# Unit 2- Tackling Complexity: Moving Up Levels of Nonfiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

This unit teaches students to embrace the complexities of their high-interest nonfiction texts. Students will investigate the ways nonfiction texts are becoming more complex, and they'll learn strategies to tackle these new challenges, such as expecting to encounter multiple main ideas, some taught implicitly. Instruction emphasizes the strong foundational skills, such as fluency, orienting to texts, and word solving, that are required to read complex nonfiction. Students will pursue independent inquiry projects, drawing on all their skills to tackle complex texts. You'll extend the teaching from Unit 1 on writing about fiction reading, to help students write about their nonfiction reading in ways that are similarly engaging and productive. Reading analytically is critical for fifth-graders. You'll support students in analyzing differences in perspective across texts, particularly differences that tie into the author's craft or structure decisions. You'll also support skills such as cross-text synthesis. Your fifth-graders will make their own connections and spark their own ideas as they think deeply about a text, so they can contribute their own thinking to conversations on their topics. Across this unit, you'll communicate to students that following their interests matters and is valued in your classroom.

## Standards

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| LA.RL.5.1 | Quote accurately from a text, and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. |
| LA.RL.5.2 | Determine the key details in a story, drama or poem to identify the theme and to summarize the text. |
| LA.RL.5.3 | Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact). |
| LA.RL.5.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes. |
| LA.RL.5.5 | Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem. |
| LA.RL.5.6 | Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described. |
| LA.RL.5.7 | Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem). |
| LA.RL.5.9 | Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. |
| LA.RL.5.10 | 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. |

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| LA.RI.5.1 | Quote accurately from a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. |
| LA.RI.5.2 | Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. |
| LA.RI.5.3 | Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text. |
| LA.RI.5.4 | Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. |
| LA.RI.5.5 | Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts. |
| LA.RI.5.6 | Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. |
| LA.RI.5.7 | Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. |
| LA.RI.5.8 | Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s). |
| LA.RI.5.9 | Integrate and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. |
| LA.RI.5.10 | By the end of year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed. |
| LA.RF.5.3 | Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words. |
| LA.RF.5.3.A | Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context. |
| LA.RF.5.4 | Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. |
| LA.RF.5.4.A | Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. |
| LA.RF.5.4.B | Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. |
| LA.RF.5.4.C | Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. |

## Essential Questions

- How can I read tons of high-interest nonfiction texts, reading to learn all that I can, and to read faster, smoother, with absorption—while also learning from the texts?
- How can I understand what I read, aware not just of the content but also of the structure and of reasons why that structure is a good one for carrying the content?
- How can I build theories about what the text says, in noting not just what it actually says but also what it suggests?

## Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- readers build theories about what the text is telling and suggesting.
- readers critique texts with an analytical lens
- readers read across several texts about one topic to gain information
- readers read from various non-fiction text formats paying attention to the text structure
- readers read thoughtfully in order to write well about reading
- readers read to gather information about a topic
- readers synthesize information and determines important as they read.

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

- compare and contrast texts, analyze arguments, and investigate points of view
- conduct research on a specific topic within their reading
- determine importance and synthesize information in expository nonfiction
- develop critical thinking and note taking skills
- explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support a particular point in a text
- read from various nonfiction text structures

## Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from the Tackling Complexity*; Moving Up Levels of Nonfiction* unit; *Grade 5;* 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 readers approach nonfiction texts with their knowledge of genre in mind, knowing the things that are apt to be important
- teach students that readers orient themselves to complex nonfiction texts and then hold their initial ideas loosely as the read forward, remaining open to revision as they encounter new information
- engage students in an inquiry to determine how complex nonfiction gets challenging when it comes to determining the main idea
- teach students specific strategies that readers use when they encounter texts that teach main ideas implicitly
- teach students that readers rely on a host of strategies to help them make sense of the increasingly complex vocabulary used by authors of nonfiction texts
- teach students that readers can use word morphology to tackle tricky vocabulary
- teach readers that they can study and consider the structure of texts at many levels. They can think about how texts are built at the smallest level- the sentence level- to how part of a text is built in how the entire text is built
- teach students that readers monitor their own comprehension, and when they notice their comprehension breaking down, they rely on a toolkit of strategies to help get themselves unstuck
- teach students that readers can summarize complex texts, drawing on previous learning about main idea to lift the level of their summaries

- teach students that researchers can learn from a variety of sources- videos, observations, interviews, and even field trips- using the same reading skills to make meaning from them that they do when they read their print nonfiction texts
- teach students that researchers conduct primary research to learn as much as they can about their topic, discover patterns, and determine main ideas
- teach students that readers approach texts differently after having done some primary research on a topic. They know what's important to know about their topic, which leads them to see patterns not noticed by novice readers
- teach students that informational readers write to understand what they are learning as they read. Specifically, they can angle their writing so that it betters explains the information
- teach students that researchers ask questions as different levels- from basic comprehension questions to those requiring in-depth exploration. They question the text they're reading, the topic they're studying, and their own agenda
- teach students that readers synthesize information across subtopics, both within a single text and across texts. They explain how parts of the text work together and determine why one part of the text is important to the rest of the text or the rest of the topic
- teach students that best writing about reading moves back and forth from specific details to big ideas. You'll help readers see that they need both ideas and details to develop strong thinking and identify what they really want to say about their topic
- teach students that as researchers read across subtopics, they pay particular attention to how authors portray topics in similar and different ways. They compare and contrast the central ideas authors teach, and they examine how authors teach those central ideas
- teach students that readers pay attention to an author's perspective and how the author might be swaying readers to think, even when the author's perspective is not explicit. Then readers also consider the trustworthiness of sources and develop their own perspective
- teach students that when readers study topics deeply, they allow the research they've done to change the way they think and feel about their research topic. They live differently because of this research, planning for and taking action

**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:

- preview the book, paying attention to information from the cover and the first chapter/prologue to orient the reader to the story's characters, conflicts, and possible themes
- use what the reader knows about the genre and author to build expectations for the characters, setting, plot, and theme
- anticipate that a story might have more than one plotline, timeline, and point of view and track shifts in time or perspective
- notice when the narrator is connected to one or more characters' inner thoughts (3rd person narrative)
- notice when the author has made the narrator unreliable or limited in his or her point of view (1st person narrative)
- continue to develop theories about main and minor characters, thinking about how they are affected by elements such as the plot, setting, issues, and conflicts

## 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**

On My Journey Now: Looking at African American History Through the Spirituals by Nikki Giovanni

Rose That Grew From Concrete by Nikki Giovanni

The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Octopus by Harry Abrams

Under the Sea: Hidden World by C. Delafosse

A Look Inside Sharks and Rays by K. Banister

Shark Attack! DK Readers

**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

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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.CRP7.1 | Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies. They use reliable research process to search for new information. They evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices in their workplace situation. |