

Fair Lawn Public Schools
Fair Lawn, NJ

7th Enriched Literature Connection

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I. Course Synopsis

The Enriched Language Arts Curriculum encompasses all the expected outcomes required of the student exiting the seventh grade. The course utilizes challenging texts, provocative concepts and advanced writing assignments. Students will make various connections which will encourage them to evaluate their responsibilities, abilities, and talents with the on-going development of their:

- Intellectual, emotional and academic growth

- Empathy and understanding

- Environmental awareness

- Global responsibility

- Sense of civic duty

- Individuality in a complex world

II. Philosophy & Rationale

The goal of the Seventh Grade Enriched Language Arts Curriculum is to expose students to multiple perspectives and experiences as presented by first hand accounts, autobiographical texts and historical fiction. Empathy and activism will be fostered through the exploration of the 20th Century American Experience, sense of place, and the pursuit of The American Dream. A relationship established between the reader and the characters will enable, text to self, text to text, and text to life connections; subsequently providing a foundation for writing. The authenticity that is fostered through textual connections initiates the productive application of voice.

III. Scope & Sequence

Marking Period One:

Summer Reading

The Giver

The Little Prince

Independent Reading

Marking Period Two:

Short Story: "Song of the Trees"

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

Independent Reading

Marking Period Three:

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Independent Reading

Marking Period Four

The Heart of a Chief or *Farewell to Manzanar*

A Mid Summer Night's Dream

Marking Period 1

Unit 1: Intro and Summer Reading (1 Week)

Unit 2: *The Giver* (Five Weeks)

Unit 3: *The Little Prince* (Three Weeks)

Unit 4: Independent Reading (Two Weeks)

Literature

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Enduring Understanding

1. Freedom should be protected.
2. Feelings and memories are essential qualities of being human.

Essential Questions

- Is a "perfect" society possible? Is it something we really want?
- What is the importance of memories to an individual and to a society?
- How important is individuality and diversity in a society?
- Could something intended for the greater good really be bad?
- Is it worth giving up freedom, individuality, and choice for safety, security, and comfort?
- How can language be used to manipulate people's thoughts and feelings?
- In order to truly live, do we have to experience pain and suffering?
- What makes life truly worth living?

Learning Objectives/Common Core Standards

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact

RL.7.10. Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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L.7.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.7.6. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Suggested Activities

Before the novel:

1. **Lesson on Perspective-** Use *Zoom* or prism exercise
2. **Create and Develop** - Create and develop a utopian school environment. Details will be provided on a how to sheet. Each group will be responsible for creating a specific element of the school.
3. **Journals-**Pre and post journals. Pre journal: Identify the “perfect” person (celebrity, athlete, business person). Post journal: Response to the create and develop assessment.
4. **Journals-** While reading certain chapters students will be asked to respond to journal prompts that are related to the content.
5. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. reading comprehension questions
2. compare/contrast Jonas’s world and our world
3. summarize, make connections, make predictions
4. identify symbols and what they represent (i.e. Sevens- front buttoned jacket- independence)
5. identify cause and effect relationships
6. identify pros/cons of the rules in Jonas’s world
7. constructive controversy- Should Jonas leave the community?
8. open-ended questions for each chapter
9. multiple choice questions for each chapter

After the novel:

1. Essay- Is Jonas a hero or villain?
2. Film study – Truman Show and *The Giver* - compare/contrast
3. Expository Essay- Select a song and explain the lyrics and connections to *The Giver*.
4. "Newbery Award Acceptance Speech" by *Lois Lowry*
In her acceptance speech for the Newbery Medal, Lois Lowry explains how her own memories inspired ideas for her book.
5. Deconstruct Utopian school. Examine how this school environment could become a dystopia.

Notable quotations for Double Entry Journals:

- Students will identify two quotes per chapter and explain the relevance to the text.

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Literature

The Little Prince by Antoine De Saint-Exupery

Enduring Understanding

1. Understand how the life of the author informs the text and provides valuable insight into the themes of the text.
2. Understand how children's literature can speak to a broader audience and satirize people, places, and events.

Essential Questions

- What is the importance of seeing with the heart?
- Why may children see the world more clearly than adults?
- What causes individuals to lose their innocence?
- Why do living creatures look for companionship?
- How are sins and virtues reflected in the novel?

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Suggested Activities

Before the novel:

1. **Research-** Antoine De Saint-Exupery's life.
Political atmosphere of the time such as World War II, Leon Werth
2. **Journals**
3. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. reading comprehension questions
2. summarize, make connections, make predictions
3. identify satirized characters and who they represent
4. identify cause and effect relationships
5. open-ended questions

After the novel:

1. Expository Essay
2. Research on sins in today's world
3. Creation of a board game

Assessments:

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Independent Reading:

Select a non fiction text.

Create a scrapbook which will include biographical details about the topic and a recommendation to a future reader.

Marking Period 2

Unit 1: "Song of the Trees" and *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (5-6 weeks)

Unit 2: Independent Reading (2-3)

Literature

“Song of the Trees”

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

Enduring Understanding

1. Past sacrifices paved the way for future generations.
2. The importance of maintaining individuality.

Essential Questions

- What makes a person respond differently to something like racism?
- Why would an author choose to tell a story from one character's point of view?
- How does family play a role in shaping our values and beliefs?
- When and how should an individual take a stand in opposition to an individual or a large group?
- Do friends play a role in shaping values and beliefs? What makes a good friend?

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Suggested Activities

Before the novel:

1. **Notable Author**
2. **Read-** “Song of the Trees”
3. **Journals-** examples: Taboo Words, What does it mean to be prejudice?
4. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. reading comprehension questions
2. summarize, make connections, make predictions
3. identify characters and who they represent
4. identify cause and effect relationships
5. open-ended questions
6. research project: Themes in *Roll of Thunder*
Common Assessment between schools based on several timely articles on topics that are relevant to the text.

After the novel:

1. Expository Essay

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Independent Reading

Select a text

Use a range of assessments for Independent Reading

Possible assessments: Jigsaw Collaboration

Work in small groups to create a story which incorporates the most influential characters from the various texts.

Introduce characters through “Speed Dating”

Select characters that they would like to develop.

Write a 5 pages maximum short story which incorporates all of the characters.

Select one character which best represents their short story and create a life size model.

Each group will present a brief summary and individual students will select a short story to read. After reading the text they will write a analysis of their peer’s work and provide a recommendation.

Marking Period 3

Unit 1: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (7 weeks)

Unit 2: Film Study: option includes: *The Pursuit of Happiness* (2 weeks)

Literature

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

Enduring Understanding

1. Exposure to various cultures and religion has a tremendous impact on our view of the world.
2. Focus, drive, and determination forge a path to success.
3. Much of the historical fiction of the 20th century American Literature provides insight to the meaning of the American Dream.

Essential Questions

- How does ethnic and religious background help to shape a person's identity and values?
- What value does education have in empowering a person to overcome obstacles?
- How are life lessons sometimes just as valuable?

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Suggested Activities

Before the novel:

1. **Read Non Fiction Articles:** immigration in the 1920's, ethnic groups in Brooklyn during the 20's
2. **Introduce Controversial Topics:** alcohol abuse, promiscuity, and gender bias
3. **Notable Author**
4. **Journals**
5. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. sustained silent reading
2. post-it prompt
3. discussion questions
4. fish bowl activity
5. identify cause and effect relationships
6. open-ended questions
7. after book three choose a topic or group to research and represent

After the novel:

1. Brooklyn Block Party (each group presents factual information about the topic through a written report. Students will then create a display which represents themes, motifs, music, art, and food of the topic or culture that is represented)

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Film Study: *The Pursuit of Happiness*

Viewing Guide

Questions about the American Dream

Compare and contrast essay

Marking Period 4

Unit 1: *The Heart of a Chief* (4-5 weeks)

Unit 2: *A Farewell to Manzanar* (4-5 weeks)

(Select from Unit 1 or 2)

Unit 3: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2-3 weeks)

Literature

The Heart of a Chief by Joseph Bruchac

Enduring Understanding

1. Every individual can make a difference in their school and community.
2. If you learn to stand up for your beliefs at an early age you are more likely to take on leadership roles in your adult life.
3. Solutions can come from unexpected places.

Essential Questions

- How can you pay homage to the past but still progress in the modern world?
- Why do certain places hold value in a community?
- How do you build arguments using proper citations?

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Suggested Activities

Before the novel:

1. **Notable Author**
2. **Discuss Poem** “The Beat of a Drum”
3. **Journals**
4. **Native American Myths:** Read selections from Native American Myths and Legends
5. **Background on Penacook People**
6. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. discussion questions
2. identify cause and effect relationships
3. open-ended questions
4. read selections from *Multicultural America*
5. read the “Real Story of Thanksgiving”
6. after Chapter 5 research using Native American names for mascots
7. write a formal MLA paper using proper citations and create a works cited

After the novel:

1. **Interactive Poetry Wall**
Write a journal entry that focuses on the natural world. Select a line from their journal and enhance it with figurative language. Groups then form their own poem and create a symbol of themselves which is reflective of their line.
One group makes a mosaic from the images while the second group creates a group poem. Students will then switch roles.

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Literature

Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

Enduring Understanding

1. Adults are so afraid of “the other” that they cannot see themselves.
2. Second Generation Japanese American’s experienced a loss of identity because being Japanese was their heritage, but their American way of life was stripped from them.
3. We will survive repressions because individuals always strive for our own human dignity.

Essential Questions

- A citizen shows allegiance to their country, but is their country required to do the same?
- When is your neighbor your enemy? How do you determine who your enemy is?
- What are the responsibilities of both the writer and the reader of nonfiction?

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Before the novel:

1. **Notable Author**
2. **Read Selections from *Multicultural America***
3. **Journals**
4. **Propaganda cartoons**
5. **Vocabulary**

During the novel:

1. discussion questions
2. identify cause and effect relationships
3. open-ended questions
4. research information on life in an interment camp (topics will be provided)
5. presentation on information

After the novel:

1. Examine how the media's representation of Asian Americans has changed throughout time in a formal explanatory paper.
2. Create a Japanese Showcase

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, essays, projects

Literature

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

Enduring Understanding

1. There is a timeless nature to certain pieces of literature which directly relates to universal themes and well developed characterization.
2. Develop an appreciation for the poetic qualities of the written word.

Essential Questions

- How is a play different from a novel?
- How is a character developed through language and actions?
- How does this play connect to forms of today's entertainment?
- How much control should parents have over children?

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Suggested Activities

Before the play:

1. **Notable Author:** Background on Shakespeare, Globe Theater, and Elizabethan Era
2. **Examine Phrases coined by Shakespeare**
3. **Identify every day Shakespearean connections**
4. **Vocabulary**

During the play:

1. Act out play
2. Discussion questions
3. Show clips from *Shakespeare in Love* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
4. open-ended questions
5. incorporate poetic and literary terms

After the play:

1. Make a flyer advertising the reopening the Globe Theater with a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
2. Select a scene to modernize.

Assessments

Quizzes, tests, journals, projects