Unit 2: Fanatics: Obsession and Idolatry

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **3-4 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit examines fan obsession in sports and its subsequent impact on American culture. Students will consider if sport could be considered a religion; that is, they will explore the psychology of fans. This unit will illustrate how media coverage and profit may exacerbate this fanaticism.

Interdisciplinary Connections and Career Readiness:

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. When completing this course, students can make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interest.

Revision: June 2023

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

LA.RI.11-12.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

LA.SL.11-12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.11-12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.11-12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
LA.SL.11-12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
LA.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.11-12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
LA.SL.11-12.4	Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.SL.9-10.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
LA.11-12.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
LA.11-12.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
LA.11-12.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.9	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP5	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
TECH.8.1.12	Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.

Essential Questions

- Define the characteristics of a hero or warrior. How can everyday "heroes" compete with media-hyped heroes?
- Does the title "March Madness" accurately describe the NCAA basketball tournament? Under what circumstances do students choose institutions of learning based upon the success of the sports teams and associated fandom experience?

- How does the pressure to excel at sports change the values parents place on their children? How can this pressure affect the relationship between children and parents?
- How is reckless behavior accepted under the guise of supporting the team?
- In what way are sporting events “religious” experiences? In what cases are athletes worshipped more than academics?
- What is fanaticism? Name some fanatical groups in today’s society. Does fanaticism suggest unreasonable behavior or beliefs? Is a fanatic open-minded?
- What makes society dub a sports celebrity a hero or villain?

Essential Understandings

- Analyze past trends in sporting events as opposed to current practices in youth sports, high school sports, collegiate sports, and professional sports.
- Draw connections between religious rituals and sports rituals.
- Reflect on the values of sports fanatics.

Students Will Know

- How fanaticism functions in sports.
- How sports reflects cultural values.
- How to identify rituals and media-driven behavior.
- The current acceptable spectator behavior for sporting events.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- Developing personal inquiry and thought in journals.
- Discussing cogent ideas in a cooperative setting.
- Evaluating effectiveness of texts based on intended purpose.
- Manipulating digital media.
- Writing thought-provoking essays.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered two times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of multimodal text sets
- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation
- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal
- Textual Analysis Reading Responses
- Dialectical Journal
- Rhetorical Precis
- SOAPSTone Analysis

Summative, including Alternative Assessments:

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Problem-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums
- Analytical and Expository Essay

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- Common Lit Reading Benchmark Assessments, three times per year (grades 9-11)
- Advanced Placement tests (grades 11-12)
- NJGPA (grade 11)
- NJSLA (grade 9)
- PSAT (grades 10-11)

- SAT (grades 11-12)
- Final Exam
- IXL

- Analyze and correlate fanatical sports behavior with cultural behavior.
- As a culminating assessment, conduct a live draft of players through ESPN. Study statistics and make choices of players. Consider sentimental biases over pure business decisions. Provide written analysis for five players. Write self-reflection to consider thoughtfully on process, successes, and struggles.
- By composing a persuasive essay, confirm or negate that fanatical behavior involves personal possession or ownership.
- Compose short personal narratives about experiences in athletics as a spectator.
- Conduct a graded discussion (fishbowl, Socratic seminar, other) regarding parental involvement in school sports.
- Develop a portfolio of selected current articles and critique each through reflection and synthesis.
- Develop and write a perspective on the principles of sportsmanship.
- Evaluate and analyze peer projects using the lens of fan bias, media influence, and business perspective.

Learning Plan

Instructional time will be dedicated to whole class text instruction, collaborative learning, and independent and personalized learning. The intent is for student-readers to have clear modelling through whole-class instruction. These strategies are practiced in a group setting of peers and through independent practice monitored through teacher conferencing with students. An emphasis will be based on the transfer of skills instruction, teaching the reader, not merely the content of the text. The text complexity and rigor of reading will be appropriate for grade 9-12; materials selection for whole-class and literature circles will be from the book list approved by the Board of Education. Classrooms will house rich and diverse independent reading libraries of both contemporary and canonical works.

The reading of text during this class targets not only comprehension, but also analysis. Students may read both long-and short-form, exceprted and full-length, print and electronic, fiction and nonfiction texts. Study will include the analysis of visual texts including film clips, art, infographic, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, graphic novel. Technique and terminology specific to a genre of reading is examined. Research tasks are embedded throughout the year and a minimum of one task is completed during each unit. Vocabulary instruction will be chosen from the reading material.

Students write in all modes of rhetoric including narration/description, argument/persuasion, and exposition. Various forms of writing including digital writing are emphasized as well. Grammar instruction is embedded in writing instruction through mini-lessons, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modelling is done through mentor texts, both published and student-crafted. Teachers focus on process in

addition to product with an emphasis on synthesizing texts with nuanced understanding; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes, timed and untimed pieces are all important.

Students will be taught how to speak and listen in addition to being assessed on these skills.

- As a final assessment, conduct a live draft of players through ESPN- Study statistics and make choices of players. Consider sentimental biases over straight business decisions. Provide written analysis for five players. Write self-reflection to consider thoughtfully on process, successes, and struggles.
- Evaluate and analyze peer projects using the lens of fan bias, media influence, and business perspective.
- From ESPN Films: 30 for 30 Index, watch and critically analyze The 16th Man/ Fernando Nation. Discuss how fanaticism teaches behavior and creates sub culture.
- Read “March Madness” and “Superbowl” articles. Discuss how money influences behavior. How does marketing of events change the fans’ perspectives of events?
- Read “The Spirituality of Sport Culture.” Write a reaction paper: how do sports rituals mirror religion?
- Students read one literature circle selection (see materials section). Students will discuss key ideas in cooperative groups and submit assigned written reflections.
- Through composing a series of journal entries, students will tap into personal experience as players and spectators.
- View a clip from Kicking and Screaming. Compare clip to actual youth experience.
- Watch clips from Field of Dreams. Write personal journal entries on the lasting effects of parental pressure to succeed in sports.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

- Berry, Matthew. Fantasy Life: The Outrageous, Uplifting, and Heartbreaking World of Fantasy Sports from the Guy Who’s Lived It -ISBN-10: 1594632715, ISBN-13: 978-1594632716
- Farrey, Tom. Game On
- Feinstein, John. A March to Madness: A View from the Floor in the Atlantic Coast Conference- ISBN-10: 0316277126, ISBN-13: 978-0316277129
- Gubar, Justine. Fanaticus: Mischief and Madness in the Modern Sports Fan- ISBN-10: 144222892X, ISBN-13: 978-1442228924
- Rushin. Road Swing.-ISBN-10: 0385483929, ISBN-13: 978-0385483926

- • Saint John, Warren. Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Road Trip into the Heart of Fan Mania- ISBN-10: 0609807137, ISBN-13: 978-0609807132
- ESPN Films: 30 for 30 Index

Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Possible accommodations include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques
- Offer oral assessments
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Small group and one on one assessment
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Use digital technology, eBooks,, audio version of printed text
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan