

Unit 4: Characters & Their Stories in Longer Books (Weeks 20-22)

Content Area: **Template**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **9 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit 4: Characters & Their Stories in Longer Books

Unit Rationale

Essential to this unit is explicit instruction in skills and strategies for “reading” characters, to grow ideas about them. As students work inside early chapter books, teachers will support them in accumulating the story, linking chapters, and dealing with any difficulty they encounter. Students will first learn to gather as much information about main characters as they can before they even begin reading a book. They will consider what they can predict about the kind of book they are about to read, and the kind of characters that live in its pages, based on their previous reading, the book’s front and back cover, and its table of contents. Then, once children are reading, they’ll squeeze every bit of character information they can out of the text itself, and the pictures. Readers will learn to continue raising and answering questions, just like they did with their nonfiction books, to get some good ideas going about their characters. Once they’ve completed the book, they’ll think about whether the characters have changed, and if so, what lessons have been learned. Next, readers will learn specific skills and strategies they can use when something about a character is hard to understand—whether it is unfamiliar vocabulary, surprising or confusing behavior, or conflicting points of view about the character. Kids will study how reading fluently and expressively helps readers better understand the story, and how to find clues in the text to help figure out how a particular tricky part is to be read. Last, students will learn how to study and investigate the ways in which the characters in their books change and grow. They will learn to notice how characters felt or behaved at the beginning of the book and how that changes at the end. They will also learn to extend their thinking to think about the lessons the characters (or the readers) have learned. They will learn to pinpoint key moments in the stories that highlight any lessons learned. Then they can apply and test out if those types of lessons or changes occur with other characters in other books, conducting mini-inquiries to compare and contrast across texts. This unit will set students up for success with reading longer books and analyzing characters, which will prepare them for the work they will be doing in future reading units in second grade and beyond.

Essential Questions

1. How can I be a thoughtful fiction reader who thinks carefully about characters and their stories, asking and answering questions, drawing on strategies when books (and characters, too) are hard to understand, and considering what an author intends for me to learn through a character’s journey?
2. What are the things I can do before, during, and after reading a book to be a thoughtful reader of characters and stories?
3. How can I draw on strategies I know and am learning, to continue getting to know characters even when it’s hard to do so?

4. How can I study how the characters change and grow—considering how characters change from the beginning to the end of the book and thinking about the lessons that the author may have intended?

21st Century Life and Career

CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP5	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
CRP.K-12.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP9	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
CRP.K-12.CRP9.1	Career-ready individuals consistently act in ways that align personal and community-held ideals and principles while employing strategies to positively influence others in the workplace. They have a clear understanding of integrity and act on this understanding in every decision. They use a variety of means to positively impact the directions and actions of a team or organization, and they apply insights into human behavior to change others' action, attitudes and/or beliefs. They recognize the near-term and long-term effects that management's actions and attitudes can have on productivity, morals and organizational culture.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.
CRP.K-12.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal.

They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.

Pre-Assessments

Teacher Observation

Independent Reading

Turn & Talk

Sticky Notes/Reading Notebook

Grand Conversations

Partner Work

Collaborative Group Work

Conferring Observations

Small Group Observations (Guided Reading and Strategy Groups)

Instructional Plan

[Unit 4: Characters & Their Stories in Longer Books](#)

Please see the attached document for suggested Minilessons, Instructional Strategies and Activities, Formative Assessments, Instructional Materials and Resources, Reflections and Suggested Modifications.

Modifications and/or Accommodations

Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, Gifted, At-risk of Failure)

English Language Learners

Native language support: The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

Adjusted Speech: The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

Visuals: The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

Front-Loading Vocabulary: The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

Special Education Students

Chunking: The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

Checking for Understanding: It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

Extra time: The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

Oral Reading: The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

Timers: The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how much time they have to complete an assignment.

Students with 504 Plans

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Gifted & Talented Strategies

Extensions/Enrichments: Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply

acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

Modify/Change Activities: Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs students.

Students at Risk of School Failure

Directions or Instructions: Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

Peer Support: Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

Alternate or Modified Assignments: Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

Increase One to One Time: When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

Contracts: It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

Hands On: As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

Tests/Assessments: Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

Seating: Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.

Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Climate Change; Informational and Media Literacy

See Crosswalk

New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area

ELA.L.RF.2.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.A	Know spelling-sound correspondences for common vowel teams.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.B	Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.C	Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.D	Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R5	Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.E	Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.
ELA.L.RF.2.3.F	Read high-frequency and grade-level irregular words with automaticity (e.g., friend, other, would).
ELA.L.RF.2.3.G	Identify the parts of high-frequency words that are regular and the parts that are irregular.
ELA.L.RF.2.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
ELA.L.RF.2.4.A	Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
ELA.L.RF.2.4.B	Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
ELA.L.RF.2.4.C	Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
ELA.L.KL.2.1	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
ELA.L.VL.2.2.A	Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.2.2.C	Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).
ELA.L.VL.2.2.D	Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).
ELA.RL.CR.2.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of key details in a literary text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
ELA.RL.TS.2.4	Describe the overall structure of a text, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action, identifying how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
ELA.RI.PP.2.5	Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author seeks to explore, answer, explain, or describe.
ELA.RL.MF.2.6	With prompting and support, use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
ELA.SL.PE.2.1.A	Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

ELA.SL.PE.2.1.B	Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their explicit comments to the remarks of others.
ELA.SL.PE.2.1.C	Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.
ELA.SL.II.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
ELA.SL.ES.2.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.
ELA.SL.UM.2.5	Use multimedia; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
ELA.SL.AS.2.6	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

Integration of Career Readiness. Life Literacies and Key Skills

TECH.9.4.2.CI.1	Demonstrate openness to new ideas and perspectives (e.g., 1.1.2.CR1a, 2.1.2.EH.1, 6.1.2.CivicsCM.2).
TECH.9.4.2.CI.2	Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work (e.g., 1.3A.2CR1a).
TECH.9.4.2.CT.2	Identify possible approaches and resources to execute a plan (e.g., 1.2.2.CR1b, 8.2.2.ED.3).
TECH.9.4.2.CT.3	Use a variety of types of thinking to solve problems (e.g., inductive, deductive).
TECH.9.4.2.DC.6	Identify respectful and responsible ways to communicate in digital environments.

Integration of Computer Science and Design ThinkingNew Section

CS.K-2.8.1.2.AP.1	Model daily processes by creating and following algorithms to complete tasks.
CS.K-2.8.1.2.AP.4	Break down a task into a sequence of steps.

Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLs for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math

SOC.6.1.2.CivicsCM.1	Describe why it is important that individuals assume personal and civic responsibilities in a democratic society.
SOC.6.1.2.CivicsCM.2	Use examples from a variety of sources to describe how certain characteristics can help individuals collaborate and solve problems (e.g., open-mindedness, compassion, civility, persistence).
SOC.6.1.2.CivicsCM.3	Explain how diversity, tolerance, fairness, and respect for others can contribute to individuals feeling accepted.

SEL Competencies

SEL.PK-12.1	Self-Awareness
SEL.PK-12.1.1	Recognize one's feelings and thoughts
SEL.PK-12.1.2	Recognize the impact of one's feelings and thoughts on one's own behavior

SEL.PK-12.1.3	Recognize one's personal traits, strengths, and limitations
SEL.PK-12.1.4	Recognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges
SEL.PK-12.2	Self-Management
SEL.PK-12.2.1	Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
SEL.PK-12.2.2	Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals
SEL.PK-12.2.3	Identify and apply ways to persevere or overcome barriers through alternative methods to achieve one's goals
SEL.PK-12.3	Social Awareness
SEL.PK-12.3.1	Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of others
SEL.PK-12.3.2	Demonstrate awareness of the differences among individuals, groups, and others' cultural backgrounds
SEL.PK-12.3.3	Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
SEL.PK-12.3.4	Demonstrate an awareness of the expectations for social interactions in a variety of settings
SEL.PK-12.4	Responsible Decision-Making
SEL.PK-12.4.1	Develop, implement and model effective problem-solving, and critical thinking skills
SEL.PK-12.4.2	Identify the consequences associated with one's actions in order to make constructive choices
SEL.PK-12.4.3	Evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions
SEL.PK-12.5	Relationship Skills
SEL.PK-12.5.1	Establish and maintain healthy relationships
SEL.PK-12.5.2	Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
SEL.PK-12.5.3	Identify ways to resist inappropriate social pressure
SEL.PK-12.5.4	Demonstrate the ability to prevent and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways
SEL.PK-12.5.5	Identify who, when, where, or how to seek help for oneself or others when needed