Unit 6- Fantasy Book Clubs: The Magic of Themes and Symbols

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 4**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit, students will work in clubs to become deeply immersed in the fantasy genre and further develop higher-level thinking skills to study how authors develop characters and themes over time. Students read analytically as they consider how authors begin a book by establishing the setting as both a physical and a psychological place. You'll lead students to think metaphorically as well as analytically, teaching them to explore the quests and themes within and across their novels. You'll also help students engage more deeply by considering the implications of conflicts, themes, and lessons learned. Later in the unit, you'll focus students on dealing with the challenges that harder novels pose. Kids will work on their habits as readers—going outside the book to build knowledge, or studying how authors introduce hard words and using strategies to learn new vocabulary as they read. In addition, readers investigate fantasy as a literary tradition and study how the thinking developed through reading fantasy novels will apply to other genres.

Standards

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.
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 tackle the demanding and complex genre of fantasy reading?
- What will my strategies and goals be that help me to make sense of multiple plot lines, layered characters, complex themes?
- What strategies can I use to hold onto the story line when plot get tangled and the main characters seem confusing?
- What strategies can I use when the setting is unfamiliar and hard to envision?
- How can I use all I have learned about how authors develop themes to study the way authors approach common themes in fantasy?
- How can I deepen my thoughts about fantasy stories by thinking about the choices the authors have made—especially thinking about symbolism, allusion and craft?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- fantasy novels teach readers to deal with complexity
- fantasy readers develop thematic understandings of texts, know that it is much more than dwarfs and elves.
- fantasy readers envision the story in their mind, creating the world the author is trying to portray.
- readers ask questions about a text as they read to build comprehension
- there are many fantasy archetypes, quest structures, and thematic patterns.
- using strategies and creating goals will help them to make sense of complex texts.

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

- actively participate in discussions about texts during book club
- analyze a text by asking questions about the characters, theme. structure, and author's craft
- consider how a story portrays cultures and represents characters
- notice patterns across texts.
- read complex texts developing skills of synthesis and interpretation.
- think about how the work they have done in the fantasy unit applies to other genres
- think metaphorically about a text

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from the Fantasy Book Clubs*; The Magic of Themes and Symbols* 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 fantasy readers research the setting of a story by investigating clues about the time period and important magical elements, using covers, blurbs, and details from the beginning of the story
- teach students that fantasy readers expect to learn alongside the main character, and are alert to clues that characters are in the midst of important learning experiences
- teach students that as fantasy readers tackle more complicated books, they use charts, timelines, and other graphic organizers to help track and analyze multiple problems and plotlines
- guide students through an inquiry to explore what they can learn about characters if they study them over time, delving deeply into their formation, motivations, and actions
- teach students that readers know that in fantasy stories, characters face different kinds of dragons- some are literal, while others are metaphorical dragons symbolizing conflicts faced by those characters. Experiences readers look to how these conflicts develop into themes
- teach students that insightful readers mine fantasy stories to discover themes and lessons that might apply to their own lives
- teach students that most fantasy stories follow a quest structure, and to achieve deeper understanding of the story, it's valuable to investigate both the external and internal quests of major characters
- teach students that knowledgeable readers assume that some themes are so universal that they appear in more than one book and across history as well

- teach students that readers of fantasy refer to nonfiction texts and references to more fully understand the world they are reading about
- teach students that specific vocabulary plays an important role in their reading, especially fantasy words. Students should use a whole toolkit of strategies to figure out meanings of unfamiliar words
- teach students that just as in life, characters in fantasy books are not all good or all bad, but in fact are rather complex
- teach students that fantasy readers try to figure out if repeated or highlights images, objects, characters, or settings are a symbol of something else, and how this symbol might connect to a possible theme for the story
- teach students that fantasy readers gain new insights into the real world by understanding and interpreting the metaphors and allegories that exist in fantasy
- teach students that fantasy readers pay close attention to how cultures are portrayed in stories- the culture in which the story takes place, as well as other cultures. They also consider how characters, settings, and plotlines may vary across fantasy stories from different cultures
- teach students that expert fantasy readers use what they know about archetypes to help make predictions, inferences, and interpretations about stories
- teach students that one way readers analyze a story is by using critical lenses, such as being alert to stereotypes and gender norms (or rules)
- teach students that they can apply their fantasy reading skills, such as interpretation and cross-text study, to help improve their skills in reading other genres.
- teach students that strong readers celebrate and reflect on all that they have learned, and then find ways to carry those skills forward on their learning journeys

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
- question stories and think about social issues and stereotypes

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:

- *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

Mentor Texts:

The Werewolf Club Series (L) David Pinkwater

Unicorn's Secret Series (M) Kathleen Duey

Secrets of Droon (M-O)Tony Abbott

Dragon Slayer's Academy (N-P) Kate McMullan

Spiderwick Chronicles (Q-R) Black and DiTerlizzi

The Edge Chronicles (R-U) Stewart and Riddell

City of Ember Series (R-U) Jeanne DuPrau

Deltora Quest (R-T) Emily Rodda

Warriors (R-S) Eric Hunter

Narnia (T) C.S. Lewis

Rowan of Rin (T) Emily Rodda

Animorphs (T-U) K.A. Applegate

The Ranger's Apprentice (T-U) John Flanagan

Gregor The Overlander (U-V) Suzanne Collins

Artemis Fowl (W) Eoin Colfer

Tuck Everlasting (W) Natalie Babbitt

Percy Jackson and the Olympians (U-W)Rick Riordan

The Dark is Rising (X) Susan Cooper

Mockingay Series (The Hunger Games) (Y-Z) Suzanne Collins

Redwall (X-Z) Brian Jacques

Harry Potter (V-Z) J.K. Rowling

The Golden Compass (Y-Z) Phillip Pullman

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.