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 read and discuss novels from an approved list of Exemplars. Activities revolve around daily class reading. Students 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.

For more information, please see the *Activities* section of this unit.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3	Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.5	Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6	Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.7	Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.9	Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.7	Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2	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.8.2.a	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.b	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.c	Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.d	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.e	Establish and maintain a formal style.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.f	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.5	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.8.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.10	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.8.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.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.8.1.b	Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.c	Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.d	Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or

	justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2	Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.5	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.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.8.4.b	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4.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.8.4.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.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.b	Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.c	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).

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.
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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.

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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 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 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 identify literary terms whose examples from the story are provided.

Committee Presentations
Formative: Other oral assessments

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's 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

UbD The Giver Essential Questions.docx

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- Literary Term Test
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- Peer assessments of committee presentations
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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

Investigation of cross-curricular connections

Literature Circle discussions between small groups of peers

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

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, committee presentations) 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 the novel allow students' individual preferences and interests to enhance their processing of the story.

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 8--connections to Big Questions in short fiction units

Approved novels:

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee 870 L

The Hound of the Baskervilles by Arthur Conan Doyle 1090 L

Essential questions related to the texts.

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