

# 02\_The Need to Belong

Content Area: **ELA**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **8 weeks (40 Days)**  
Status: **Published**

## **General Overview, Course Description or Course Philosophy**

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The New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts / Literacy lay out a vision of what it means to be a literate person in the twenty-first century. Indeed, the skills and understandings students are expected to demonstrate have wide applicability outside the classroom or workplace. Students who meet the Standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature. They habitually perform the critical reading necessary to pick carefully through the staggering amount of information available today in print and digitally. They actively seek wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts that build knowledge, enlarge experience, and broaden worldviews. They reflexively demonstrate the cogent reasoning and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic. In short, students who meet the Standards develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language.

## **OBJECTIVES, ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS, ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS**

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Essential Question: How do empathy and acceptance contribute to our personal growth and the creation of a more inclusive and compassionate society?

Students will understand:

- Real life inspires authors to base their work on personal experiences.
- Good writing requires a process
- Characters in fiction reflect and explore the complexities of human nature, allowing readers to empathize and gain insight into different perspectives.
- Literary elements such as plot, setting, and theme shape the overall meaning and impact of a story.
- The interpretation of fiction is influenced by personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and societal contexts, highlighting the subjective nature of meaning-making.
- Fictional narratives provide opportunities for readers to engage with diverse cultures, historical periods, and imaginary worlds, expanding their understanding of the human experience.
- Analyzing and evaluating literary techniques in fiction enhances critical thinking and develops a deeper appreciation for the artistry of storytelling.

-Reading fiction promotes imagination, creativity, and emotional intelligence, fostering personal growth and empathy.

- Nonfiction texts convey information, ideas, and perspectives about the real world, enhancing our understanding of specific topics and broadening our knowledge base.

-Effective reading and comprehension strategies enable readers to extract meaning, analyze evidence, and evaluate arguments presented in nonfiction texts.

-Nonfiction texts can be used as tools for research and learning, helping readers locate, assess, and synthesize information from diverse sources.

-Different genres of nonfiction, such as memoirs, biographies, and essays, offer unique perspectives and narrative approaches to explore real-life experiences and events.

## **CONTENT AREA STANDARDS**

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RL.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.

RL.6.2. Determine a theme or 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.

RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

RL.6.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

W.6.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

A. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.

B. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form. E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

W.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

A. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

C. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. E. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.6.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.6.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W.6.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

SL.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

L.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).

B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).

C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.6.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. A. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. B. Spell correctly.

LA.L.6.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.6.2.A	Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
LA.L.6.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.6.3.A	Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
LA.L.6.3.B	Maintain consistency in style and tone.
LA.L.6.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.W.6.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
LA.W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.6.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
LA.W.6.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
LA.W.6.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and

refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

LA.W.6.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.
LA.W.6.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.RL.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.RL.6.2	Determine a theme or 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.RL.6.3	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
LA.RL.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
LA.RL.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
LA.RL.6.6	Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
LA.RL.6.7	Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.
LA.RL.6.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.
LA.RL.6.10	By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.
LA.SL.6.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
LA.SL.6.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.6.1.C	Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
SOC.6.3	Active Citizenship in the 21st Century
SOC.6.3.8.CivicsPR.3	Take a position on an issue in which fundamental ideals and principles are in conflict (e.g., liberty, equality).

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

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TECH.9.4.8.CI	Creativity and Innovation
TECH.9.4.8.DC	Digital Citizenship

## **STUDENT LEARNING TARGETS**

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Refer to the 'Declarative Knowledge' and 'Procedural Knowledge' sections.

## **Declarative Knowledge**

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Students will understand that:

- Authors use a variety of techniques in developing characters.
- Plot is essential to develop an interesting and readable story
- Themes of short stories are used to teach lessons to the readers.
- Literary devices are used to enrich the author's purpose for writing a story.
- Connecting an author's life to the story makes for deeper understanding.
- Writing involves a process.

## **Procedural Knowledge**

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Students will be able to:

- write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims.
- distinguish among the connotations of words with similar denotations .
- distinguish claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
- explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- interpret figures of speech in context.
- pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
- use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

- by the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- cite textual evidence from the text.
- describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes.
- describe how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
- determine a theme or central idea of the text and how it is conveyed through particular details.
- determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings.
- present claims and findings.
- provide an objective summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgements.
- sequence ideas logically and use pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes.
- support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.
- use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.
- follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- use adequate volume, and clear pronunciation when

## **EVIDENCE OF LEARNING**

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Refer to the 'Formative Assessments' and 'Summative Assessments' sections.

## **Alternate Assessments**

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- Portfolio Assessments
- Modified Rubrics
- Individual Teacher/Student Conferences

## **Summative Assessments**

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Literary essays, compare/contrast essays, narrative writing, constructive responses, entrance/exit tickets, projects, presentations, notebook assessment

## **Formative Assessments**

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Novel study notes, book clubs, close reading strategy assessments, shared readings, discussions, conferencing, reflection/response writing, questioning

## **Benchmark Assessments**

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- iXL
- Edulastic

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

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Novel study- "Wonder"-Core Text

Short stories (i.e. Popularity, President Cleveland, Where Are You?)

Poetry (i.e. Sonrisas, It Seems I Test People, I'm Nobody; Who Are You?)

-Various nonfiction articles at an appropriate level of complexity.

## **INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS**

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Social Studies

- Current Events-Students will research current events that demonstrate people from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs, coming together to achieve a common goal. Current Events-S
- Ethics
- Social Justice
- Social relationships among people



## Technology/Multimedia

- Audio/visual media analysis
- Google
- Media Literacy
- Educational tech applications

## **ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS**

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See link to Accommodations & Modifications document in course folder.