

# Unit 01: Case studies in Extraordinary

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

## Standards Alignment

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### New Jersey Student Learning Standards

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#### Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills

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CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP3	Attend to personal health and financial well-being.
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.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP9	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
CRP.K-12.CRP10	Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

#### Technology / Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking

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TECH.8.2.12	Technology Education, Engineering, Design, and Computational Thinking - Programming: All students will develop an understanding of the nature and impact of technology, engineering, technological design, computational thinking and the designed world as they relate to the individual, global society, and the environment.
TECH.8.2.12.A	The Nature of Technology: Creativity and Innovation: Technology systems impact every aspect of the world in which we live.
TECH.8.2.12.A.3	Research and present information on an existing technological product that has been repurposed for a different function.
TECH.8.2.12.B	Technology and Society: Knowledge and understanding of human, cultural and society values are fundamental when designing technology systems and products in the global society.

TECH.8.2.12.B.1	Research and analyze the impact of the design constraints (specifications and limits) for a product or technology driven by a cultural, social, economic or political need and publish for review.
TECH.8.2.12.B.3	Analyze ethical and unethical practices around intellectual property rights as influenced by human wants and/or needs.

## Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSL for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math Section

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LA.RL.11-12	Reading Literature Key Ideas and Details
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
LA.RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
LA.RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
LA.RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).  Craft and Structure
LA.RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (e.g., Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R4	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.RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.  Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
LA.RL.11-12.7	Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (e.g., Shakespeare and other authors.)
LA.RL.11-12.9	Demonstrate knowledge of and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R9	Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
LA.RI.11-12	Reading Informational Text
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W	Writing
LA.RI.11-12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.  Text Types and Purposes
LA.RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text, and analyze their development and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.  Production and Distribution of Writing
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.  Research to Build and Present Knowledge
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.SL	Speaking and Listening  Comprehension and Collaboration
LA.W.11-12.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.SL1	Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.SL2	Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.SL3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
LA.W.11-12.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.SL5	Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
LA.W.11-12.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

LA.W.11-12.2.D	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
LA.W.11-12.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.11-12.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L	Language Conventions of Standard English
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
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.W.11-12.8	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation. (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
LA.W.11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.11-12.9.B	Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses]”).
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.11-12.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
LA.L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.11-12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
LA.L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.11-12.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.11-12.4.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.11-12.4.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).

## **Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Climate Change; Informational and Media LiteracyNew Section**

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see Crosswalks

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

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### **Stage I: Desired Results**

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## **Transfer/Overview/Rationale**

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### **Transfer / Overview / Rationale**

#### Unit Rationale

The purpose of this unit...

Human psychology makes all people susceptible to conspiracy theories, magical thinking, and fake news. The internet and social media, with its 240 characters, dopamine delivering feedback loop, makes this susceptibility even more dangerous to young adults who have been raised on easy access, high interest, low accountability information. Students need to learn to apply the elements of critical thinking and have both the systematic skills and the self-confidence to use these elements to evaluate the validity of the conspiracy theories, magical thinking, and fake news that gets hundreds of thousands of likes on the internet every day. Students' abilities to tell the difference between a new idea and a fake idea will impact not only their ability to function as adults but the ability of our nation to sustain itself.

## **Meaning**

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## **Essential Questions**

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Essential Questions

- How should we evaluate extraordinary claims?
- Why is it essential that members of our society have a logical system to evaluate new and extraordinary statements?

## **Enduring Understanding/Indicators of Understanding**

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Enduring Understanding/Indicators of Understanding

- Human psychology makes all people susceptible to conspiracy theories,
- Since human psychology makes all people susceptible to conspiracy theories, people need to know to protect themselves and our society for this predisposition.
- Understanding the elements of and know how to apply critical thinking, will help counter our natural tendency to believe conspiracy theories.
- Applying Critical thinking skills to new information will improve both the lives of individuals and our society.

## **Acquisition (Student Learning Objectives)**

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## Knowledge

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### Knowledge

Students will know...

- The law of thought/logic and how they function
  - law of non-contradiction
  - law of identity
  - the law of the excluded middle
- the difference between laws of nature and laws of logic- very thing that is physically possible is logically possible but not everything that is logically possible is not physically possible.
- things that are logically and physically possible may still not exist
- Claims must be judged by the evidence for it, not the lack the law of identity of evidence against it.
  - Just because there is no evidence against something does not mean it is true
  - Just because there is something has not been proven conclusively proven, does not mean it is false.

## Skills

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### Skills

Student will be skilled at ...

- applying the laws of logic to real-world situations
- telling the between logic and physically possible situations
- differentiate between positions that are not conclusively proven but are still reasonable and positions that are not disproven by unreasonable.
- ask questions to determine the reasonableness of a position

## Stage 3: Learning Plan

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## Resource and Mentor Texts

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### Resources and Mentor Texts

Primary sources- teacher made units based on the following texts

- How to think about weird Things- critical thinking for a new age. by Theodore Schick and Lewis Vaughn
- How to think like a Freak- the authors of Freakonomics offer to retrain your brain- Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner
- Why People Believe Weird Things- Pseudoscience, superstition, and other confusions of our age- Michael Shermer
- A Candle in the Dark- Carl Sagan
- Skeptic magazine
- Skeptical Inquirer magazine

## **Formative Assessment Strategies**

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### Formative Assessment Strategies

- fast five quizzes to check for comprehension
- logical flow charts
- evidence supported claim statement present
- student debates
- Student presentations
- Student create media

## **Learning Activities/Unit of Study**

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### Learning Activities/Unit of Study

Students will

- \* Read non-fiction works
- Find resources online
- pose questions
- find and evaluate resources
- apply elements of critical thinking to real-world situations
- evaluate the logic and accuracy of real-world situations
- create and deliver presentations supporting your analysis of a real-world situation

## **Modifications and/or Accommodations**

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### **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.