Unit 5: Author Study -- Reading Like a Fan

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Week 33**
Length: **8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In Unit 5: Author Study -- Reading Like a Fan, students will closely examine the work of a prolific young adult author by comparing and contrasting narrative elements, writer's craft, and thematic tendencies across several texts. First, students will get to know the author by researching their biographical details and reading from the author's autobiography. Next, students will participate in book club discussions and readings to read (or re-read) one or two novels composed by the author. While reading, students will work to identify the basic narrative elements of the text, while also looking deeper to consider larger life lessons and issues present within the text. Through this initial reading work, readers will study particular aspects of the books to consider how these aspects might be hallmarks within the author's body of work. As readers continue their exploration, readers will work to notice and name distinctive craft moves the author makes across texts and genres. Finally, readers will analyze the themes that recur in the author's book, and extend to consider the bigger life lessons and stance the author seems to bring forward in each text. Based upon these observations of narrative elements and structure, writer's craft, and thematic traits, readers will compare and contrast across their reading work to generate and justify author claims that can become the basis for a literary analysis essay. Readers may also use their "writer's eye" to bring elements of the author's craft into their own writing lives by composing a personal or fictional narrative.

Standards

LA.RL.6.1	Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
LA.RL.6.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
LA.RL.6.3	Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
LA.RL.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
LA.RL.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
LA.RL.6.6	Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
LA.RL.6.7	Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.
LA.RL.6.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

LA.RL.6.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.6.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
LA.SL.6.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
LA.SL.6.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.6.1.C	Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
LA.SL.6.1.D	Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
LA.SL.6.4	Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).
LA.SL.6.5	Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.
LA.SL.6.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Essential Questions

- How does an author's own life experience shape what and how he/she writers?
- How can I deepen my understanding of a text by considering other work by an author?
- How can I analyze an author's body of work to understand the author's voice, style, and narrative focus?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- An author uses their life experiences to shape their stories.
- Authors are decisive in the choices they make; everything on the page is there because it matters!
- Readers dedicate and apprentice themselves to authors, knowing the "ins and outs" of their style, voice, and focus.
- Readers look for the deeper meanings within a text as a way to look deeper at the world around them.

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

- Analyze the impact of a scene, chapter, or sentence on the development of the theme, plot, or character change.
- Analyze the impact of figurative language and narrative techniques on meaning and tone.
- Assemble relevant textual evidence to support literal and inferential claims.

- Compare and contrast an author's approach to similar themes and topics across genres and texts.
- Compare and contrast narrative elements across texts and genres.
- Construct a valid literary claim with relevant textual evidence and logical reasoning.
- Construct appropriate graphic organizers to support interpretation. (Venn Diagram, T-Chart, Timeline, etc.)
- Describe the narrative structure of a text. (Exposition, Inciting Event, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution)
- Determine a theme.
- Develop reading artifacts (jots, long writes, entries) to generate and revise literary theories.
- Employ active reading strategies to construct meaning across a text.
- Employ literary lens for character and thematic analysis.
- Enact accountable talk routines and roles.
- Generate and defend a list of recurring themes and common attributes across an author's various works.
- Identify narrative elements. (character, setting, plot, conflict, theme)
- Retell with meaning and a focus on literary elements.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

Suggested Teaching Points

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from the TCRWP curricular calendars and texts and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Bend I: When Readers Read More Than One Book by the Same Author, We Come to Know that Author

- Teach readers that readers research authors to know them as real people whose experiences shape their writing lives.
- Teach readers that when readers are fans of an author, we mark our favorite places in books to reread over and share.
- Teach readers that readers become author experts by studying the characters with an admiring gaze.
- Teach readers that readers compare and contrast different characters in different books by the same author.
- Teach readers that readers get to know authors by looking closely at the setting in an author's books and questioning the significance of this time and place.
- Teach readers that readers study the structures of the books they read to see if patterns emerge.

Bend II: When We Read Many Books by an Author We Love, We Apprentice Ourselves to that Author's Craft

- Teach readers that readers admire the moves an author makes, noticing techniques to try out in their own writing.
- Teach readers that readers return to beloved places within texts and look to other spots to see if there is evidence the author tends to do a lot of this in his/her craft.
- Teach readers that readers construct theories about the choices an author made.
- Teach readers that readers walk in the author's shoes by filling in the gaps and imagining what might have happened.

Bend III: Becoming an Author Expert

- Teach readers that readers look across different books to distinguish the themes and big issues authors return to again and again.
- Teach readers that readers build a sense of what an author is "known for" in order to anticipate how next books may fulfill or be different than the majority of the author's work.
- Teach readers that readers use knowledge of an author's body of work to compare and contrast across genres and books.
- Teach readers that readers uncover meaningful lessons by revisiting books and asking, "What have I learned here? How am I different from having read this book?"
- Teach readers that readers look to authors to generate ideas for our own writing lives.

Suggested Activities

- Mini-lesson to include connection, teaching point, modeling, active engagement, and link to independence.
- Develop and use reader's notebook for modeling, exemplar entries, and a time line of teaching points
- Create authentic artifacts (logs, jots, etc.) for examination and inquiry
- Think aloud during process to model strategies, sentence stems, and problem-solving techniques
- Model creation of artifacts during read aloud
- Examine mentor and student exemplars
- Read aloud a mentor text or whole class text with strategic stopping points for teacher think aloud, turn and talk, and stop and jot opportunities
- Construct authentic anchor charts (specific teaching points + student observations + student friendly terms/examples)
- Create process checklists to guide reading work into independence
- Incorporate multimedia and visual texts as a means for active engagement and practice
- Small group strategy lessons
- Individual conference with students

Assessments

Assessment within this unit of study arrives in three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. The development and use of assessment will happen strategically throughout the unit as a means of maintaining a "pulse of learning" to ensure that students are grasping and mastering the skills and strategies intertwined within the teaching points prior to advancing on in the unit. Assessment will be formal and informal, as well as teacher-driven and student-driven. Students will be given the opportunity to self-assess their work to identify areas of weakness and development in order to develop ambitious, feasible goals. Students will also be asked to collaborate with peers in their assessment practices in order to support learning across zones of proximal development. On-going teacher assessment will take place in the context of the conference. Conferences, both small group and one-on-one conferring, are used to reinforce expectations, provide advice/or assistance, and to support growth.

Diagnostic Assessments:

- TC Running Record (http://readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/running-records)

The running record forms provide a book introduction, the typed text, a sidebar of reading characteristics, a scoring guide, comprehension questions with sample responses, and space to take notes and to jot student responses. A Teacher Guidebook for Levels A-K and one for Levels L-Z+ is available in the Supporting Documents and explains in detail the assessments and includes suggestions for how to use the assessments to plan differentiated, explicit instruction for each student assessed.

Formative Assessments:

- Unit pre-assessment (On-demand performance task)
- Examination of student reading logs
- Examination of student developed jots and notebook entries
- Informal conferring and observation of independent reading habits and accountable talk
- Collection of anecdotes from teacher-student conferences: individual, small group, strategy, and guided
- Collection of observations from active engagement within mini-lesson
- Quick jots
- Exit tickets
- Student reflection

Summative Assessments:

- End of unit post assessment (On-demand performance task)
- Reading logs, notebook entries, and other evidence of students improving skills
- Published writing composition
- Portfolio (collection of process work to reflect growth across a unit)

This unit puts a strong emphasis on craft, theme, and comparing and contrasting across books. One possible assessment before the unit begins might be to plan a short read aloud in which you ask children to stop and jot in several places:

- "Why did the author include this setting/quote/description/etc.?"
- "Write a bit about your ideas and don't forget to give evidence from the text to support it!"
- "What might the theme or lesson of this story be? How did the author show this?"

Collect these prompted responses and assess them using a reading learning progression to assess students' understanding of authors' choices. These continua will help you place children at a specific level, and provide ideas for what students must do to move to higher levels. On the second day, read a second read aloud by the same author and ask children to do cross- text work:

- "Stop and jot about how this character is similar to the character we read about yesterday."
- "How are the lessons/themes in this story similar or different from those in the text we read yesterday?"

If the majority of students still struggle to develop more interpretive ideas about the lessons in stories, consider returning to some of the work from the character or social issues unit. Plan to repeat this assessment at the end of the unit with the focus on the author of choice. (Example prompt: Compare and contrast this book to the first one you read by Jerry Spinelli. Discuss Spinelli's style and analyze how this book adheres or differs.)

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Differentiated instruction is accomplished through preassessment and ongoing formative assessments that inform independent work, small group strategy lessons, and individual conferences. Differentiation in content, product and/or process addresses the needs of exceptionally able students, and scaffolding of varying degree is provided to support less ready students in meeting worthy and appropriately rigorous learning outcomes. Instructional objectives, strategies and materials emphasize relevance, authenticity, and student-centered learning.

In compliance with 504 plans and IEP's, teachers will review applicable documents, consult appropriate personnel connected with special-needs students' cases, work closely with inclusion teachers and classroom aides, and communicate with parents in an effort to see to the specific needs of all students. Due to varying dispositions and learning styles, teachers promote various strategies during all phases of the reading process. Students will have opportunities to work alone, in pairs, and in groups. The reading workshop incorporates a variety of instructional techniques to meet the continuum of learners' interests, learning profiles, and readiness levels.

Differentiating through Independent Reading: After using the TCRWP benchmark assessments to determine

corresponding Fountas and Pinnell text gradient levels A-Z+, students choose appropriate "just right" books that match them as readers based on interest/readiness. The strategy or skill being taught might be the same, but the book choice, or content, is differentiated.

Differentiating though Reading Response Methods: One option to differentiate product is to allow students to use different methods to track their thinking. For example, if students are working on inferring and using their notebooks, students can choose how to record their thought process (Venn Diagram, T-Chart, etc.) to use evidence and explanation to support their decision. The teacher can assign how students respond to literature based on their reading goal or need, or the student can decide.

Differentiating through Conferences and Small Groups: Teachers should listen to students as they read and take notes during one-on-one conferences. Reading conferences can be used to encourage students' reading interests, help students find appropriate leveled books to read, and to monitor student progress. The teacher can also pull small groups for extra practice at this time. These small groups can be used to challenge higher-level students, give additional practice to all students in small groups, or to meet with lower readers to focus on areas of weakness. Small groups are meant to be flexible and change to fit the needs of students. During this time students can share their thinking with partners and with the small group, and then receive feedback from the teacher.

Individual conferencing and small group instruction allows for instruction at various levels, remediation or enrichment of specific skills, as well as the differentiation of the method of instruction and the presentation of information.In addition to these forms of differentiation other modifications can be made. They can include, but are not limited to those suggested below.

Differentiating for special education:

- *Learning Environment*: Allow space for students to choose; Use preferential seating; Provide opportunities for movement; Vary activities both in and out of desk/table
- *Curriculum:*Adapt amount of work required; Use different forms of assessments that demonstrate different learning styles; Allow different visual aids, concrete examples, hands-on activities, and cooperative groups to learn new concepts; Allow work to be completed in various formats
- *Teaching and Learning Styles:*Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner- use multiple teaching styles to teach a new concept; Use concrete examples and move towards the abstract; Provide an overview of lesson at beginning; Monitor the rate and manner in which the material is being presented
- *Time Demands*: Allow extra time to complete tests; Give different versions of tests; Follow a routine; Set specific time limits for test
- *Cooperative Learning:* Use flexible grouping; Use student choice in grouping; Assign peer helpers to check in on one another
- *Behavior Concerns:* Give clear expectations of goals for the class period; Be consistent in follow through with both positive and negative consequences; Use of cues; Give immediate positive reinforcement and feedback; Avoid power struggle
- *Attention/Focus Concerns:* Give notification of transitions; Use of cues to refocus; Seat near teacher or in area of less distraction; Introduce assignments in sequential steps; Make sure books/materials are on the correct pages
- *Organization:* Give copy of notes; Allow student to leave unnecessary materials in a nearby area;

Color-coded materials; Use of binder system; Use a checklist for work in smaller units
- *Written Expression:* Allow use of manuscript, cursive, or typing for assignments; Leniency in spelling and neatness (to an agreed upon level); Provide a copy of notes; Avoid pressures for speed or accuracy
- *Visual Processing:* Give highlighted/color coded copy of notes; Avoid copying notes from the board; Check in with student to be sure that visuals are comprehended from the beginning of lesson; Avoided cluttered worksheets keeping them clear and well defined
- *Language Processing:* Give both written and verbal directions; Slow the rate of presentation and paraphrase information; Keep statements short and to the point Allow for extra wait time; Use student‘s name before asking a question; Use of visuals and hands-on materials; Familiarize students with new vocabulary before lesson
- *Audio Processing:* Provide a copy of notes; Use of a checklist; Keep statements short and to the point; Use of eye contact; Have student sit closer to instruction; Use of student buddy to check in with sitting nearby; Use of visuals; Stop and check in for understanding
- **Content specific modifications may include:**
    - Instruction aligned to student's performance level according to Teacher's College Reading Continuum
    - Personal student goals designed to move student along Teacher's College Reading Continuum

Differentiating to extend learning for gifted students:

Reading programs for the gifted should take into account the individual characteristics of the children, capitalize on the gifts they possess, and expand and challenge their abilities. Tasks should be commensurate with ability and achievement. Accommodations may include:

- Compacting the regular curriculum; acceleration of content and/or text at a pace and depth appropriate to the capacity of able learners
- Inquiry reading and independent study opportunities; use of more advanced books
- Focus on developing higher-level comprehension skills, along with higher level questioning
- Exploration of literary tropes and elements (i.e. craft, irony, symbolism, foils, unreliable narrators, and multiple perspectives) on a highly abstract level and with highly nuanced applications
- Special emphasis to the critical-thinking components of the standard scoring rubrics
- A wider and more in-depth array of related topics and cross-curricular connections
- Opportunities for students to engage in peer instruction
- Requiring more initiative and independence from students, emphasizing metacognitive skills that foster self-directed learning
- Encouraging students to apply insights revealed in group discussions to their own analysis of literature

Differentiating for ELL's:

General modifications may include:

- Strategy groups
- Teacher conferences
- Graphic organizers
- Modification plan
- Collaboration with ELL Teacher

Content specific vocabulary important for ELL students to understand include:

- Analyze, Synthesize, Interpret, Structure, Evidence, Evaluate, Symbolism, Genre, Theme, Craft, Mem oir, Point of View, Critique, Story Elements, Theory, Inference, Compare/Contrast

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Consistent with the concept of differentiated instruction, students should learn the knowledge and skills of this unit in conjunction with concepts from various content areas. While some teachers will provide instruction that includes specific concepts from various content areas, all should direct students to specific text and online resources pertinent to various content areas. Also, teachers will consult grade-level content area teachers on concepts covered in their classes, allowing subjects, lessons, and experiences to reinforce each other.

The diverse genres of narrative reading make this highly feasible, and mini-lessons can apply to concepts from multiple subjects. Here are some of the possible correlations:

historical fiction: social studies

science fiction: science and mathematics

fantasy: mythology and folklore

fan fiction: literature

Writing Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts
- expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading
- apply sentence, paragraph, and narrative structure from mentor texts
- utilize other elements of author's craft seen in mentor texts and independent reading books

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 character struggles in read alouds and mentor texts
- apply reading skills and strategies to the reading done 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 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

Suggested Teaching Resources:

- Beers, Kylene and Robert E. Probst. *Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. New Hampshire: Heinemann, 2013. Print.
- Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Reading*. Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 2001. Print.
- Ehrenworth, Mary, Hareem Atif Khan, and Julia Mooney. *Constructing Curriculum: Alternate Units of Study*. New Hampshire: Heinemann, 2010. Print.
- Serravallo, Jennifer. *The Reading Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers*. New Hampshire: Heinemann, 2015. Print.
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. A Curricular Plan for the Reading Workshop, Grade 5, 2011-2012. "Unit Nine: Option 2 -- Author Study: Reading Like a Fan"

Suggested Mentor Texts and Whole Class Texts:

- *Knots in My Yo-Yo String: The Autobiography of a Kid* (J. Spinelli)
- *Crash* (J. Spinelli)
- *I Can Be Anything!* (J. Spinelli)

Suggested Book Club Titles:

- *4th Grade Rats* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: P
- *Eggs* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: U
- *Loser* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: U
- *Maniac Magee* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: W
- *Smiles to Go* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: W
- *Stargirl* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reading Level: V
- *Wringer* (J. Spinelli) -- Guided Reaidng Level: U

Other Authors to Consider:

- Sharon Creech
- Christopher Paul Curtis
- Gary Paulsen
- Gary Soto
- Patricia MacLachlan
- Patricia Reilly Giff
- Walter Dean Myers
- Suzanne Collins
- Laurence Yep
- Judy Blume
- Jacqueline Woodson

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
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.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.

CRP.K-12.CRP8.1	Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem. They are aware of problems when they occur and take action quickly to address the problem; they thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions. They carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others.
CRP.K-12.CRP11.1	Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring new technology. They are proficient with ubiquitous technology applications. They understand the inherent risks-personal and organizational-of technology applications, and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.
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.