

Grade 4 Curriculum Map

Unit 1: Personal Narratives

Unit Summary

This unit examines the genre of personal narratives, which consists of works of nonfiction written by a first-person narrator involved in the events being described. Students read five personal narratives, identifying the elements of the genre and, throughout the unit, using these elements in writing a variety of their own personal narratives. These elements include events proceeding in a logical sequence, dialogue that shows character, vivid descriptive language, characters with defining traits, sensory details, figurative language, and writing strong introductions and conclusions. Students also take a Beginning-of-Year assessment to evaluate their preparedness for Grade 4 instruction.

Unit Length:

15 Days

Anchor Text: *Personal Narratives*

Text Type: Informational

Lexile: 800L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Identify features of personal narrative genre
- Identify literary devices in Personal Narratives including similes and metaphors, dialogue, transition words, sensory details, and point of view
- Demonstrate understanding of cause and effect
- Develop proficiency with cursive handwriting
- Beginning-of-the-Year Assessment

Big Ideas

- Writers of personal narratives incorporate a variety of literary elements and an intentional point of view into their writing.
- Students can increase their literal comprehension and ability to make text-based inferences through critical and close reading.
- Personal narratives are a genre that students can use to create a sense of meaning out of their life's experiences.

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Unit 2: Empires in the Middle Ages

Unit Summary

The *Empires in the Middle Ages* unit covers the history of both the Middle Ages in Europe and the Islamic Medieval Empires. While part 1 deals primarily with the events of western Europe and the relationship between the Christian Church and the rulers of the region, the concurrent part 2 looks at events in another part of the world (particularly in what is now called the Middle East). Students practice taking notes from informational text, writing an informative, explanatory paragraph, and writing a persuasive paragraph. They describe the functions of and relationship between nouns and adjectives as well as between adverbs and verbs, form and use prepositional phrases, identify parts of speech, correctly use subject and predicate, and correct sentence fragments or run-on sentences by revising them into complete sentences. They practice writing the four different kinds of sentence and using the progressive verb tense. Students work with the prefixes *un-*, *non-*, and *en-*, the root words *arch* and *graph*, and the suffix *-y*.

Unit Length:

25 Days

Anchor Text: *Empires in the Middle Ages*
Text Type: Informational/Literary
Lexile: 910L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate understanding of key vocabulary
- Write an informative paragraph using details from the text
- Determine importance through note taking
- Write an opinion piece with evidence to support that opinion
- Utilize paraphrasing to create an explanatory paragraph
- End-of-Unit Assessment

Big Ideas

- The decline and fall of the Roman Empire led to the Islamic Empire and the western European empire, influenced by the role of the Christian Church.
- The Crusades were religious and political wars fought by both empires to gain control of The Holy Land.
- Advances made in the fields of knowledge, philosophy, and science moved from Greek roots to Arabic to Latin cultures.
- We must understand the past origins of these cultures in order to make sense of our current political climate.

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Unit 3: Poetry

Unit Summary

This unit gives students tools and strategies for approaching poetry, training them in the methods and devices poets use and equipping them to read and interpret both formal and free verse poems. It gives them continual opportunities to create poems themselves, allowing them to practice what they have learned. The poems in this unit represent a wide variety of time periods, from Kshemendra's twelfth-century treatise on the responsibilities of poets to the work of living writers such as Harriette Mullen. The poets come from many backgrounds and nations; the poets included are European, Asian, African American, Native American, and Hispanic. The poems themselves are similarly diverse; some employ precise meter and rhyme schemes, while others use free verse. A key aspect of the Poetry unit is encouraging and equipping students to write original poems. This allows for creative and imaginative expression, but it also affords students the opportunity to implement the poetic devices they have learned in the reading components of each lesson. The writing portion of the unit allows students to apply their new poetry knowledge, further solidifying their understanding of the craft of poetry. Throughout this unit, students will practice using the poetic devices exemplified by each poem. They will compose rhymes, similes, and metaphors; use repetition, anaphora, and alliteration; and plan, draft, and revise several original poems inspired by the poems studied in this unit.

Unit Length:

15 Days

Anchor Text: *Poetry Journal*

Text Type: Literary

Lexile: N/A because poetry/verse

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Read text with the purpose of identifying details and evidence
- Explore imaginative possibilities of figurative language
- Identify and develop an understanding of poetic devices including rhyme, repetition, alliteration, meter, and tone
- Explore and identify extended metaphors in text
- Write original poems with colorful language and poetic devices

Big Ideas

- This unit prepares students for complex texts, vocabulary, and form they will encounter in Grade 5.
- Poetry need not be bound by formal constraints, but can be a free form, creative, imaginative vehicle for expression.
- Poetry has been around for centuries, and it is a timeless, distinctive craft.

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Unit 4: Eureka! Student Inventor

Unit Summary

Eureka! Student Inventor Quest, a narrative-driven unit that immerses students in close reading adventures. Through them, students read complex literary and informational texts and consistently demonstrate their ability to find evidence and use it appropriately. Over the course of the Quest, students write routinely in opinion, informational, and narrative modes, adjusting style for the task and audience indicated. In Eureka! Student Inventor, students read a range of informational texts about inventors, inventions, and the process of creation. In addition to close readings, students analyze objects and situations in the world around them, identify problems, create evidence-based solutions, and ultimately become inventors themselves. By routinely writing informational and opinion pieces, students practice research, observation, communication, and persuasion. They also engage in a range of collaborative discussions, sharing ideas and working in teams with defined roles and agreed-upon rules. Students read biographical articles about eight inventors, detailed histories of important inventions, and scientific explanations of simple machines. Comprehension and collaboration skills are developed throughout, as students establish rules for group work and work together on building, reading about, and presenting inventions. Students make oral presentations about their inventions and demonstrate how and what they have learned from their peers' presentations. Audio and video components, as well as teacher-read texts, give students opportunities to practice active listening.

Unit Length:

10 Days

Anchor Text: *Eureka! Files*

Text Type: Informational

Lexile: 1100L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Read complex literary and informational text, find evidence, and use it appropriately
- Write in opinion, informational, and narrative modes and adjust style for task and audience
- Develop proficiency in research, observation, communication, and persuasion
- Demonstrate understanding of key vocabulary

Big Ideas

- Inventors go through a variety of steps in the creative process, often times resulting in an invention.
- The creative process involves identifying problems and creating evidence-based solutions.
- Inventors, and students playing the role of inventor, engage in collaborative discussions, share ideas, and often work in partnerships and teams.

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Unit 5: Geology

Unit Summary

This unit focuses on the composition of the earth and the forces that change Earth's surface. Students learn about the theory of plate tectonics and how it explains the presence of volcanoes, mountains, underwater trenches, ridges, and other geological features. Students will also study geological processes like rock formation, weathering, and erosion in order to understand how the earth changes over time and why it looks the way it does. They review the stages of the writing process, examine and explain similes, draft an informational pamphlet about tsunamis, write a wiki entry about a specific volcano, and create a descriptive paragraph about a type of rock or item in the rock cycle, incorporating literary devices such as alliteration, personification, and simile. Students also work with the suffix *-ly* and the root word *rupt* and practice sequencing adjectives and proper use of commas and quotation marks. This unit includes a Mid-Year assessment to track student progress towards grade-level standards mastery.

Unit Length:

15 Days

Anchor Text: *The Changing Earth*
Text Type: Informational/Literary
Lexile: 900L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Ability to reference bolded words in the glossary not directly addressed in lessons
- Demonstrate understanding of key vocabulary
- Examine and explain similes
- Draft an informational pamphlet, write a wiki entry, and create a descriptive paragraph
- Utilize literary devices including alliteration, personification, and simile
- Mid-Year Assessment

Big Ideas

- Earth is composed of layers that, through heat and pressure, cause movements that result in geological features above and below the Earth's surface.
- Tectonic plate theory explains how mountains, volcanoes, and trenches are created on land and under the sea.
- Information about the rock cycle, weathering, and erosion explains how the earth is continually changing.

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Unit 6: Contemporary Fiction: *The House on Mango Street*

Unit Summary

This unit leads students into a deep dive on narrative literature and writing, using excerpts from *The House on Mango Street* as its anchor text. Throughout this unit, students read closely and analyze the text, then practice using literary elements they have explored in each vignette from the Reader—for example, the use of detailed descriptions, the building of aspiration as a theme, and the contrast between the protagonists' perceptions and the perceptions of others. The unit asks students to compose a multi-chapter narrative; they build their stories throughout several lessons devoted to planning, drafting, and revising their work. In addition, students practice opinion writing using evidence from the text.

Unit Length:
13 Days

Anchor Text: Writer's Journal with excerpts from *The House on Mango Street*
Text Type: Literary
Lexile: 800L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Reading for details, dialogue, and action
- Inferring character and theme in a text
- Development of Core and Literary Vocabulary
- Develop strength in writing narrative prose
- Demonstrate proficiency in writing an opinion piece backed by clear evidence
- Demonstrate success with literary devices including detailed descriptions, use of theme, and contrasting character perceptions.
- End-of-Unit Assessment

Big Ideas

- Through close reading, a reader can discover several different layers of meaning in a text.
- Narrative text can be similar to poetry, with short stories that contain imaginative and sometimes abstract use of language.
- Narrative text can act as windows, revealing lives different from ours, or mirrors, reflecting characters with whom we can identify.

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Unit 7: American Revolution

Unit Summary

This unit centers around the big idea that disagreements about principles of government led colonists in North America to seek independence from Great Britain. The causes, major figures, and consequences of the American Revolution provide a framework for understanding both what caused the thirteen colonies to break away and become an independent nation and what significant ideas and values were at the heart of the American Revolution. Students review the stages of the writing process, enact and record key information from vignettes corresponding to the causes of the American Revolution, and develop a five-paragraph cause and effect essay. Students learn the prefixes *im-* and *in-*, the suffixes *-ible* and *-able*, and the root word *port*. They also learn modal auxiliary verbs and continue developing their use of commas and quotation marks and employing correct subject-verb agreement.

Unit Length:

17 Days

Anchor Text: *The Road to Independence*

Text Type: Informational/Literary

Lexile: 950L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Write a five-paragraph compare and contrast essay
- Demonstrate understanding of key vocabulary
- Develop proficiency of subject-verb agreement with both regular and irregular verbs
- Deepen knowledge and understanding of prefixes and suffixes when added to root words
- End-of-Unit Assessment

Big Ideas

- Disagreements about principles of government led colonists in North America to seek independence from Great Britain.
- The causes, major figures, and consequences provide a framework for understanding the strive for independence.
- There were significant ideas and values at the heart of the American Revolution.

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Unit 8: Treasure Island

Unit Summary

This unit examines the fiction genre through a classic novel, *Treasure Island*. Students focus on character development, setting, plot, and literary devices while reading an abridged version of Robert Louis Stevenson’s popular adventure story. They also trace the development of plot, characters, and literary elements over the course of the novel and engage in an extended writing project while continuing to practice the various stages of the writing process. Students draft a character sketch, then write, publish, and share an original adventure story. Throughout these writing activities students focus on character development, dialogue, verb choice, and revision methods. Students learn relative pronouns, the suffixes *-ful* and *-less* and the root word *bio*. They also continue working with modal auxiliary verbs and coordinating conjunctions.

Unit Length:

19 Days

Anchor Text: *Treasure Island*
Text Type: Informational/Literary
Lexile: 770L

Overall Learning Outcomes

- Identify and properly use modal auxiliary verbs, relative pronouns, and coordinating conjunctions
- Demonstrate understanding of key vocabulary
- Trace development of character, setting, plot, and literary devices in a longer work of fiction
- Develop an adventure story using an introduction, problem or conflict, rising action, turning point or climax, and a resolution
- End-of-the-Year Assessment

Big Ideas

- This text is an abridged version of the original novel written by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1883 and provides exposure to literary classics.
- There are several themes, including greed, adventure, duplicity, and bravery, throughout the text.
- Sailing, the primary form of long-distance travel at the time, also included many challenges, including disease, piracy, and accurate navigation.