Epic Heroes and Tragic Heroes

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **5-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

FOCUS: "It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life. Where you stumble, there lies your treasure." *Joseph Campbell*

Reading Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey,* and Sophocles' dramas, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone,* will inroduce students to the classics of early Western literature and to the enduring quesitons of humanity. The study of these works, thousands of years after the death of these poets, unites modern students with the contemplative thought for which Homer and Sophocles are acclaimed.

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 interests.

Revision Date: July 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.

Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills: This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy that are critical for students to develop to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

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.

Information Literacy:

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

LA.RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
LA.RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
LA.RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create specific effects (e.g., mystery, tension, or surprise).
LA.RL.9-10.6	Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
LA.RL.9-10.7	Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each work (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
LA.RL.9-10.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).
LA.RL.9-10.10a	By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RL.9-10.10b	By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at grade level or above.
LA.RI.9-10.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.) and make relevant connections, to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze how it is developed and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RI.9-10.7	Analyze various perspectives as presented in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
LA.W.9-10.1.A	Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
LA.W.9-10.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.9-10.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
LA.W.9-10.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.9-10.3.C	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.

Essential Questions

- What are the elements of an epic?
- What are the characteristics of an epic hero?
- What are the Greek concepts of kleos, nostos, and xenia and how are they evidenced in ancient and modern literature and culture?
- What is the cycle of the hero delineated by literary scholar Joseph Campbell?
- How do modern epics - "Star Wars," "The Matrix" - follow the hero's journey or monomyth?
- What are the elements of a tragedy?
- What are the characteristics of a tragic hero?
- What are the conventions of Greek drama?
- What are the three unities of Greek drama?
- What is the dramatic triangle and how is it evidenced in Sophocles' plays *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone?*
- How does the ancient Greek patriarchy affect gender roles within *The Odyssey*?
- How do ancient Greek gender roles shape characters' behaviors and motivations?
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- How do ancient Greek gender roles shape characters' behaviors and motivations?
- What are some modern renditions of Greek stories?
- What is the collective unconscious (Carl Jung) and archetype theory?
- How do archetypes in myths and epics reappear in modern stories?

Students Will Know/Will Be Skilled At

- The historical background of *The Odyssey* and the biographical background of Homer.

- The traditions of oral poetry in preliterate societies and the origins of Greek Theater.
- Joseph Campbell's cycle of the hero and identify that cycle in modern epics such as "Star Wars" and "The Matrix."
- The historical background of Sophocles, Greek drama, and its influences on modern drama.
- The themes and strands that reveal the elements of Greek culture and their parallels to modern culture.
- The conventions of Greek drama.
- The elements of a tragedy and a comedy.
- The characteristics of an epic hero, tragic hero, protagonist, antagonist.
- The structure of the dramatic triangle: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution.

- Identifying the characteristics of an epic, a tragedy, a comedy , and a satire play.
- Identifying the characteristics of an epic hero and a tragic hero.
- Reading and comprehending the Greek plays in translation.
- Determining the central idea of the epic and providing a summary of each book of *The Odyssey*.
- Making connections and citing strong textual evidence of support.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

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.

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

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

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year- analyze various perspectives as presented in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. Describe and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and reasoning.

- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support- accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.) and make relevant connections, to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics

- Common Lit Reading Benchmark Assessments, three times per year (grades 9-11)
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment
- Midterm and Final Exams

Learning Plan

Instructional time for reading will be divided into thirds; one-third of the time will be dedicated to whole class text instruction; one-third will include literature circles; one-third, independent reading. The intent is for student-readers to have clear modeling through whole-class instruction. These strategies are practiced through literature circles 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; 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 the ninth grade targets not only comprehension but also analysis. Students will read both long-and short-form, excerpted 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, and graphic novels. 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; modeling 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.

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

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

This unit of study focuses on "Epic Heroes and Tragic Heroes" and is centered on the quotation by Joseph Campbell: “It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life. Where you stumble, there lies your treasure.” This unit is designed to examine the universality of the hero’s journey, or monomyth, and the circumstances that lead to a hero or heroine’s growth and evolution. We will discuss gender roles and how the ancient Greek patriarchy limits people of all genders from embracing the full spectrum of their humanity. Students will also investigate how the hero’s journey influences modern literature and storytelling. The goal of the unit is for students to connect the major themes and ideas in these works to the contemporary world today. As students read whole class texts, they may also explore texts on their own based on their interests in certain topics.

For this particular unit, teachers should . . .

- Build a text set for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- Select common reading and literature circle texts
- Prepare for conferences with students
- Generate a list of skills students will master throughout the unit (focusing specifically on a few in each area)

- Create a summative assessment (backward design)

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.

Instructional Materials

Instructional Materials:

Common Reading:

Excerpts from The *Odyssey* - Homer

Oedipus Rex - Sophocles

Antigone - Sophocles

Excerpts:

The Hero With a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell

Cassandra Speaks: When Women Are the Storytellers, The Human Story Changes by Elizabeth Lesser

Poetry:

"On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" - John Keats

"Penelope" - Dorothy Parker

“Ithaka” by C.P. Cavafy

“Ulysses” by Alfred Tennyson

Short Story:

"Circe" - Eudora Welty

Supplemental Sources and Texts:

https://www.learner.org/series/invitation-to-world-literature/the-odyssey/

“The Far Reaching Effects of PTSD”

“Super Mario, Homer’s Odyssey, and The Meaning of Marriage” (JSTOR)

https://thetellingproject.org/planting-the-oar/

“It’s All Been Done Before” by Thomas Macias

“Writing is the Process of Abandoning the Familiar” by Anna North (The Atlantic)

“What We Mean When We Say Teaching Toxic Masculinity” by Colleen Clemens learningforjustice.org

Speaking and Listening:

- Individualized verbal articulation of an analysis of literary works
- Engage in poetry reading, presentation, and interpretation to the class
- Listen to audio recordings of poetry
- Participate in small-group analysis of poetry and prose for class presentation
- Individual research and presentation of background information on authors and literary works
- Dramatic reading of text of a play

Visual Text (Art, Photography, Infographic, Film):

- ps://www.metmuseum.org/ Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC
- https://www.moma.org/ Museum of Modern Art, NYC
- https://www.amnh.org/ American Museum of Natural History, NYC
- https://www.nyhistory.org NY Historical Society,NYC
- https://whitney.org/ Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC
- https://chs.harvard.edu/ Center for Hellenic Studies

Writing (Narrative, Informational, Argument):

- Develop an arguable thesis in response to a prompt
- Write an essay of argument in response to a prompt
- Develop a thesis statement and write a literary analysis focusing on an element of one of Sophocles' plays (theme, tragic hero, elements of a tragedy)
- Demonstrate the ability to weave quotations into the test of an essay
- Demonstrate the ability to use MLA format for citing sources.

Research:

- Journal Storage (JStor)
- Evaluation of sources used in classroom discussions
- Cranford Public Media Center Online Subscription Databases: http://cranford.com/library/
- Ebsco Host
- Facts on File
- Follet Fiction Ebooks
- Gale Reference Ebooks
- *New York Times*
- Goodreads
- Reading Rants
- History Channel
- MLA Format online: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/
- Purdue Owl:https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Additional Resources:

- Chromebooks/laptops
- SORA
- Digital Theatre+
- Swank Streaming
- Newsela
- Common Lit
- Google Classroom or other LMS
- Writing Portfolios
- Writer's Notebook/Journal
- Google Suite
- Audible
- Padlet
- Jamboard
- Socrative.com
- Remind.com
- YouTube

Teacher Resources

- *Readicide*, Kelly Gallagher
- *A Novel Approach*, Kate Roberts
- *When Kids Can't Read*, Kylene Beers
- *Beyond Literary Analysis,* Allison Marchetti & Rebekah O'Dell
- *Writing with Mentors*, Allison Marchetti & Rebekah O'Dell
- *Argument in the Real World*, Kristen Hawley Turner and Troy Hicks
- *Writing Instruction that Works: Proven Methods for Middle and High School Classrooms*, Arthur Applebee and Judith Langer
- *Teaching Adolescent Writers*, Kelly Gallagher
- *Write Like This,* Kelly Gallagher
- *Book Love*, Penny Kittle
- *The Journey is Everything*, Katherine Bomer
- *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, Thomas C. Foster
- *The Digital Writing Workshop*, Troy Hicks
- *Crafting Original Writing*, Troy Hicks
- *Fearless Writing: Multigenre to Motivate and Inspire*, Tom Romano
- *Understanding Comics, Scott McCloud*
- *Making Comics*, Scott McCloud
- *The Art of Styling Sentences*, Ann Longknife and K.D. Sullivan
- *The Well-Crafted Sentence*, Nora Bacon

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