they've already read
- teach students that researchers not only construct a big picture of their topic through reading and synthesizing, they also pay careful attention to the details that reveal tone and point of view
- teach students that readers of history draw on particular strategies to read primary source documents
- teach students that researchers can bring their topics to life when they draw on all they know about reading fiction to make a scene come alive
- teach students that readers study historical evidence to determine their own point of view, and then they analyze the evidence to figure out how to make it support their point of view
- teach students that debaters research both sides of an issue to present their position effectively with reasons and evidence and rebut the position of their opponent
- teach students that readers often read much easier texts to get background knowledge on a topic before tackling harder texts
- teach students that readers use special strategies for making sense of a complex text. They begin by previewing the text closely, and then they read a section, paraphrase what they just read, and notice whether it goes with what they've read before or introduces something new
- teach students that nonfiction readers know that there are specific places in a text where an author often reveals important information related to the main idea: introductions, conclusions, and text features
- teach students that readers draw on prior knowledge of text structure to read nonfiction
- teach students that when readers approach a new word, they not only learn the definition of it, but also work to understand the word and how it is used at a deeper level

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 plot lines.
- 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 back story, 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

The Fourth of July Story by Alice Dalgliesh

George Washington by Wil Mara

George, the Drummer Boy by Nathaniel Benchley

Paul Revere and the Bell Ringers by Jonah Winter

A Picture Book of Paul Revere by David A. Adler

The Fighting Ground by Avi

George Vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen From Both Sides by Rosalyn Schanzer

Guns for George Washington by Seymour Reit

If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution by Kay Moore

Phoebe the Spy by Judy Berry Griffin

The Secret Soldier by Ann McGovern

Sophia's War: A Tale of the Revolution by Avi

George Washington's Socks by Elvira Woodruff

George Washinton's Spy by Elvira Woodruff

Give Me Liberty by L.M. Elliott

The Keeping Room by Anna Myers

Midnight Rider by Joan Hiatt Harlow

Mr. Revere and I by Robert Lawson

Secret Weapons: A Tale of the Revolutionary War by Johann Wyss

Sybil Ludington's Midnight Ride by Marsha Amstel

Washington's War by Stacia Deutsch

And Then What Happened Paul Revere? by Jean Fritz

The Birth of the United States by Linda Crotta Brennan

Heroes of the Revolution by David Adler

Let it Begin Here! by Dennis Fradin

A More Perfect Union by Betsy Maestro

The Revolutionary War by Josh Gregory

Shh!! We're Writing the Constitution by Jean Fritz

Voices of the American Revolution by Lois Miner Huey

Who Was George Washington? by Roberta Edwards

When Washington Crossed the Delaware by Lynne Cheney

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.