

Unit 5 Reading: Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons, A Study of Story Elements

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 3**
Length: **5-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

During this unit, students will study both character traits and actions to help understand the character. An analysis of characters' changing feelings will be considered. Most importantly, students will develop strategies to use when they are struggling to understand the character.

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.

Revision: June 2024

Instructional Reading Level Benchmark: H, I, J, K

Guided Reading and Small-Group work can provide small group instruction for **Level H** language and literary features:

- Multiple episodes taking place across time
- Variation in placement of subject, verb, adjectives, and adverbs
- Easy multi-syllable words
- Easy compound words

Guided Reading and Small-Group work can provide small group instruction for **Level I** language and literary features:

- Variety of dialogue (between more than two characters in many texts)
- Most texts told from a single point of view with some texts showing more than one
- Many sentence with embedded clauses and phrases
- Sentence with nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in series, divided by commas (quietly, loudly)
- Many compound sentences

Guided Reading and Small-Group work can provide small group instruction for **Level J** language and literary features:

- Characters which have more than one dimension
- Elaborated description of character traits
- Occasional use of parenthetical material embedded in sentences
- Many words with complex letter-sound relationships
- Some complex spelling patterns
- Adjectives describing dialogue

For students reading below or above grade level expectations, please reference The Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment, Planning and Teaching to target skills for additional reading levels.

Pacing Guide

Please refer to [this Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 1](#); the pacing guides for word study and phonemic awareness can be found in the learning plan.

Pacing Guide

Please refer to [this Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 1](#); the [suggested pacing guides for word study and phonemic awareness](#) (grades K-1) can be found in the K-5 folder.

A sample K-5 Literacy Schedule Across a Week is accessible in instructional materials section of the [Grades K-5 folder](#).

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. These mandates may be hit through the selection of choice literature:

Amistad Commission

This unit also reflects the goals of the Department of Education and the Amistad Commission including the infusion of the history of Africans and African-Americans into the curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete, and inclusive history regarding the importance of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in a global context.

Asian American and Pacific Islander History Law

This unit includes instructional materials that highlight the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies.

New Jersey Diversity and Inclusion Law

In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance.

Essential Questions

- Bend 1: How can readers use their skills at reading--including tackling unfamiliar words using all they know about how to slide across those words-- to let books take them on a journey--a journey to learn about a new topic, a journey to experience an adventure alongside a character?
- Bend 2: How can more experience with tricky letters- soft G and C, R-controlled vowels- help readers read more complex texts, allowing readers to think about characters' changing feelings, their traits, and the reasons for their actions?
- Bend 3: How can readers bring a knowledge of text structure, prior knowledge, and global inference skills to the job of comparing and contrasting related books? How, while doing this, can readers save some energy for word-solving multisyllabic words?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- Students will identify character actions
- Students will describe a character based upon his or her actions
- Students will use information from the book to help understand the character
- Students will think about characters as people by paying attention to their actions, traits, and how their feelings change over the course of the story.
- Students will retell stories by chunking clusters of pages together.
- Readers will use strategies to improve understanding of a character.
- Readers will infer character feelings, and how they change over the course of the book.
- Readers will focus on the meaning of the story.
- Preview books, predict events, and retell key parts to understand the story

- Study characters closely, noticing actions, feelings, and changes
- Compare and contrast characters and stories using evidence to find similarities and differences in feelings, problems, and lessons learned

Evidence/Performance Tasks

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.

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered three 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.

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 Assessments

- Responses to Essential Questions
- One-to-one reading conferences and accompanying conferring notes
- Peer conferences
- Turn and talks
- Read Aloud/Shared Reading responses, written and oral
- Post-it notes to tally the number of times the book is read
- Exit tickets or do nows
- Engagement Observations
- Accountable Talk--Knee Talking, Sharing out
- Post-it Board

Summative including Alternative Assessments:

- Reading Conferences
- Running Records
- Reading Logs
- Reading Responses
- Word Study Assessments
- Performance- and project-based learning
- Personalized, student-designed assessments
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: Reading learning progressions

- Use teacher/student-created rubrics
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: rubrics with student samples
- Standards-based reporting system and report card

Benchmark Assessments

- Phonemic Awareness Assessment
- Cranford Public Schools Sight Word Assessment
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessment, recorded three times per year
- Screener: Dynamic Indicator of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- Diagnostic: Phonological Assessment Profile by Linguistics (PAPL) Diagnostic Assessment, as needed
- iReady Screener and Diagnostic Assessment

Learning Plan

Primary reading instruction for the Cranford Public Schools embraces a centrist approach, employing both structured and balanced literacy practices to both decode *and* comprehend print.

To teach decoding, reading instruction follows a structured literacy approach through an number of multi sensory strategies and research-used techniques. Daily word work emphasizing phonics and phonemic awareness uses a multisensory approach to instruction. Decodable and controlled texts are used. For Word Study, please refer to the [Cranford Scope and Sequence](#), and the [Phonological Awareness Scope and Sequence](#).

To teach comprehension, reading instruction is literature and informational text-based and follows a balanced literacy approach through a number of strategies and techniques in Reading Workshop These include interactive read-alouds, mini lessons, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, and partnership discussions. Students will select from authentic literature at their independent reading levels. Teachers will focus on the needed skills and behaviors identified on the Continuum at each student's instructional reading level. Grade level indicators are outlined above. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.

During reading workshop, teachers follow the mini-lesson format:

- Teaching point(s) for each lesson
- Connection: Connects new learning to previous learning/lessons
- Teach/Modeling: Uses "think aloud" when modeling what you expect students to do
- Guided Practice/Active Engagement: Guides students through practice of the teaching point
- Link to Independent Practice: Helps writers understand the purpose for the writing they are about to do and the skills/craft they will be practicing/applying independently as good writers
- Independent Writing/Student Conferences: Provides time for students to do independent writing while teacher confers with individual students, works with small groups, or writing clubs.

- Closure/Sharing: Pull students back together and recognize the work they have done relating to the teaching point. (See end of section for closure ideas.)

For teaching purposes, see attached template for structure of a Reading Workshop lesson. (Change the red font to match your teaching point). Click [here](#).)

Please see the Cranford Public School [Grades K-5 Google Folder](#) for instructional materials to identify teaching points and design strategy lessons for those above or below grade level reading. The bends below provide detailed teaching points and lesson ideas.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Detailed Curriculum Map

Teaching Points and lessons are located in the K-5 folder under Grade 1 Curriculum for Language Arts. These curriculum unit guides include not only aligned teaching points to standards, but also specific lessons and appropriate resources. Guidelines for preparing to teach the unit as well as goals for the end of the unit are outlined. Academic vocabulary and prerequisite skills are identified. Essential questions and possible assessments are detailed as well.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate varied, 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. Classrooms will house rich and diverse classroom libraries of both classic and contemporary works.

Core materials used in all classrooms include the following:

- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessment System, 2nd Edition, System 1.
- Fountas and Pinnell Classroom System, Shared Reading.
- Fountas and Pinnell Classroom System, Guided Reading.
- Fountas and Pinnell Classroom System, Read Aloud.
- Heggerty: Phonemic Awareness.
- Cranford Word Study Program.

For Fountas & Pinnell classroom shared reading and interactive read aloud books that link to each unit, please see [the FPC and Units of Study Crosswalk](#).

Possible intervention materials including resources from FCRR and West Virginia may be found in the

[Pathways to Intervention](#) document. Teachers can access the green Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) kits for striving readers.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved [Core Book List](#) while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources. Classrooms house rich and diverse libraries with both classic and contemporary works to support a wide range of student interest and readiness.

Supplemental Instructional Materials

For [possible anchor charts](#), please look at instructional materials in the Grades K-5 folder.

Possible Read Aloud Texts

- Mr. Putter & Tabby Drop the Ball by Cynthia Rylant and Arthur Howard
- Iris and Walter and the Field Trip by Elissa Haden Guest
- The Ghost Eye Tree by Bill Martin
- Curious George by H.A. Rey
- Henry and Mudge by Cynthia Rylant
- Elephant and Piggie by Mo Willems
- I Am Sad by Mo Willems
- Waiting is not Easy by Mo Willems
- There's a Bird On My Head by Mo Willems
- Ish by Peter H. Reynolds
- Little Bear by Elsa Holmelund Minarik
- Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats
- Koala Lou by Mem Fox

Possible Teaching Charts

- "Readers Go On Adventures"
- "Clues that Help Readers Know HOW to Read"
- "Partners Share Their Reading Adventures"
- "Readers Meet Characters"
- "Readers Learn Lessons"

Guided Reading

Fiction and nonfiction book sets with 6-8 copies of the same title. Levels A to M - at least 12 sets in each level for both fiction and nonfiction

Teacher Resources

- Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from the Reading and Writing

Project, Grade 1 Heinemann, 2023.

- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Reading Units of Study, Grade 1, 2014-2015.
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Kit
- Teachers College Reading Assessment Kits for Grades K-2, Lee and Low Books
- Word Study Scope and Sequence using multisensory approach to word work
- The Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment, Planning and Teaching
- The Reading Strategies Book, Jennifer Serravallo
- The Literacy Teacher's Playbook, K-2, Jennifer Serravallo
- Conferring with Readers, Jennifer Serravallo and Gravity Goldberg
- Teaching Reading in Small Groups, Jennifer Serravallo
- Cranford Public School Grades K-5 Google Folder for instructional materials
- For lessons for word work, see [Florida Center for Reading Research](#)

Suggested Strategies for Modifications and Accommodations

[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.

The structure of reading workshop is designed to differentiate and address specific goals and learning for each reader:

- The unit includes presentation of material through multiple modalities such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic to address the unique learning styles of all students.
- The teacher will assign, assess and modify if necessary to address the specific needs of the learner.
- Students will select from authentic literature at their independent and instructional reading levels.
- Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.

Possible accommodations during reading workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts, word walls.
- Have a designated reader for difficult content
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to complete a task or project
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Mark text with a highlighter
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide a distinct steps in a process; eliminate unnecessary steps, as needed.

Additional modifications to content during reading workshop include, but are not limited to:

- The teacher will refer to the Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment,

Planning and Teaching to target specific strategies to teach students below benchmark levels.

- Refer to the [Strategies for Striving Students](#) and [Pathways to Intervention](#) documents in the [Grades K-5 folder](#) for specific appropriate interventions.
- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plans.
- Consult with Cranford Problem Solving Team (CPST) at your school, as needed.
- Refer to the If...Then...Curriculum:Assessment based instruction, Grades K-2 book.