Comparing Fiction and Nonfiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts, Generic District Course**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

This unit serves as an introduction to both fiction and nonfiction passages. Students will be introduced to the varying elements and structures of both types of stories, as well as to active reading strategies that will aid in comprehension.

Students will identify various genres of fiction and nonfiction, comparing and contrasting the characteristics from one category to others. Their commentary will take the form of large-group discussions, Literature Circles, and essay-length responses to open-ended questions.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.6	Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9	Compare and contrast 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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2	Determine a 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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.3	Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.8	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.9	Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.a	Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.b	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.c	Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.d	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.e	Establish and maintain a formal style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.f	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9.a	Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast 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").
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9.b	Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not").
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.b	Spell correctly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.a	Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.b	Maintain consistency in style and tone.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Essential Questions

How do literary devices enhance the meaning of a story?

What are the basic genres of both fiction and nonfiction, and how are they distinct from each other?

How does literature--both fiction and nonfiction--apply to one's life?

How is reading for information different from reading a narrative?

Application of Knowledge and Skills...

Students will know that...

Students will know:

-literary terms for discussing fiction.

-literary terms for discussing nonfiction.

-the basic genres of literature (short fiction, novellas, novels, personal essays, biography, historical narrative, etc.) and their distinguishing characteristics.

-that active reading strategies aid in comprehension.

-the definitions of vocabulary and academic words in literature.

-that video and graphic organizers add to the experience of literature.

-note-taking and question-answering strategies that aid comprehension.

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- -the definitions of vocabulary and academic words in literature.

Students will be skilled at...

Students will be able to:

-identify characters, plot, setting, point of view, theme, and various other literary elements in literature.

-analyze and discuss point of view, historical context, and cross-curricular connections in nonfiction.

-explain elements and features that are common to various genres as well as those that are distinct to single genres.

-use the active reading strategy of identifying author's purpose in literature.

-use context clues to decode meaning of vocabulary words in literature.

-use video and graphic organizers as a part of a literature study.

-take notes and answer comprehension questions with textual evidence when reading.

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Assessments

Big Question Discussion

Diagnostic: Other oral assessments

Students will be introduced to the Big Question and engage in a discussion to assess ideas they already have.

Critical Thinking Questions
Formative: Instructional/Assessment Focus

Students will answer comprehension questions about each story. While questions assess knowledge of the text, they are also centered around a reading skill such as making predictions or fact and opinion.

Vocabulary Warm Ups
Diagnostic: Instructional/Assessment Focus

Students will complete vocabulary warm ups to determine prior knowledge of both academic and text-specific vocabulary.

Selection Tests
Summative: Written Test

Students are tested on their comprehension of passages read and discussed in class. Open-ended questions are included, as well as vocabulary.

Essay Response to Open Ended Questions
Formative: Extended Essay

Students respond to open-ended questions with thoughtful, thorough, elaborate essays that demonstrate basic comprehension, critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and adherence to formal writing guidelines.

Literature Circles
Formative: Other oral assessments

At the end of this unit, students work in their Literature Circles in order to discuss questions, insights, and literary elements related to the passages they have read. Students use their Reading Exploration Sheets to keep track of what they wish to contribute, but they must take care that their discussion is not a mere recitation of what is on their sheets. The discussion must be dynamic and energetic.

Particularly important in this unit is a focus on the distinguishing characteristics of multiple genres. Students will compare and contrast the works they have read for this unit, classifying them into various genres and types.

Additionally, students will consult the contents of their anthology and the book-length selection list for the class. They will speculate on the genres of all titles, while making predictions about the nature of passages they expect to read.

At times, students consult each other regarding strategies for writing essays connected with the reading. This is acceptable so long as the discussion does not become little more than a Writing Workshop conference.

Some teachers may desire more structure for Literature Circles in their classes. If so, they can assign the following roles to each student: master of ceremonies, literary term wizard, vocabulary czar, summarizer, and passage picker.

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- Big Question Discussion
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Diagnostic: Instructional/Assessment Focus
- Diagnostic: Other oral assessments
- Essay Response to Open Ended Questions
- Formative: Extended Essay
- Formative: Instructional/Assessment Focus
- Formative: Other oral assessments
- Literature Circles
- Selection Tests
- Students are tested on their comprehension of passages read and discussed in class. Open-ended questions are included, as well as vocabulary.
- Students respond to open-ended questions with thoughtful, thorough, elaborate essays that demonstrate basic comprehension, critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and adherence to formal writing guidelines.
- Students will answer comprehension questions about each story. While questions assess knowledge of the text, they are also centered around a reading skill such as making predictions or fact and opinion.
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- Students will complete vocabulary warm ups to determine prior knowledge of both academic and text-specific vocabulary.
- Summative: Written Test
- Vocabulary Warm Ups

Activities

Exploring the Big Question

Note-taking

Reading and discussion of various fiction and informational texts

Responding to Critical Thinking questions

Responding to After-You-Read questions

Class investigation and preliminary classification of titles to be read throughout the year

Literature Circles

Writing about the Big Question

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Leveled short stories

Leveled Selection Tests

Reader's Notebook, Adapted Version

Hear It! Audio CD

See It! Video DVD

Leveled Vocabulary Warm-Ups

Leveled Selection Support

Leveled Skills Development

Teacher-constructed notes

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

The works that teachers select from the Pearson anthology will invariably contain connections to various content areas. Pearson resources contain information and resources for instruction on related cross-curricular topics.

Students will engage in a structured inquiry of titles to be read during the year. They will discuss and classify the works of literature by genre, and they will follow up on these discussions as they read the works throughout the year.

Resources

Pearson Literature Anthology (particularly the table of contents, as students discuss titles to be read during the current academic year)

List of book-length fiction and nonfiction titles for the class

Reader's Notebook

Adapted *Reader's Notebook*

Teacher's Manual

Teacher's Unit Resource Manuals

Selection Tests

Open-Book Tests

Unit Tests

Benchmark Tests

ExamView Test Bank CD-ROM