Unit 3 Reading: Reading to Learn: Synthesizing Nonfiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **4-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit of study focuses on improving students' ability to read more complex nonfiction and synthesize information across several texts. Priorities include the following: Identifying the central ideas as well as citing textual evidence; employing strategies to better understand the meaning of academic words; identifying various text structures and features that also include different media formats.

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. In this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers.

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.

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 facts, points of view, and opinions,

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

LA.RI.6.1	Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
LA.RI.6.2	Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
LA.RI.6.3	Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
LA.RI.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
LA.RI.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
LA.RI.6.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.
LA.L.6.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.6.4.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.
LA.L.6.4.B	Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible).
LA.L.6.4.C	Consult 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.
LA.L.6.4.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).
LA.L.6.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.6.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.
LA.L.6.5.B	Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
LA.L.6.5.C	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty).
LA.L.6.6	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

- How can we read to learn and gain more knowledge?
- How do we become motivated to try different types of nonfiction text?
- How do we learn to synthesize ideas and details while increasing our knowledge and broadening our interests?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- analyzing the craft of nonfiction writers: vivid images, symbolism, literary devices.
- cited evidence from across the parts of the text.

- developing tools and strategies when determining and tracking multiple ideas and information.
- grasping the most important ideas about the texts as they read.
- how to to approach more complex nonfiction.
- how to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and technical vocabulary.
- how to summarize informational texts.
- identifying various text structures: chronological, compare and contrast, narrative, problem and solution.
- noticing how authors often evoke a tone or feeling in their writing.
- reflecting and self-assessing on progress and goals.
- stating the central ideas clearly.
- synthesizing information from several different texts.
- that information may include different media formats such as photographs, charts, graphs, illustrations, maps, etc…
- the difference between credible and not credible information.
- which information best supports the central ideas of the text by citing relevant information.

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 benchmark assessments. Follow up diagnostic assessments may be 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/Partner Reading Time
- Large and Small-Group Discussion
- Whole group mini-lessons (model reading strategies)
- Accountable Talk
- Turn and talks
- Reading Responses on Post-its
- Expanded Stop and Jots with text evidence
- Reading Responses in Journals/Notebooks
- Quick-Writes about Reading

- Interactive Read Aloud Reading responses, written and oral (Thinkaloud and Close Reading)
- Exit tickets or Do Nows
- Engagement Observations
- Reading Logs and Reading Surveys
- Envision and prediction post-it notes/Board
- Monitor Stamina, Volume, and Fluency through rubrics
- Read increasingly complex text by monitoring student self-selection of leveled text
- Small Group Strategy Reading group work
- Knowledge of domain-specific vocabulary
- Grade-Level Engagement Rubric for Verbal and Non-Verbal Participation

Summative Assessments including Alternative Assessments:

- Reading Notebooks using grade-level text questions
- Running Records
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: Reading learning progressions
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project: rubrics with student samples
- Vocabulary/Word Study Assessments
- Performance- and project-based learning
- Personalized, student-designed assessments

Benchmark Assessments

- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, grades 3-8, Levels L-Z, Heinemann
- Complete Comprehension, Independent Reading Assessment, fiction, Jennifer Serravallo, Heinemann
- iReady Screener and Diagnostic Assessment
- Benchmark Grade-Level Reading and Writing Assessments aligned with New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)

Learning Plan

The Middle School Language Arts/Literacy program encompasses reading literature and informational text, speaking and listening and enhancing language skills (spelling, grammar, and vocabulary). The understandings and skills of each strand of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards are not isolated, but integrated, interactive, and embedded in all subject areas across the curriculum. Teachers may engage in two whole-class, closely-studied community readings per year, not to exceed four weeks each.

Reading instruction is literature-based and follows a balanced literacy approach through a number of strategies and techniques in Reading Workshop. These include read-alouds/alongs, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, and partnership or book club

discussions. Reading Workshop provides students with the necessary tools to communicate orally, read and comprehend print, and write with clarity and purpose for a variety of audiences. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader. Students will select from authentic literature at their independent and instructional reading levels.

Lessons should follow the mini-lesson format:

- Teaching point(s) for each lesson
- Connection: Connects new learning to previous learning/lessons
- Teach/Modeling: Uses 'think alouds' 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.)

Please refer to the Middle School ELA, Grade 6 Folder for specific lessons and materials for Word Study.

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

This unit of study focuses on improving students' ability to read more complex nonfiction and synthesize information across several texts. Identify the central ideas as well as cite textual evidence. Employ strategies to better understand the meaning of academic words. Identify various text structures and features that also include different media formats.

For this particular unit, teachers should

- Prepare materials for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- Select mentor texts for modeling
- Prepare for conferences with students
- Prepare materials for review of text structures and features.
- Create formative and summative assessments

- Children's Books - Star Stuff: Carl Sagan and the Mysteries of the Cosmos by Stephanie Roth Sisson Thomas Jefferson: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Everything by Maira Kalman The Watcher: Jane

Goodall's Life with the Chimps by Jeanette Winter Who Says Women Can't Be Doctors? The Story of Elizabeth Blackwell by Tanya Lee Stone, illustrated by Marjorie Priceman

- During Shared Reading expose students to the following: •Synthesizing information into big ideas and supporting details • Taking notes on the central ideas and supporting details using boxes and bullets – see p. 7 in Unit 7 of TC binder • Organizing ideas by what is most important • Using text features to aid in comprehension • Using the details the author gives to infer ideas that are not directly stated
- Academic terms may include the following: analyze, synthesize, credible, reflection, motivation, traits, characteristics, metacognitive, inference, visualize, envision, determine, compare/contrast.
- Conduct think alouds – where thinking about the text is modeled for the students Model how to jot about nonfiction using boxes and bullets or other strategies Conduct whole class conversations about books and articles about how to find the big ideas and synthesize a lot of information Show how authors use different literary devices Model listening and talking behaviors in large group and small group conversations about texts.
- Conference Notes
- Interactive read-alouds (think alouds and close reading)
- Literary elements may include the following: tone, character, plot, setting, problem/solution/resolution, secondary characters, protagonist/antagonist, external/internal conflict, point of view (first person, third person), narrator, scene, theme, central idea, genre, drama, narrative, stanza
- Mentor/Anchor Texts : Oh Rats! The Story of Rats and People by Albert Marrin and C.B. Bordon Hannibal: Rome's Worst Nightmare (Wicked History) My Life in Dog Years by Gary Paulsen Tree Shaker: The Story of Nelson Mandela by Bill Keller
- Other Informational Texts • Hitler Youth by Susan Bartoletti • The Way Things Work by David Macaulay • You Wouldn't Want to Be an Egyptian Mummy! By David Stewart, David Salariya, and David Antram
- Poetry terms may include the following: white space, lines, stanza, rhyme scheme, lyrics, meter, end rhyme, slant/imperfect rhyme.
- Pre and post assessment (see pp. 4 and 7) in Unit 7*
- Rubric/checklist – (see p. 9) in Unit 7*
- Various nonfiction articles and novels: such as selections from Scope Magazine, Junior Scholastic, Newsela.com, Readworks.org, Goodreads.com
- Vocabulary strategies such as using context clues; identifying prefixes, roots, suffixes; analyzing syntax including grammatical structures and parts of speech, creating word walls, to name a few.
- Vocabulary Words will be pulled from mentor texts and independent reading.
- Whole group mini-lessons (model reading strategies)

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.

Please reference the materials in this Middle School ELA, grade 6 folder under "reading."

- Gather read-aloud texts (mentor/modeling)
- http://www.ncte.org/standards/common-core/nonfiction-texts
- Include articles and information from magazines such as Scope, Junior Scholastic, Sports Illustrated, Newsela.org, Goodreads.com, Readworks.org, and www.readingandwritingproject.com – look under resources
- Include autobiographies and biographies
- Nonfiction Mentor Texts: Teaching Informational Writing Through Children's Literature K-8, Lynn R Dorfman and Rose Capelli
- Organize nonfiction texts by topic
- Post-its/jots/readers' responses, and annotations.
- Prepare and think about anchor charts – (see p.3)in Unit 7
- Tapping the Power of Nonfiction, Katie Clements (Heinemann)
- www.readingandwritingproject.com

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.

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
- Create packet of suggested ways to "Talk and Share About Books" to allow for independence.
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Take frequent breaks

- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Questioning techniques – QAR (Question-Answer Relationships) Right There, Think and Search, Author and You, On My Own – (50 Instruction Routines to Develop Content Literacy – Pearson Publishing 2011) Inclusion Strategy Book
- 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; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed.
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines
- Use digital ebooks, technology, audio and video version of printed text
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Access speech to text function on computer

Possible 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 speciifc strategies to teach students below benchmark levels.
- Adhere to all modifications and accomodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plans.

Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader.