

English 7: 2017-2018 Literature and Movie Rationales

***The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (1967)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Outsiders* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

The Outsiders tells the story of two rival gangs struggling to live in a society that encourages their polarization through social divides. As an orphan, Ponyboy struggles with his sense of identity and what constitutes a family. One fateful evening, during a clash between the two gangs, a murder occurs which permanently changes the trajectory of each character's life. Students will study 1960's America, stereotyping, and teenage social issues present in the novel.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to identify cultural and social issues found in the novel and relate those issues to their own experiences and modern-day society. The literary learning objectives include recognition of character development as an important part of plot development. Students will also practice identifying plot development, i.e.: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. Students will conclude this novel with a research project examining a social issue that teenagers still face today, as well as a presentation to their peers on their findings.

In addition to reading the novel by S. E. Hinton, students will view the film version: *The Outsiders*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1983). The purpose of viewing the film is for students to compare the novel to the visual representation, examining the use of lighting, stage direction, dialogue, costume, music, and actor choice and its effectiveness in conveying the story. Students will compare the two genres in a formal essay.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.7.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)

- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study (SL.7.2)
- Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence (SL.7.3)
- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation (SL.7.4)
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and finds and emphasize salient points (SL.7.5)
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate (SL.7.6)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Outsiders*: gang violence, death, difficult family circumstances, and mild language.

Throughout the study of the novel and the film, students will examine the culture of the time period and discuss how it contributed to the choices made and the subsequent consequences. Students will also examine contemporary social issues and discuss how these social issues change society. Students will examine any social issues that connect with their own lives and will be encouraged to talk through solutions, and if applicable, apply those solutions to their own lives or local organizations. Through these studies, students will come to understand that violence is not used for shock or gratuitousness in the novel or the movie.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Call of the Wild* by Jack London (1903)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Call of the Wild* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

The Call of the Wild, set during the 19th century Klondike Gold Rush, is told from the perspective of Buck, a dog who is stolen from a domesticated life and forced into the wild and volatile life of an Alaskan sled dog. The story tells of Buck's journey as he becomes the dog he never knew he could be—strong, respected, and primitive. Jack London's classic novel touches on the themes of identity, survival, friendship and the inherent laws of the wild.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through the reading and study of this novel, students will discuss the themes addressed above. They will analyze Buck (and other major characters) and note how their identities change throughout the novel. Students will come to understand how the characters are affected and, to some extent, created by the harsh environment in which most of the novel occurs. Students will also spend a good deal of time analyzing the setting of the novel and evaluating how the setting of their town (Flagstaff) was similar to and different from the Alaskan frontier during the time period in which the novel was set. Students will address and respond to the novel and its themes through diverse creative writing assignments, as well as research and synthesis. Additionally, students will use the novel for the purpose of studying Jack London's writing style and the expanse of high-level vocabulary found within his writing.

Additionally to reading the novel by Jack London, students will also read the graphic genre of this novel, *The Call of the Wild: The Graphic Novel* adapted by Lloyd S. Wagner. The purpose will be to compare the novel to an illustrated form in order to make contrasts between the language style and visual representations.

Students will also read the novel and view the film *White Fang* directed by Randal Kleiser (1991) in order to make comparisons between the story of Buck and the story of White Fang. Students will compare the two dogs' journeys and examine what led to the differences these dogs' lives had.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (RI.7.7)

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Call of the Wild*: depictions of animal cruelty, fighting between animal characters, and mild profanity.

Students will discuss how the plot and character development are altered by the inclusion of this material. Students will also learn about the real-life setting of the Alaskan frontier and in doing so will come to conclusions about the intrinsic wild and violent nature of the setting, therefore coming to understand that the violent scenes from the novel are not included gratuitously.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli (2003)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *Milkweed* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

Jerry Spinelli's novel *Milkweed* allows the reader to learn about the Holocaust through the eyes of a young orphan boy. The reader is often asked to fill in the holes in Spinelli's narrative, as Misha himself is often confused about what is happening around him. As Misha struggles to survive in Nazi occupied Poland, the reader is pushed to critically evaluate themes of identity, friendship, family, and survival.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This novel serves as an excellent introduction to the Holocaust because it allows students to see the events unfold through the eyes of a narrator near their own age. Students will discuss the effect that the point of view and the narrator's voice have on their impressions and understanding throughout the story. This unit contains a research component as well: Spinelli includes many historical figures and places (Himmler, Dr. Korczak, the Warsaw Ghetto, etc.), and students will work within groups to research the historical truths behind them. Spinelli creates many

excellent examples of figurative language which can be used to introduce or review these terms/concepts as well as to assist in the study of poetry written during/about the Holocaust. Students will focus on the ghettos and the inhabitants who resided there; students will also study the historical framework to better understand the decisions characters make throughout the novel.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Analyze how a drama or poem's form or structure contributes to its meaning (RL.7.5)
- Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text (RL.7.6)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (RI.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others (RI.7.6)
- Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (RI.7.7)
- Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims (RI.7.8)
- Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts (RI.7.9)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)

- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
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- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Milkweed*: depictions of Holocaust-specific torture, violence, death, and anti-Semitic language.

Students will participate in discussions about these topics and why they are hurtful. Students will participate in discussions and write reflectively to help process their emotional reactions to both the novel, and supplemental readings included within the unit. A strong emphasis will be placed on the idea that it is necessary to study the horrific periods of our history so that they are not repeated. Students will be encouraged to pose questions, discuss any confusion, and study supplementary texts in order to better understand the events in the novel, as well as the characters' actions and the consequences.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys (2012)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *Between Shades of Gray* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

Fifteen-year-old Lina is a Lithuanian girl living an ordinary life--until Soviet officers invade her home and tear her family apart. Separated from her father and forced onto a crowded train, Lina, her mother, and her young brother make their way to a Siberian work camp, where they are forced to fight for their lives. Lina finds solace in her art, documenting these events by drawing. Risking everything, she imbeds clues in her drawings of their location and secretly passes them along, hoping her drawings will make their way to her father's prison camp. But will strength, love, and hope be enough for Lina and her family to survive?

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will read this book as a companion novel to *Milkweed* during the Holocaust Unit. It works well in this unit, and with *Milkweed*, because it gives students a different yet equally as important perspective on the Holocaust: how the Soviet Union was contributing to the destruction during World War II. This novel also has a female protagonist, so students will have the opportunity to read about how young people of both genders were affected during this

time period. These differences will allow for ample discussions and comparisons between what was going on in Europe and what was going on in the Soviet Union. We will be examining the Holocaust as an entire event—this novel will allow students to have a glimpse at a part of history that is often forgotten or diminished because it wasn't as widespread and as well-known as the European counterpart. This novel, much like *Milkweed*, also allows for students to really examine how these events affected people their age—how those young kids experienced loss, confusion, terror, as well as hope, resilience, and a desire to continue on the fight for what is right and good in the world.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (RI.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others (RI.7.6)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)

- Determine of clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Between Shades of Gray*: violence, labor camp hardships, death, and mild sexual implications.

Between Shades of Gray is a realistic, yet fictional account of what people would face as they made the journey from their homes to Soviet Union labor camps in northern Siberia. As this novel will be read after *Milkweed*, students will already know the benefits of discussing historical events, even the painful ones, and will already have established a rapport to discuss these difficult topics. Students will participate in discussions, reflective writings, and comparisons with the characters/experiences in *Milkweed* to help them not only process their own emotional responses, but also to help examine what caused these events to happen, what happened after these events, and how they can apply that knowledge to ensure these types of events are not repeated. Students will also examine how this novel has a main theme of hope—through all of the atrocities, and painful experiences the characters in the novel have, students will continually examine how hope prevails throughout the novel, and how hope can prevail in all situations.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins (2008)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Hunger Games* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event, The Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change, but one thing is constant: kill or be killed.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Hunger Games will be one of many novels during the Dystopian Literature Unit. All of the novels have similar themes that students will explore, either in their individual groups, or as a whole class; these themes include survival, identity, coming of age, choice, and family. Additionally, students will look specifically at the ideas of reality television, entertainment, obligation, and social class. Students will also examine how the price of “remembrance” can outweigh the value of moving on, and how the main characters maintain their sense of self, and their personal morals and ethics, even when thrown into impossible situations.

This novel also has value because of its recent and immense popularity: students will have the opportunity to compare this novel to its film counterpart *The Hunger Games* directed by Gary Ross (2012), as well as continue the book series with the two sequels. This novel was also chosen because it wouldn't be a typical "school" read, and one of the most important goals of English 7 is to spark and encourage a love of reading, and often times that is best achieved through unique literature that will connect to students' individual interests.

Additionally, students will examine various short stories and compare the ideas, themes, and characters. Through this study, students will be able to draw parallels between different types of literature, as well as pinpoint differences.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
 - Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
 - Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot (RL.7.3)
 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
 - Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text (RL.7.6)
 - Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
 - Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
 - 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
 - Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
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- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
 - Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
 - Determine of clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
 - Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
 - Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Hunger Games*: violence.

The Hunger Games no doubt has a fair amount of violence, and young people are often the victims. Although this violence is seen throughout the book, the merits of the novel far outweigh the instances of violence. Indeed, one of the most important ways students will explore the protagonist is by critiquing and examining how she handles the unnecessary violence she is forced to participate in, and how she plans to put a stop to the violence, and make the rest of her community understand just how horrific the Hunger Games are. The violence is always purposeful: it forces the main character to continually evaluate who she is as a person, what she values, and what she can and cannot stand for. This will allow students to have in-depth discussions and reflections about identity and how one person can change the world. Suzanne Collins focuses on the implications and consequences of each act of violence, as opposed to the violence itself, which will encourage students to examine the bigger picture as well.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Giver* by Lois Lowry (1993)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Giver* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

In Jonas' perfect world, everything is under control. There is no war or fear or pain. But when Jonas learns the truth, there is no turning back. In a utopian community where there are no choices--where everyone has his or her place in the world assigned according to gifts and interests--the time has come for 12-year-old Jonas to become the new Receiver of Memory. He will be the one to bear the collective memories of a society that lives only in the present, where "Sameness" is the rule. But Jonas soon recognizes the losses and discovers the lie that supports his community. He decides he will change his world--but he cannot predict how that change will come about, or what that change will mean for himself and the "newchild" Gabriel, whom he has resolved to protect.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Giver will be one of many novels during the Dystopian Literature Unit. All of the novels have similar themes that students will explore, either in their individual groups, or as a whole class; these themes include survival, identity, coming of age, choice, and family. Students will also look specifically at the idea of diversity, the role of government, and the idea that memory can serve multiple purposes. *The Giver* was added to this list to serve two purposes: to give students an option that has historically been included as a classic text in the middle school curriculum, as well as provide an option for struggling readers that will better suit their needs. Students will also be able to read the rest of the series, which is critically acclaimed. This novel was also chosen because it wouldn't be a typical "school" read, and one of the most important goals of English 7 is to spark and encourage a love of reading, and often times that is best achieved through unique literature that will connect to students' individual interests.

Additionally, students will examine various short stories and compare the ideas, themes, and characters. Through this study, students will be able to draw parallels between different types of literature, as well as pinpoint differences.

Students will also have the opportunity to compare the novel to its movie version, *The Giver* directed by Philip Noyce (2014). Students will discuss the effects of lighting, music, stage movement, and dialogue and will also examine how successful the movie is in portraying the story.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text (RL.7.6)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Giver*: mild violence, mild romantic implications, suicide, and euthanasia.

The Giver is a classic dystopian novel that examines many themes that are relevant to modern-day dystopian novels. Although this book touches on many different topics that could be potentially sensitive, none of the scenes are gratuitous, and many times, the main character struggles with these things as much as the reader might. Also, because the main character is on the younger side, many of the scenes are glossed over, in the same way young people do in the real world: they know something is going on that might be painful or wrong, but they don't spend much time on the intricacies. Students will explore the themes in this novel by discussing or writing about different scenarios, and how the characters acted, and what the characters could have done differently. Students will also examine the importance of the negative parts of life, and how those negatives are organically balanced out by the many positives.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than

compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Lightning Thief: The Graphic Novel* by Rick Riordan (2010)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Lightning Thief: The Graphic Novel* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

You've read the book. You've seen the movie. Now submerge yourself in the thrilling, stunning, and action-packed graphic novel.

Mythological monsters and the gods of Mount Olympus seem to be walking out of the pages of twelve-year-old Percy Jackson's textbooks and into his life. And worse, he's angered a few of them. Zeus's master lightning bolt has been stolen, and Percy is the prime suspect. Now, he and his friends have just ten days to find and return Zeus's stolen property and bring peace to a warring Mount Olympus.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit will serve the purpose of allowing students to compare different types of story-telling: the traditional novel, a graphic novel, and a film. Students will read the novel independently, and then will read the graphic novel as a group before viewing the film. Students will be focusing on scene comparisons and character comparisons during this unit. Students will also be composing their own graphic novel after reading this one and studying the use of language and illustrations.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.7.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)

- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study (SL.7.2)
- Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence (SL.7.3)
- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation (SL.7.4)
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and finds and emphasize salient points (SL.7.5)
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate (SL.7.6)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Lightning Thief: The Graphic Novel*: mythical gods and creatures, violence, some romantic implications

The premise of this novel is that mythical gods have affairs with mortal women which results in children who are demigods. This can lead to discussions of how these affairs began, although this book does not include detail. It also alludes to and describes fantasy violence, although again, the novel does not dive into details with this.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***Shark Girl* by Kelly Bingham (2010)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *Shark Girl* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

On a sunny day in June, at the beach with her mom and brother, fifteen-year-old Jane Arrowood went for a swim. And then everything — absolutely everything — changed. Now she’s counting down the days until she returns to school with her fake arm, where she knows kids will whisper, "That’s her — that’s Shark Girl," as she passes. In the meantime there are only questions: Why did this happen? Why her? What about her art? What about her life? In this striking first novel, Kelly Bingham uses poems, letters, telephone conversations, and newspaper clippings to look unflinchingly at what it’s like to lose part of yourself - and to summon the courage it takes to find yourself again.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit will serve two purposes: one is to examine the literary technique of using verse to tell a story in a novel. Students will study the techniques the author uses to achieve themes and mood throughout the use of verse; students will apply these techniques to their own writings at the conclusion of this unit. Students will also study how the protagonist moves on from tragedy and how the character changes in a significantly altering way. Students will be encouraged to include major character events in their own writings during this unit.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.7.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study (SL.7.2)
- Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence (SL.7.3)

- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation (SL.7.4)
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and finds and emphasize salient points (SL.7.5)
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate (SL.7.6)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine of clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Shark Girl*: hospitalization/amputation, physical therapy

Although this novel deals with a violent event—a shark attack—very little time is spent focusing on the attack itself. Students will read about the protagonist’s long stay in the hospital, as well as her struggles to overcome the loss of her arm. She also goes through physical therapy which frustrates her and she can be hopeless at times.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Outsiders* directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1983)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Outsiders* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

The Outsiders tells the story of two rival gangs struggling to live in a society that encourages their polarization through social divides. As an orphan, Ponyboy struggles with his sense of identity and what constitutes a family. One fateful evening, during a clash between the two gangs, a murder occurs which permanently changes the trajectory of each character’s life. Students will study 1960’s America, stereotyping, and teenage social issues present in the novel.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to identify cultural and social issues found in the novel and relate those issues to their own experiences and modern-day society. The literary learning objectives include recognition of character development as an important part of plot development. Students will also practice identifying plot development, i.e.: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. Students will conclude this novel with a research project examining a social issue that teenagers still face today, as well as a presentation to their peers on their findings.

In addition to reading the novel by S. E. Hinton, students will view the film version: *The Outsiders*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1983). The purpose of viewing the film is for students to compare the novel to the visual representation, examining the use of lighting, stage direction, dialogue, costume, music, and actor choice and its effectiveness in conveying the story. Students will compare the two genres in a formal essay.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.7.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.7.4)
- 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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W.7.5)
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources (W.7.6)
- Conduct short research projects to answer questions, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7)
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (W.7.8)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study (SL.7.2)
- Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence (SL.7.3)
- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation (SL.7.4)
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and finds and emphasize salient points (SL.7.5)
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate (SL.7.6)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Outsiders*: gang violence, death, difficult family circumstances, and mild language.

Throughout the study of the novel and the film, students will examine the culture of the time period and discuss how it contributed to the choices made and the subsequent consequences. Students will also examine contemporary social issues and discuss how these social issues change society. Students will examine any social issues that connect with their own lives and will be encouraged to talk through solutions, and if applicable, apply those solutions to their own lives or local organizations. Through these studies, students will come to understand that violence is not used for shock or gratuitousness in the novel or the movie.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***White Fang* directed by Randal Kleiser (1991)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *White Fang* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

In gripping detail, London bares the savage realities of the battle for survival among all species in a harsh, unyielding environment. *White Fang* is part wolf, part dog, a ferocious and magnificent creature through whose experiences we see and feel essential rhythms and patterns of life in the animal kingdom and among mankind as well. It is, above all, a novel that keenly observes the extraordinary working of one of nature's greatest gifts to its creatures: the power to adapt. Focusing on this wondrous process, London created in *White Fang* a classic adventure story as fresh and appealing for today's audiences as for those who made him among the bestselling novelists of his day.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will watch this film for multiple purposes. The first is to compare the film version to the novel, and students will compose a formal essay discussing the similarities and differences. Students will also have the opportunity to compare this film to the themes and plot of *The Call of the Wild* and address similarities and differences.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)

- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (RI.7.7)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *White Fang*: depictions of animal cruelty, fighting between animal characters, and mild profanity.

Students will discuss how the plot and character development are altered by the inclusion of this material. Students will also learn about the real-life setting of the Alaskan frontier and in doing so will come to conclusions about the intrinsic wild and violent nature of the setting, therefore coming to understand that the violent scenes from the novel are not included gratuitously.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Hunger Games* directed by Gary Ross (2012)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Hunger Games* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event, The Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change, but one thing is constant: kill or be killed.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will watch this film for multiple purposes. The first is to compare the film version to the novel, and students will compose a formal essay discussing the similarities and differences. Students will also have the opportunity to compare this film to the themes and plots of their other dystopian novels.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (RI.7.7)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences (W.7.3)
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.7.9)
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking (L.7.1)

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.7.2)
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (L.7.3)
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies (L.7.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Hunger Games*: violence.

The Hunger Games no doubt has a fair amount of violence, and young people are often the victims. Although this violence is seen throughout the book, the merits of the novel far outweigh the instances of violence. Indeed, one of the most important ways students will explore the protagonist is by critiquing and examining how she handles the unnecessary violence she is forced to participate in, and how she plans to put a stop to the violence, and make the rest of her community understand just how horrific the Hunger Games are. The violence is always purposeful: it forces the main character to continually evaluate who she is as a person, what she values, and what she can and cannot stand for. This will allow students to have in-depth discussions and reflections about identity and how one person can change the world. Suzanne Collins focuses on the implications and consequences of each act of violence, as opposed to the violence itself, which will encourage students to examine the bigger picture as well.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Giver* directed by Phillip Noyce (2014)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Giver* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 7th grade English curriculum.

PLOT SUMMARY

In Jonas' perfect world, everything is under control. There is no war or fear or pain. But when Jonas learns the truth, there is no turning back. In a utopian community where there are no choices—where everyone has his or her place in the world assigned according to gifts and interests—the time has come for 12-year-old Jonas to become the new Receiver of Memory. He will be the one to bear the collective memories of a society that lives only in the present, where "Sameness" is the rule. But Jonas soon recognizes the losses and discovers the lie that supports his community. He decides he will change his world—but he cannot predict how that change will come about, or what that change will mean for himself and the "newchild" Gabriel, whom he has resolved to protect.

RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will watch this film for multiple purposes. The first is to compare the film version to the novel, and students will compose a formal essay discussing the similarities and differences. Students will also have the opportunity to compare this film to the themes and plots of their other dystopian novels. This film in particular will serve as a good example of how film often takes a book and completely alters the content—students will address this in their writings.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RL.7.1)
- Determine a theme or central ideas of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RL.7.2)
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (such as, how setting shapes the characters or plot) (RL.7.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4)
- Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poems to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (Lighting, sound, color, etc.) (RL.7.7)
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history (RL.7.9)
- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.7.1)
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text (RI.7.2)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (RI.7.4)
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas (RI.7.5)
- Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (RI.7.7)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (W.7.2)
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- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (SL.7.1)
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- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings (L.7.5)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.7.6)

ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Giver*: mild violence, mild romantic implications, suicide, and euthanasia.

The Giver is a classic dystopian novel that examines many themes that are relevant to modern-day dystopian novels. Although this book touches on many different topics that could be potentially sensitive, none of the scenes are gratuitous, and many times, the main character struggles with these things as much as the reader might. Also, because the main character is on the younger side, many of the scenes are glossed over, in the same way young people do in the real world: they know something is going on that might be painful or wrong, but they don't spend much time on the intricacies. Students will explore the themes in this novel by discussing or writing about different scenarios, and how the characters acted, and what the characters could have done differently. Students will also

examine the importance of the negative parts of life, and how those negatives are organically balanced out by the many positives.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The English department feels that the literary merit of this novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.