Short Stories

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 be introduced to short stories, recognizing that they are brief works of fiction. They will realize that no two stories are identical, but that they all share some common elements.

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.
- 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.W.7.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.a	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.b	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.c	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.d	Establish and maintain a formal style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.e	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument 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.7.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9.a	Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “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.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	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
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.7.6	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

What role do reading strategies play in reading comprehension?

What applicability does literature have to real life?

How can being a good reader improve one's life in other areas?

How do literary devices enhance one's understanding of a story?

How do the authors one reads engage one as a reader and what can one learn from them?

Application of Knowledge and Skills...

Students will know that...

Students will know

- how to understand the literary elements of author's purpose and theme
- how to identify the plot of a short story
- how to identify point of view and setting in a short story
- the types of conflict and how to identify them and their resolution
- how to identify, prove, and explain character traits
- how to identify and explain theme(s) in a short story
- new vocabulary words

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Students will be skilled at...

Students will be able to

- present information to the class orally
- graph the plot of a short story
- identify and explain point of view and setting in a short story
- define internal and external conflict and identify them and their resolutions in a short story
- identify, prove, and explain character traits
- identify and explain theme(s) in a short story
- expand vocabulary by defining and studying new vocabulary words selected from a short story
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- identify, prove, and explain character traits
- present information to the class orally

Assessments

Big Question Discussion
Diagnostic: Other oral assessments

Students will be introduced to the Big Question (Does every conflict have a winner) and engage in a discussion to assess the ideas they already have.

Critical Thinking Questions
Formative: Instructional/Assessment Focus

Students answer comprehension questions about each story. While the 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 complete vocabulary warm-ups to tap prior knowledge of both academic and story vocabulary.

SelectionTests
Summative: Written Test

Students are tested on their comprehension of the story read and discussed in class. Open-ended questions are included.

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.

Unit Project
Summative: Personal Project

Students complete a project that embodies all of the skills learned over the course of the unit. Students present their projects to the class.

Literature Circles
Formative: Other oral assessments

Working in their 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.

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

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- Big Question Discussion
- Committee Presentations
- Connections committee—prepare biweekly presentations that illustrate connections between the text they are reading and other content areas.
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Diagnostic: Instructional/Assessment Focus
- Diagnostic: Other oral assessments
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- Literature Circles
- Peer assessments of committee presentations
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demonstrate basic comprehension, critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and adherence to formal writing guidelines.

- Students self-assessments of their own work in committees
- Students will be introduced to the Big Question (Does every conflict have a winner) and engage in a discussion to assess the ideas they already have.
- Summative: Personal Project
- Summative: Written Test
- Teacher assessment of students' overall work in preparation and presentation
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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

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

Literature Circle discussions between small groups of peers

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

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

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

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 Internet resources (kinesthetic) allow for a variety of induction modes.

Emphasis of historical, cultural, literary, political, and social influences in a work of nonfiction will allow students' individual preferences and interests to enhance their processing of the story. Enrichment instruction on these topics may take the form of individual student investigations, committee presentations (using the Literature Symposium model), and/or supplementary lessons provided by the teacher.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Social Studies Connections:

- Pueblo Native Americans and their culture
- the Holocaust
- Communist China
- Geography

For additional 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.

Resources

Pearson Literature Anthology

Reader's Notebook

Adapted Reader's Notebook

Teacher's Manual

Teacher's Unit Resource Manuals

Selection Tests

Open-Book Tests

Unit Tests

Benchmark Tests

Pearson ExamView Test Bank CD-ROM