

# 04 Character Studies

Content Area: **ELA**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **23 days**  
Status: **Published**

## **UNIT ORIENTATION**

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This unit will focus on analyzing characters in fiction text as students begin to read books with more complex characters. Students learn that characters encounter difficult challenges and who change in significant ways due to their challenges.

## **OVERVIEW OF BENDS**

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In Bend 1 students get to know their characters as friends by observing and investigating patterns in their actions and feelings. In bend II students will focus on further analyzing a character's journey across a story mountain. In Bend III students will compare and contrast characters across books looking at traits, motivations and life lesson they learn or teach.

## **Essential Questions**

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- How can I develop ideas (theories) about the kind of person a character is?
- What are the character's traits?
- Why did the character make this decision?
- How/why did the character change?
- What text evidence supports my claim?
- What did the character learn?
- How can I apply the lesson to my own life?
- How are the story elements similar/different from other books I've read?
- How is this story element important to the story?

## **Enduring Understandings**

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- Readers develop ideas (theories) about the kind of person a character is. They know this means talking about a character’s traits (personality), and are careful not to confuse the way a character feels for a trait.
- Readers understand why characters make decisions based on their prior knowledge about the character and the story as a whole.
- Readers notice how a character changes across the story (for example, the character’s feelings, traits, motivations, or behaviors might change) by paying attention to the key moment(s) in the story that caused the character to change.
- Reader support their ideas with details from the text through speaking and writing.
- At the end of a story readers can say a few sentences about the big life lesson (the theme) that a character has learned.
- Readers can read books in a text set or series, and talk about how the major events across the two books are similar or different.
- Readers can also talk about how other story elements are partly the same and partly different—like the characters, setting, or the life lessons (the themes).
- When asked to talk about the importance of a part of a story to the whole, readers use what they know about story structure to name what part of the story it is: the setting? The problem?
- Readers can also think about how the part is important to the whole story. If it is the setting, for example, they think “How is this particular setting important to the story?”

## **CONTENT AREA STANDARDS**

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### Key Ideas and Details

RL.3.1. Ask and answer questions, and make relevant connections to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RL.3.2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message/theme, lesson, or moral and explain how it is revealed through key details in the text.

RL.3.3. Describe the characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot.

## Craft and Structure

RL.3.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

RL.3.5. Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

RL.3.6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

## Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.3.7. Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

RL.3.8. (Not applicable to literature)

RL.3.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the central message/theme, lesson, and/ or moral, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).

## Range of Reading and Complexity of Text

RL.3.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

## Progress Indicators for Reading Informational Text

### Key Ideas and Details

RI.3.1. Ask and answer questions, and make relevant connections to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RI.3.2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

RI.3.3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

## Craft and Structure

RI.3.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

RI.3.5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

RI.3.6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.3.7. Use information gained from text features (e.g., illustrations, maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur). RI.3.8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence) to support specific points the author makes in a text.

RI.3.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

#### Range of Reading and Complexity of Text

RI.3.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

#### Reading Foundational Skills

##### Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.3.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words. A. Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes. B. Decode words with common Latin suffixes. C. Decode multisyllable words. D. Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

##### Fluency

RF.3.4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. A. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. B. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. C. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

**RELATED STANDARDS (Technology, 21st Century Life & Careers, ELA Companion Standards are Required)**

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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.

TECH.8.1.5.A.CS1

Understand and use technology systems

## **EVIDENCE OF LEARNING**

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### **Alternate Assessment**

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- Portfolios
- Verbal Assessment (instead of written)
- Multiple choice
- Modified Rubrics
- Performance Based Assessments

### **Summative Assessments**

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- Cold reads with comprehension questions
- End of Unit Tests
- Running Records
- NJSLA
- Open Ended Responses
- Written responses

## **Formative Assessments**

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- Checklists
- Conferences
- Class Discussions
- Exit Slips
- Interactive Notebooks
- Quizzes
- Reflections
- Review of classwork/homework
- Running Records
- Student Participation
- Teacher Observations
- Text Dependent Questions

## **Benchmark Assessments**

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- iXL
- Edulastic

## **RESOURCES (Instructional, Supplemental, Intervention Materials)**

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- Teachers College Units of Study
- Leveled books including texts of diverse subjects
- Interactive notebooks

- Mentor texts
- Readers notebooks
- Chromebooks
- IXL
- Readworks
- EPIC
- Mentor Text: Because of Winn Dixie, ; Dynamite Daniel

## **INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS**

Speech/Debate: partners and small groups analyze, compare and contrast and evaluate character traits, motives and story problem-solution

## **ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS**

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Special Education:

Provide modified notes and access to extra copies online

Provide oral reminders and check student work during independent work time

Model skills/techniques to be mastered

Check and sign assignment planner

Preferential seating

Pair visual prompts with verbal presentations

Modified or scaffolded homework and classwork

Extended time as needed

Provide graphic organizers and study guides

English Learners:

Provide scaffolded assignments and assessments

Pair visual prompts with visual presentations

Check and sign assignment planner

Extended time for assignment and assessment as needed

Highlight key vocabulary

Use graphic organizers

Provide verbal and written directions

Preferential seating with an English-speaking peer

At Risk of Failure:

Encourage class participation and reinforce skills

Model skills and assignments

Extended time to complete class work

Preferential seating

Provide extra help outside of class and 1:1 instruction when needed

Communicate regularly with students' other teachers

Provide positive feedback for tasks well done

Encourage student to proofread assessments and projects and ask for teacher proofreading of large writing assignments

Gifted and Talented:

Pose higher-level thinking questions

Provide higher level reading and writing materials for literacy based activities

Probe student to extend thinking beyond the text or connect two or more texts

Provide alternate or project-based assessments and assignments



Students with 504 Plans

Provide extended time as needed

Modify length of writing assignment

Provide short breaks within the lesson

Provide scaffolding for students

Utilize graphic organizers