Book-Length Fiction

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

Unit Overview

Students will read and discuss works of book-length fiction. Activities revolve around daily class reading. Students typically work in pairs to take detailed literary notes. Students have daily opportunities to share insights, questions, and observations with the class. Teachers may group students in Literature Circles in order to investigate concepts in greater depth. Additionally, teachers may make vocabulary lists a collaborative effort and apply the Writing Workshop approach to essays connected with this unit. The social interaction of these activities ensures a wide field of viewpoints and ideas; students demonstrate their learning in collaboration with each other, but they must also do so on an individual basis as they apply vocabulary words, compose articulate and analytic essays, and identify literary elements at work in the text.

Gifted classes in English Language Arts have an approach to literature and reading that differs from that of regular classes in the following ways:

- Gifted classes naturally engage in critical thought even beyond the already high standard of regular classes, and teachers add special emphasis to the critical-thinking components of the standard scoring rubrics.
- Gifted classes include a wider array of related topics and cross-curricular connections when exploring meaning in what they read (see *Integrated/Cross Disciplinary Instruction* and *Resources*).
- Gifted classes include opportunities for students to engage in peer instruction, placing the teacher at times in the role of facilitator. This capitalizes on the strong intrinsic motivation of the gifted child.
- Gifted classes require from all students more initiative and independence, while incorporating structured group activities to provide synthesis from and integration of individual efforts.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3	Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.5	Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.6	Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.7	Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.9	Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10	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.7.7	Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2.a	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; 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.7.2.b	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2.c	Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2.d	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2.e	Establish and maintain a formal style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2.f	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.5	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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.10	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.7.1.a	Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1.b	Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1.c	Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1.d	Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.2	Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.5	Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4.a	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4.b	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4.c	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4.d	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5.b	Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5.c	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6	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 and why do themes emerge from a work of fiction?

How and why does an author's likely point of view affect the crafting of a work of fiction?

How do literary elements such as conflict, irony, symbolism, and foils enhance the artistic impact of a work?

How is literature applicable to one's life?

Why does a reader's individual response to a novel provoke thought and growth?

How does group discussion influence and individual's response, thought, and growth?

Application of Knowledge and Skills...

Students will know that...

Students will know that:

- fiction reveals concepts and themes on literal and figurative levels.
- literature may contain valuable hints as to an author's purpose or point of view.
- literary elements such as conflict, irony, symbolism, and foils enhance the artistic impact of a work.
- that literature is an expression and celebration of human nature and human interaction.
- as individuals, we can grow as we engage with a text and analyze it.
- the social act of literary discussion enhances not only the participants' learning and growth with respect to one book but also each individual's understanding of additional literature that they read on their own.

- as individuals, we can grow as we engage with a text and analyze it.
- fiction reveals concepts and themes on literal and figurative levels.
- literary elements such as conflict, irony, symbolism, and foils enhance the artistic impact of a work.
- literature may contain valuable hints as to an author's purpose or point of view.
- that literature is an expression and celebration of human nature and human interaction.
- the social act of literary discussion enhances not only the participants' learning and growth with respect to one book but also each individual's understanding of additional literature that they read on their own.

Students will be skilled at...

Students will be able to:

- trace, analyze, and explain concepts and themes as they unfold in a work of literature.
- evaluate a work of literature and explain an author's likely purpose or point of view.
- explain in discussion and in writing the ways in which literary elements such as conflict, irony, symbolism, and foils enhance the artistic impact of a work.
- draw and analyze parallels between the nature of literary characters and concepts and those of real life.
- analyze a text and synthesize concepts in spoken and written response to critical questions.

- apply insights revealed in group discussions to their own analysis of literature and express those insights verbally and in writing.

- analyze a text and synthesize concepts in spoken and written response to critical questions.
- apply insights revealed in group discussions to their own analysis of literature and express those insights verbally and in writing.
- draw and analyze parallels between the nature of literary characters and concepts and those of real life.
- evaluate a work of literature and explain an author's likely purpose or point of view.
- explain in discussion and in writing the ways in which literary elements such as conflict, irony, symbolism, and foils enhance the artistic impact of a work.
- trace, analyze, and explain concepts and themes as they unfold in a work of literature.

Assessments

Reading Exploration Sheets
Formative: Other written assessments

After daily class reading, students work together to compose notes on each chapter. These notes include a short summary, questions, comments, literary devices, and challenging vocabulary. The teacher periodically assesses the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of these notes.

Literature Circles
Formative: Other oral assessments

In weekly Literature Circles, students discuss questions, insights, and literary elements. 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.

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.

Vocabulary Assessments
Summative: Written Test

Students collaborate with the teacher on vocabulary lists at various stages in the unit. The teacher publishes an official list, and students take tests requiring them to put words into sentences that show each word's correct meaning and use.

Comprehension Quizzes
Summative: Written Test

For some chapters, students will read individually and answer questions that demonstrate comprehension of

main idea, plot elements, literary devices, vocabulary, and making inferences.

Essay Responses to Open-Ended Questions
Formative: Extended Essay

Students must 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.

Literary Term Test
Summative: Written Test

After reading for the novel has concluded, students must identify literary terms whose examples from the story are provided.

Committee Presentations
Formative: Other oral assessments

Some teachers may choose to apply an enrichment component to this unit, grouping students in committees, with each committee charged with jobs like the following:

Vocabulary committee—compose, in consultation with the teacher and with suggestions from classmates, vocabulary lists and preparation sheets that will assist students in preparing for tests. The words come directly from the text that they are reading.

Literary elements committee—prepare biweekly presentations on literary devices at work in the text they are reading.

Plot and character analysis committee—prepare biweekly presentations that provide analysis of characters and plot.

Connections committee—prepare biweekly presentations that illustrate connections between the text they are reading and other content areas.

Assessment Instruments:

Students self-assessments of their own work in committees

Teacher assessment of students' overall work in preparation and presentation

Peer assessments of committee presentations

- Assessment Rubric for Reading Exploration Sheets
- Reading Exploration Sheets
- Assessment Rubric for Literature Circle Participation

Blank Vocabulary Test

Assesment Rubrics for Self-Assessment, Peer Assessment, and Teacher Assessment

- After daily class reading, students work together to compose notes on each chapter. These notes include a short summary, questions, comments, literary devices, and challenging vocabulary. The teacher periodically assesses the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of these notes.
- After reading for the novel has concluded, students must identify literary terms whose examples from the story are provided.
- Assessment Instruments:
- 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.
- Committee Presentations
- Connections committee—prepare biweekly presentations that illustrate connections between the text they are reading and other content areas.
- Essay Responses to Open-Ended Questions
- For some chapters, students will read individually and answer questions that demonstrate comprehension of main idea, plot elements, literary devices, vocabulary, and making inferences.
- Formative: Extended Essay
- Formative: Other oral assessments
- Formative: Other oral assessments
- Formative: Other written assessments
- In weekly Literature Circles, students discuss questions, insights, and literary elements. 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.
- Literary elements committee—prepare biweekly presentations on literary devices at work in the text they are reading.
- Literary Term Test
- Literature Circles
- Peer assessments of committee presentations
- Plot and character analysis committee—prepare biweekly presentations that provide analysis of characters and plot.
- Reading Exploration Sheets
- Some teachers may choose to apply an enrichment component to this unit, grouping students in committees, with each committee charged with jobs like the following:
- 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.
- Students must 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 self-assessments of their own work in committees
- Summative: Written Test
- Summative: Written Test

- Teacher assessment of students' overall work in preparation and presentation
- Vocabulary Assessments
- Vocabulary committee—compose, in consultation with the teacher and with suggestions from classmates, vocabulary lists and preparation sheets that will assist students in preparing for tests. The words come directly from the text that they are reading.

Activities

Possible classroom activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Daily review of essential questions

Classroom reading, note-taking, discussion

Independent reading and note-taking

Essay responses to open-ended questions with peer conferences to assist with composition and editing

Deep inquiry into vocabulary, literary devices, social/cultural influences, and plot elements in the novel

Literature Circle discussions between small groups of peers

Investigation of cross-curricular connections

Committee presentations on concepts and topics related to the reading with self-assessment and peer review of presentations

Enrichment lessons and activities on advanced literary concepts and cross-curricular connections presented by the teacher

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Peer-review of essays, paired note-taking sessions, and Literature Circle discussions all enable students of different conceptual perspectives to combine resources.

Structured activities between peers (Literature Circles, paired note-taking sessions) activate the social element of learning.

Discussion(auditory), notes and handouts (visual), and online investigation of Web resources (kinesthetic) allow for a variety of induction modes.

Emphasis of historical, cultural, literary, political, and social influences in the novel allow students' individual preferences and interests to enhance their processing of the story. Activities may take the form of individual student investigations, committee presentations (in connection with the Literature Symposium model), and/or supplemental lessons provided by the teacher.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Teachers (or the Connections Committee, for teachers who set up Literature Symposium Committees) may wish to include investigations of various cross-curricular topics that come up in connection with the texts covered this year.

Resources

Teacher Website (for assignments and expectations)

Pearson Prentice Hall *Literature*, Grade 7--connections to Big Questions in short fiction units

Approved novels:

Cooper, Susan. *The Dark Is Rising* 920 L

Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings* 870 L

Essential questions related to the texts.

Assignment guidelines, activity objectives, and scoring rubrics provided by teachers.