

Elementary Reading Curriculum: Units of Study in Reading

Grade 4

Unit 1: Interpreting Characters			
Overview	<p>Students will be able to independently use their learning to establish a reading life, think deeply about characters, and build interpretations about text.</p> <p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters act in ways that are predictable and unpredictable, making them complex. • A story is constructed across a story arc. • Close reading of a text will elicit details that can be used to understand characters. • Substantial ideas about text must be grounded in evidence. • Thinking about the text as a whole leads to a large interpretation and better understanding of theme. 		
Unit Learning Bends	Bend I: Establishing a Reading Life	In this bend, readers will read intensely by paying attention to what a book is asking them to do. Teachers will spend time investing in the classroom community and the procedures that they put into place for reading and discussing books. Readers will dive into summarizing in the sense that they will look back into a text bringing earlier, relevant sections to support what they just read.	Priority Standards across the Unit that will be addressed: RL.4.1 RL.4.2 RL.4.3 RL.4.4 W.4.1 W.4.9 SL.4.1 SL.4.4
	Bend II: Thinking Deeply about Characters	In this bend, readers will develop theories about characters. They will pair this work with determining importance by understanding how stories are held together by a story arc. Readers will learn to pay attention to the details that authors showcase and understand the meaning behind them. Once character theories have been developed, readers will revise them to become more complex as they read to collect new information.	

	Bend III: Building Interpretations	In this bend, readers will grow to understand that when they develop an interpretation of an entire text, they will need to think about many events of the text. Readers will develop interpretations using life issues that relate to people and stories and consider part to whole work.	
Unit Resources	Suggested Key Texts for Read Aloud and for Minilessons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mango, Abuela, and Me</i> by Meg Medina • <i>The Tiger Rising</i> by Kate DiCamillo 		
Lesson Topics Across the Unit	Lesson 1: Reading Intensely: Building a Foundation to Grow Substantial Ideas Lesson 2: Taking Responsibility for Reading Lots of Within-Reach Book Lesson 3: Collaborating to Create a Culture of Reading Lesson 4: Retelling and Synthesizing to Cement Comprehension Lesson 5: Envisionment: Seeing and Hearing inside the Text Lesson 6: Using Partners and Learning Progressions to Lift the Level of Your Work Lesson 7: Reading to Develop Defensible Ideas about Characters Lesson 8: Developing Significant Ideas: Using the Story Arc to Notice Important Details about Characters Lesson 9: Growing Grounded, Significant Ideas by Noticing Author’s Craft: Finding Meaning in Repeated Details Lesson 10: Improving Theories by Reaching for Precise Academic Language Lesson 11: Finding Complications in Characters Lesson 12: Debating to Prompt Rich Book Conversation Lesson 13: Grounding Evidence Back in the Text Lesson 14: Looking beyond Characters: Studying Other Elements of Story Lesson 15: Looking through Many Lenses at Not Just a Scene—but at the Whole Story So Far Lesson 16: Connecting Thoughts to Build Interpretations Lesson 17: A Method for Crystallizing Central Interpretations Lesson 18: Finding Meaning in Recurring Images, Objects, and Details Lesson 19: Celebration: Creating a Self-Portrait in Books		
Unit 2: Reading the Weather, Reading the World			
Overview	Students will be able to independently use their learning to learn from text, launch a whole class research project, and tackle a second research project with research clubs. <p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We read non-fiction texts to learn about the world around us. • We can extend our knowledge by reading multiple texts about similar topics. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors use strategies to present their information in various ways and for various purposes in non-fiction texts. 		
Unit Learning Bends	Bend I: Learning from Texts	In this bend, students will uncover the nonfiction in their lives by discovering “What sort of nonfiction fills my life?” Readers will read easier texts to practice use of different text structures like problem-solution, chronological/sequence, and compare/contrast. Readers will shift to work with more difficult texts and determine main idea and supporting details using boxes and bullets. The bend ends with a summarizing “boot camp.”	Priority Standards across the Unit that will be addressed: RI.4.1 RI.4.2 RI.4.5 RI.4.8 RI.4.9 W.4.8 W.4.9 SL.4.2 SL.4.4
	Bend II: Launching a Whole Class Reading Project	In this bend, readers will work in research groups to study and research extreme weather and natural disasters. Individual group members will research subtopics. There will be a focus on synthesizing texts and navigating difficult texts with difficult vocabulary and new text features. Bend 2 culminates with members of each research team teaching each other what they have learned.	
	Bend III: Tackling a Second Research Project with More Agency and Power	In this bend, research teams swap topics and begin studying another extreme weather or natural disaster event. It is suggested that groups study topics that are somewhat related to their previous topic. Readers will grow their ideas as they learn across topics noticing patterns and relationships.	
Unit Resources	Suggested Key Texts for Read Aloud and for Minilessons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hurricane and Tornado</i> by Jack Challoner • <i>Weather</i> by Kathy Furgang 		
Lesson Topics across the Unit	Lesson 1: Reading and Learning with Intensity Lesson 2: To Learn from Nonfiction, Readers Get Their Mental Arms around the Text Lesson 3: Text Structures Help Accentuate What Matters Lesson 4: Embracing the Challenge of Nonfiction Reading Lesson 5: The Challenges Posed by Texts that are Structured as Hybrids		

	<p>Lesson 6: Tackling Academic Vocabulary through Reading, Note-Taking, and Conversation</p> <p>Lesson 7: Summary Boot Camp</p> <p>Lesson 8: Planning for a Research Project</p> <p>Lesson 9: Synthesis: Developing Ideas Across Texts</p> <p>Lesson 10: Reading Various Types of Text Structures</p> <p>Lesson 11: Writing to Grow Research-Based Ideas</p> <p>Lesson 12: Don't Skip the Hard Stuff: Tackling Complex Text</p> <p>Lesson 13: Celebration: Teaching One Another</p> <p>Lesson 14: Reading and Thinking across Two Topics: Comparing and Contrasting</p> <p>Lesson 15: Seeking Out Patterns and Relationships in Text</p> <p>Lesson 16: New Topics Lead to New Investigations</p> <p>Lesson 17: Readers Come to Texts with Their Own Agenda</p> <p>Lesson 18: Evaluating Sources</p> <p>Lesson 19: Reading Closely, Thinking Deeply</p> <p>Lesson 20: Analyzing Craft: Studying How Nonfiction Authors Achieve Their Goals</p> <p>Lesson 21: Imagining Possibilities and Celebrating the Unit</p>
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Unit: Details and Synthesis

Overview	<p>Students will be able to independently use their learning to analyze parts of a story in relation to the whole and interpret fictional texts with more depth.</p> <p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters change over time. • Characters' struggles, patterns of behavior, and interactions with others can give clues about the theme. • Readers use text evidence to support their big ideas about texts. • Different texts may develop the same theme in different ways.
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Unit Learning Bends	Bend I: Making More of Details to Grow Deeper About Characters	In this bend, readers will take stock in reading fiction, set goals, and learn the value of rereading and tracking multiple ideas. Readers will be encouraged to grow big ideas about characters by studying traits and relationships and examining how characters change over time. Readers will also study details that appear unrelated by considering how these connect the ideas about their characters.	Priority Standards across the Unit that will be addressed: RL.4.1 RL.4.2 RL.4.3 W.4.9 SL.4.1
	Bend II: Finding and Tracing	In this bend, readers will begin to focus more on theme. They will study characters more deeply to develop sophisticated themes by	

	Themes Across a Story	paying close attention to characters' struggles, patterns of behaviors, and interactions with minor characters. During this bend, we will expect readers to talk about their ideas for essays as they draw on evidence from the text to back up their ideas.	SL.4.4
	Bend III: Comparing and Contrasting Across Texts	In this bend, readers will focus on comparing and contrasting texts in many ways. Readers will study how similar themes are developed in different ways across texts in addition to comparing and contrasting point of view across books. To wrap up this unit, readers will consider ways they can learn lessons from books they read.	
Unit Resources	Suggested Key Texts for Read Aloud and for Minilessons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Piper</i> Pixar Short (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCf56Tb0CP8) • <i>Fox</i> by Margaret Wild • <i>Hot Day on Abbott Avenue</i> by Karen English 		
Lesson Topics across the Unit	Lesson 1: Reviewing strategies you use when reading fiction Lesson 2: Paying attention as you read and realizing when you are not understanding the text Lesson 3: Rereading important parts in a text and rethinking to grow new ideas about the text Lesson 4: Analyzing how change happens in a text: cause and effect events Lesson 5: Bringing ideas about reading to discussion groups and rethinking them together Lesson 6: Reading parts of a story that are about setting or the plot and analyzing how they reveal more about the character Lesson 7: Understanding what parts of a story (setting, plot, etc.) reveal about character change Lesson 8: Examining character motivations and obstacles characters face and what they learn Lesson 9: Studying a character's behavior in the text Lesson 10: Studying how secondary characters impact the theme Lesson 11: Writing essays: gathering evidence from the text to support our ideas Lesson 12: Quoting the text to strengthen our ideas Lesson 13: Studying part to whole: how do the different parts of the text relate to the big idea in the story Lesson 14: Comparing and contrasting themes across texts		

Unit 3: Reading History

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Students will be able to independently use their learning to read like historians by tackling complex text, synthesizing information of various points of view, and debating with reasons and solid evidence.</p> <p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers and historians pay attention to text structure and text features to paraphrase nonfiction text to determine the main idea. • Historians ask questions about history to figure out the big lessons from the past. • Readers use text features and visuals in informational nonfiction text to aid in comprehension. • Readers use key details to summarize and to synthesize information. • Readers identify multiple main ideas in a text. 		
<p>Unit Learning Bends</p>	<p>Bend I: Researching History</p>	<p>In this bend, students will research events leading up to the American Revolution from the perspective of the Patriots. Readers will use text structures to organize their thinking as they take notes. Summarizing and chunking the text will be the focus of the bend. Teachers will foster student independence and ownership and help students to understand that as they are learning history, they are becoming stronger readers. They will foster student independence and ownership throughout the unit.</p>	<p>Priority Standards across the Unit that will be addressed:</p> <p>RI.4.2 RI.4.3 RI.4.5 RI.4.6 RI.4.9 W.4.1 W.4.8 SL.4.1 SL.4.4</p>
	<p>Bend II: Preparing for Debate</p>	<p>In this bend, readers will focus on point of view and perspective. Teachers will teach readers that any account that they read will be written from the writer's own viewpoint and there may be different perspectives. Readers will explore reading about both sides of the American Revolution and learn about argument and debate.</p>	
	<p>Bend III: Engaging in a Second Cycle of Research</p>	<p>In this bend, students will begin researching in partnerships, a topic after the Second Continental Congress. Students will need continued support working on previewing and paraphrasing. Readers will focus on</p>	

		monitoring for meaning, vocabulary development and interpretation.	
Unit Resources	<p>Suggested Key Texts for Read Aloud and for Minilessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>King George: What Was His Problem?</i> by Steve Sheinkin • <i>Liberty! How the Revolutionary War Began</i> by Lucille Recht Penner • <i>The Revolutionary War</i> by Josh Gregory • <i>The Split History of the American Revolution: A Perspectives Flip Book</i> by Michael Burgan 		
Lesson Topics across the Unit	<p>Lesson 1: Researchers Orient Themselves to a Text Set Lesson 2: Readers Use Text Structures to Organize Incoming Information and Notes Lesson 3: Special Challenges of Researching History Lesson 4: Prioritizing: Notetaking on What’s Really Important Lesson 5: Synthesizing across Texts Lesson 6: The Role of Emblematic Detail in Nonfiction Lesson 7: Readers Develop Strategies for Reading Primary Sources Lesson 8: Readers Bring Their Topics to Life Lesson 9: A Celebration of Learning Lesson 10: Recognizing Different Perspectives Lesson 11: Readers Find—and Angle—Evidence to Support Their Claim Lesson 12: Rehearsing a Debate Lesson 13: Staging a Second Continental Congress Debate Lesson 14: Building the Prior Knowledge that Makes Texts Accessible Lesson 15: Strategies for Tackling Increasingly Complex Texts Lesson 16: Readers Study All Parts of a Text to Determine Main Ideas Lesson 17: Readers Alter Their Strategies Based on the Kind of Text They Are Reading Lesson 18: Developing a Richer Conceptual Knowledge of Key Vocabulary Lesson 19: Questioning and Hypothesizing to Reach Deeper Conclusions Lesson 20: Reading History for Universal Messages and for Deeper Meaning</p>		
Unit 4: Historical Fiction Book Clubs			
Overview	<p>Students will be able to independently use their learning to synthesize evolving settings and plot lines and timelines, interpret complex texts, and think across fiction and nonfiction to understand character struggles, perspectives, insights.</p> <p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters' feelings and decisions are shaped by their role and the time period in which they live. • Readers make connections to determine the importance of a part of the story to the whole story. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of a story and details across the text can help determine and support the theme. • Readers of historical fiction study primary sources to deepen their understanding of the topic. • There are many perspectives to consider when reading about historical events. 		
Unit Learning Bends	Bend I: Tackling Complex Texts	<p>In this bend, readers will synthesize evolving settings, plot lines and timelines and determine the relationships between them. Readers will begin working in book clubs and through these book clubs, readers will read to pay attention to mood, as well as construct a strong sense of setting considering both the physical and the emotional space of their texts.</p>	<p>Priority Standards across the Unit that will be addressed:</p> <p>RL.4.1 RL.4.2 RL.4.3 RI.4.6 SL.4.1 SL.4.4</p>
	Bend II: Interpreting Complex Texts	<p>In this bend, readers will build on the interpretation work done in Unit 1 (Interpreting Characters). Readers will draft and revise ideas about characters and use ideas to come up with more than one theme for their texts. Book clubs will begin to have “conversations” and discuss how passages connect to other parts of the texts that they’re reading. Symbolism will play an integral role in conversations as readers determine, “What is the author really saying?” Opportunities for reader's theater may be presented during book clubs.</p>	
	Bend III: The Intersection of Historical Fiction and History	<p>In this bend, readers will connect nonfiction primary sources and images to the historical fiction text that they were reading. This work will enlarge their understanding of character struggles, perspectives, and insights. There is a large focus on cross-text synthesis – thinking across fiction and nonfiction texts. Readers will have the opportunity to analyze the perspective of the characters that they’ve been reading about.</p>	

Unit Resources	<p>Suggested Key Texts for Read Aloud and for Minilessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rose Blanche</i> by Christophe Gallaz • <i>Number the Stars</i> by Lois Lowry
Lesson Topics across the Unit	<p>Lesson 1: Reading Analytically at the Start of a Book</p> <p>Lesson 2: Monitoring for Sense: Fitting the Pieces Together</p> <p>Lesson 3: Thinking across Timelines: Fitting History and Characters Together</p> <p>Lesson 4: Characters' Perspectives Are Shaped by Their Roles</p> <p>Lesson 5: Marking Significant Events in the Book</p> <p>Lesson 6: Seeing Big Ideas in Small Details</p> <p>Lesson 7: Determining Themes</p> <p>Lesson 8: Deepening Interpretation through Collaboration and Close Reading</p> <p>Lesson 9: Attending to Minor Characters</p> <p>Lesson 10: Self-Assessing Using Qualities of a Strong Interpretation</p> <p>Lesson 11: Turning to Primary Sources to Better Understand History</p> <p>Lesson 12: Turning Reading into a Project: Adding Background Information to Deepen Understanding</p> <p>Lesson 13: Readers Learn History from Historical Narratives</p> <p>Lesson 14: Some People's Perspective is Not All People's Perspectives</p> <p>Lesson 15: Seeing Power in Its Many Forms</p> <p>Lesson 16: Finding Thematic Connections across Texts</p>