Unit Overview

Grade 7: English/Language Arts

Unit 4: Exercising Expression

Contents

Using This Resource

The Unit Overview provides all the standards and learning targets that should be taught over the course of the unit. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the Unit-at-a-Glance. Teachers should refer to the Overview to locate specific standards and their corresponding learning targets when designing lesson plans and assessments. *While Text Suggestions are provided throughout the unit, they are intended as suggestions only. We recognize that elements of these texts are controversial; however, we intentionally left them in this unit for their educational value and the teaching moments they present. Individual teachers should use their discretion when selecting texts to meet their students' needs. The additional resources included in the Overview promote the most effective research-based teaching practices and should be considered when planning and assessing students.

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Unit Overview

"If you have the words, there's always a chance that you'll find the way."
— Seamus Heaney, *Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney*

"No man has the right to dictate what other men should perceive, create or produce, but all should be encouraged to reveal themselves, their perceptions and emotions, and to build confidence in the creative spirit."
— Ansel Adams

"Everybody is talented because everybody who is human has something to express."
— Brenda Ueland

After intensive study of oneself and one's community in the previous units, the natural culmination of the grade level is to exercise the expression of these discoveries; hence, the unifying theme for the final unit of Grade 7 is **Exercising Expression**. In this unit, students will use both drama and poetry as a means to both analyze literary works and create original ones.

This unit provides opportunities for students to consider the way we express ourselves and how our means of expression reveal our identity. Analyzing how poets and playwrights use language to express ideas in their works will help prepare students to take on similar tasks throughout the unit. Students will return to the study of diction and connotation, noting how word choice creates imagery and tone in poetry and on stage.

Reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a Shakespearean comedy, will offer an in-depth study of language, allowing students to examine humor and interpret text. Rewriting and performing scenes from the play will teach students how to make choices to tell a proper story and how verbal and nonverbal communication work collaboratively. Composing language and seeing language come to life are primary aspects of exercising expression. While this unit suggests using *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, teachers should differentiate as needed based on their individual students' needs and abilities. (For example, the amount of time students need to decipher and use the vocabulary from this Shakespearean comedy is dependent upon students' previous experiences and existing vocabulary.)

Analyzing different forms and styles of poetry will expose students to a variety of language, tones and themes, building a foundation for their own expression in the latter parts of the unit. As language is a primary focus of the unit, students will work regularly on analysis and close reading in preparation for exercising their very own expression.

Moreover, this unit emphasizes social awareness and self-awareness, providing multiple opportunities for group and individual expression. Students will hone skills for 21st-century learning by working collaboratively using creativity and innovation to communicate a new version of a Shakespearean scene. This effort will require flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self-direction, responsibility and leadership. Later, students will work independently on personal poetry portfolios that require deep examination of one's self and allow the freedom to engage in intensive emotional learning — identifying their emotions and building self-confidence along the way.

Encouraging students to create authentic work requires the foundation of the supportive classroom environment built over the course of the year. The units and class time up until this point have allowed students the confidence to take the risks outlined in this unit. By understanding ourselves, where we belong and how we fit into the social construct, seventh-grade students are now ready to fully exercise their own expression.

Essential Questions:

- In what ways do authors use language to create an effect?
- In what ways does form contribute to meaning in drama and poetry?
- How can examining the writing of others help us to express our own ideas more fully?
- How does exposure to different forms of expression contribute to our learning and our personal expression?

Standards and Learning Targets

Reading Literature (RL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets

RL.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	• Select and apply appropriate before-reading strategies interacting with a text, e.g., previewing the text, setting a purpose for reading, making predictions about the text and drawing connections between prior knowledge or experience and the text.
		
		• Select and apply during-reading strategies to monitor comprehension, e.g., rereading, paraphrasing, summarizing, connecting related ideas within a text, verifying or modifying predictions, visualizing, and connecting text ideas with prior knowledge or experience.
		
		• Demonstrate comprehension of a text with after-reading strategies by:
		  ▶ Explaining the main idea.
		  ▶ Identifying what is directly stated in the text.
		  ▶ Drawing inference.
		  ▶ Drawing conclusions.
		  ▶ Verifying or adjusting predictions.
		  ▶ Making new predictions.
		  ▶ Paraphrasing and summarizing.
		  ▶ Making connections between the text and oneself.
		
		• Identify multiple pieces of evidence to suggest logically what might be true about characters, setting, plot, etc.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		• Distinguish between connotations and denotations of words for understanding. • Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about literary texts. • Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. • Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.	• Track and examine significant details of character and plot development, repeated words, ideas and/or symbols throughout a text. • Present details and examples in a focused, coherent manner. • Use significant details of character and plot development, repeated words, ideas and/or symbols to formulate a theme. • Paraphrase in order to state or compose an unbiased summary that includes events from the beginning, middle and end of a text. • Use a variety of transition words to convey sequence. • Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. • Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.4	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 (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.	• Use evidence from a literary text to support analysis of word choice. • Examine the author's purpose in using sound elements of words. • Use evidence from a literary text to determine tone. • Use context as a clue to the meaning of words and phrases. • Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel). • Verify an inferred meaning of a word or phrase in a dictionary. • Demonstrate an understanding of figurative language and connotation.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RL.5	Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.	• Demonstrate an understanding of and distinguish between dramatic structures and poetic forms. • Examine how parts of dramatic structure or poetic forms connect to other parts of the text to clarify meaning. • Analyze how elements of a literary text interact. • Use evidence from literary texts to support analysis of a drama's or poem's form or structure. • Examine how parts of dramatic structure or poetic forms help clarify or fulfill the author's purpose.
RL.6	Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.	• Apply knowledge of point of view and characterization to determine multiple narrators. • Explain how multiple narrators/speakers are alike and different. • Examine the conflicting views of multiple narrators/speakers to develop a broad view of the action, characters or ideas in a literary text. • Analyze inferences drawn from a literary text. • Use dialogue to develop characters. • Use vocabulary knowledge when considering words and phrases important to comprehension.
RL.7	Compare and contrast a written story, drama or poem to its audio, filmed, staged or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).	• Demonstrate the behaviors of a strategic reader, viewer or listener to a given literary text. • Explain the similarities and differences of a literary text versus an audio or a visual version of a literary text. • Demonstrate knowledge of techniques available to produce an audio, filmed or staged version of a literary text. • Explain the similarities and differences among an audio, filmed or staged version of a literary text. • Explain the effects produced through audio, filmed or staged versions of a literary text. • Support ideas with relevant evidence. • Use evidence from literary texts to support reflection. • Use details presented in diverse media and formats. • Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		• Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poems, in the Grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	• Adjust strategies as necessary for reading a self-selected and assigned range of grade-appropriate literary texts representing diverse cultures, perspectives, ethnicities and time periods while self-monitoring for comprehension. • Comprehend literary texts of steadily increasing complexity with scaffolding, as necessary. • Set personal goals and conference regularly with adults to improve reading.

Reading Informational Text (RI)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RI.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	• Select and apply appropriate before-reading strategies to a text, e.g., previewing the text, setting a purpose for reading, making predictions about the text and drawing connections between prior knowledge or experience and the text. • Select and apply during-reading strategies to monitor comprehension, e.g., rereading, paraphrasing, summarizing, connecting related ideas within a text, verifying or modifying predictions, visualizing, and connecting text ideas with prior knowledge or experience. • Demonstrate comprehension of a text with after-reading strategies by: ▶ Explaining the central ideas. ▶ Identifying what is directly stated in the text. ▶ Drawing inferences. ▶ Drawing conclusions. ▶ Verifying or adjusting predictions. ▶ Making new predictions. ▶ Paraphrasing and summarizing. ▶ Making connections between the text and oneself. • Determine and state multiple pieces of evidence that confirm the meaning of an informational text. • Identify multiple pieces of evidence to suggest logically what might be true about an author's purpose, opinion, important ideas, etc.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		• Use relationships between words for understanding. • Distinguish between connotations and denotations of words for understanding. ▶ Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about informational texts. ▶ Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. • Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about informational texts.
RI.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the Grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	• Adjust strategies as necessary for reading a self-selected and assigned range of grade-appropriate literary nonfiction texts representing diverse cultures, perspectives, ethnicities and time periods while self-monitoring for comprehension. • Comprehend literary nonfiction texts of steadily increasing complexity with scaffolding, as necessary. • Set personal goals and conference regularly with adults to improve reading.

Writing (W)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
W.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	• See W.1, W.2, W.3 and W.7 of framework for specific application.
W.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing	• See W.1, W.2, W.3 and W.7 of framework for specific application.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
	for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3.)	
W.6	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.	• See W.1, W.2, W.3 and W.7 of CCSS framework for specific application. • Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. • Apply computer literacy and keyboarding skills. • Use network resources effectively and efficiently. • Use technology responsibly. • Use technology to enhance learning and collaboration. • Use technology for communication. • Use technology to locate, evaluate and organize information. • Use technology to solve problems by strategizing, analyzing and communicating data, and examining solutions.
W.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.	• Adjust the writing process as necessary for different grade-appropriate writing tasks, purposes and audiences. • Set and adjust personal goals and conference regularly with adults and peers to identify and address writing deficiencies.

Speaking and Listening (SL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on Grade 7 topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	• See SL.1.a and SL.1.c below.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.1.a	Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.	• Demonstrate the behaviors of an effective student by completing and reflecting on assigned reading. • Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • Take purposeful notes in preparation for discussion, using highlighting, outlines, journals and other techniques as appropriate. • Identify the main ideas under discussion and apply higher order questions that yield a deeper analysis of those ideas. • Conduct focused research as necessary to prepare for discussions. • Access prior knowledge to extend the topic under discussion.
SL.1.b	Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.	• Apply self-monitoring strategies to establish and adjust appropriate tone, body language and vocabulary. • Come to consensus on a framework for a collegial discussion. • Come to consensus on and monitor specific benchmarks to evaluate progress toward meeting discussion goals and deadlines. • Redirect the discussion as needed to meet goals and deadlines. • Organize the group by assuming specific roles as needed.
SL.1.c	Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.	• Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • Select and apply levels of questions to solicit elaboration and exploration of a variety of ideas and information. • Demonstrate collegiality when asking and responding to questions and comments. • Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.1.d	Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.	• Attend to the contributions of others by paraphrasing or summarizing new evidence. • Adjust their opinions as necessary based on credible evidence.
SL.5	Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.	• Select or create multimedia and visual displays strategically for clarity that emphasize claims and salient points. • Follow fair use policies when incorporating multimedia components from other sources.

Language (L)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	• See L.1.a, L.1.b below.
L.1.a	Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.	• Apply an understanding of the formation and the function of phrases and clauses: ▶ Verb, prepositional and appositive phrases. ▶ Independent versus dependent (noun, adjective and adverb) clauses. • Describe the use of a phrase or clause in a specific sentence. • Analyze professional, peer and their own writing for their use of phrases and clauses.
L.1.b	Choose among simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.	• Apply an understanding of how clauses create relationships between and among ideas in a sentence. • Apply an understanding of how sentence types create relationships between and among ideas. • Use clauses to clarify the relationships among claims, reason and evidence. • Use a variety of clauses to convey sequence. • Analyze the use of simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences in professional, peer and their own writing.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.1.c	Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.	• Apply an understanding of the relationship between the placement of phrases and clauses and clarity of meaning. • Produce clear and coherent writing through revision. • Analyze the effect of placement of phrases and clauses on meaning in professional, peer and their own writing. • Strengthen writing by editing to correct misplaced and dangling modifiers.
L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.	• Apply an understanding of the difference between coordinate adjectives and adjectives in a series. • Apply an understanding of punctuation to produce clear writing. • Analyze professional, peer and their own writing to determine the effect of punctuation upon meaning. • Strengthen writing by editing for correct punctuation to separate coordinate adjectives. • Spell correctly grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words.
L.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.	• See L.3.a below.
L.3.a	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.	• Apply an understanding of how inexact or repetitive language affects meaning in speech and writing. • Apply an understanding of denotation and connotation and their effect upon meaning in speech or writing. • Strengthen speech or writing by revising sentences for precision and conciseness. • Analyze professional, peer and their own writing or speech to determine the effect of word choice upon meaning.
L.4	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.	• Apply an understanding of the various types of context clues to determine word or phrase meaning. • Apply an understanding of inference and drawing conclusions to determine word or phrase meaning.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	● See L.5.a, L.5.b and L.5.c below.
L.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical and mythological allusions) in context.	● Apply knowledge of figurative language including literary, biblical and mythological allusions to a critical reading of a text. ● Use sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. ● Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative language. ● Analyze professional, peer and their own writing to determine how figurative language contributes to meaning.
L.5.b	Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.	● Apply an understanding of connections between words including synonym/antonym and analogy to a critical reading of a text. ● Analyze professional, peer and their own writing to determine how word relationships contribute to meaning.
L.5.c	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).	● Apply an understanding of connotation to judge word choice. ● Use precise words to capture the action and convey experiences and events. ● Analyze professional, peer and their own writing to determine how word choice contributes to meaning.
L.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; garner vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	● Apply skills identified in L.4.a, L.4.b, L.4.c, L.4.d and L.5.a, L.5.b, L.5.c to increase vocabulary and differentiate between word choices to improve writing and speaking.

Unit Assessments and Rubrics

Pre-Assessments and Formative Assessments

- End of Year Pre- and Post-Assessments (Selected Response and Writing Sample in response to short story)
- ML #1: Presentation Exit Card
- Form/Expression Jigsaw chart
- Shakespeare KWL
- Character Analysis
- A Midsummer Night's Dream Act 1, Scene 1
- ML #1: *A Midsummer* Group Scene
- ML #1: Scene Planning Sheet
- Truth Sheet
- ML #2: Poetry Circle Discussion Tracker
- Found Poetry Handout
- ML #1: Daily Recorder Notes
- Annotated Poems

Summative Assessments

- ML #1: Scene Presentation Rubric
- Poetry Circle Discussions
- ML #2: Poetry Circle Rubric
- Original Poetry Rubric

Vocabulary

High-frequency "Tier 2" words and academic vocabulary should be taught explicitly as students need to understand and apply these words across all content areas in various situations. For more information on how to teach vocabulary while using standards, visit the following websites:

- www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-ccss-critical-vocabulary-marilee-sprenger
- www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept09/vol67/num01/Six-Steps-to-Better-Vocabulary-Instruction.aspx
- achievethecore.org/aligned/including-tier-2-vocabulary-instruction-in-curricular-materials/

Theme-Specific
- Expression
- Poetry
- Point of View
- Perspective
- Self-Reflection
- Voice
- Vernacular

Drama
- Monologue
- Scene
- Stage Direction
- Character
- Soliloquy
- Dramatic Irony
- Humor
- Props
- Lighting
- Sound

Poetry
- Stanza
- Refrain
- Free Verse
- Blank Verse

- Rhyme
- Meter
- Form
- Tone
- Theme

Writing
- Process
  - Prewriting
  - Drafting
  - Revising
  - Editing
  - Publishing
- Thesis
- Evidence
- Quote
- Paraphrase
- Transition
- Synthesis
- Personal Narrative
- 6 Traits of Writing
  - Ideas and Development
  - Organization
  - Voice
  - Word Choice
  - Sentence Fluency
  - Conventions

Language
- Denotation
- Connotation
- Figurative Language
- Hyperbole
- Alliteration
- Imagery/Sensory Details
- Personification

- Simile
- Metaphor
- Diction

Reading
- Close Reading
- Annotation
- Context Clues
- Inferences
- Tone
- Theme
- Characterization
- Dialogue

Speaking and Listening
- Pitch
- Volume
- Intonation
- Emphasis
- Gestures
- Posture

Text Suggestions

The following texts have been chosen for their Lexile levels, interest levels and ease for planning to multiple standards. To find an up-to-date list of vetted texts — which clearly center diversity, equity and inclusion — visit our list of Culturally Responsive Text Suggestions.

See *Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations* for information on how to select complex text. Some Lexile (L) levels are listed below for reference.

Theme-Related Fiction
Clover by Dori Sanders (820L)
Empty by Suzanne Weyn
Every Soul a Star by Wendy Mass (HL740L)
Falling Over Sideways by Jordan Sonnenblick
The Giver by Lynn Hall (980L)
Heaven by Angela Johnson
If It Hadn't Been for Yoon Jun by Marie Lee
Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell (1000L)
Listen, Slowly by Thanhha Lai

Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs (890L)
Summer of the Swans by Betsy Byars

Theme-Related Drama
A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

Theme-Related Poetry
"Aardvark" by Julia Fields
"Dusting" by Julia Alvarez
"The Elephant" by Rudyard Kipling
"Good Hot Dogs/Buenos Hot Dogs" by Sandra Cisneros
"Graduation Morning" by Pat Mora
"If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking" by Emily Dickinson
"Ode to an Artichoke/Oda a la alcachofa" by Pablo Neruda
"The Rider" by Naomi Shihab Nye
"Scaffolding" by Seamus Heaney
"Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman
"Thumbprint" by Eve Merriam
"A Time to Talk" by Robert Frost
"To You" by Langston Hughes
"The Turtle" by Mary Oliver
"The World is Not a Pleasant Place to Be" Nikki Giovanni
Available Poetry Anthologies
Online Poetry (see resources below)

Teacher Resources: Educator Websites

(Websites change frequently. Check sites ahead of time for content and accuracy.)

- www.achievethecore.org Provides resources for teaching the Common Core State Standards.

- www.ixl.com/ela/grade-7 Offers a wide variety of links to mini lessons on conventions, sentence structure and language.

- thecornerstoneforteachers.com/2014/08/close-reading.html Offers strategies for close-reading.

- www.readwritethink.org Site is hosted by the National Council for Teachers of English, contains various lessons and resources for reading and writing.

- www.shmoop.com/literature/ A fun resource to share literature with students in a light-hearted, easy-to-digest manner.

- www.educationalrap.com/song/public-speaking/ Links to a rap that teaches effective public speaking skills.

- www.theteacherscorner.net/teacher-resources/websites.php Provides lesson plans and links including printable handouts.

- www.folger.edu/classroom-resources Includes tools, recommendations and a road map for teaching Shakespeare.

- www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/1564-william-shakespeare-born-20436.html Features lessons to introduce Shakespeare to middle school students.

- www.weareteachers.com/teach-shakespeare/ Offers tools and tips to teaching Shakespeare without turning students off.

- www.calshakes.org/v4/educ/pdf/09_ALTeachersGuide_MND_final.pdf A complete resource for teaching *A Midsummer Night's Dream* including character map, vocabulary and more.

- www.shakespearehelp.com/a-midsummer-nights-dream-lesson-plans/ Provides links to various *A Midsummer Night's Dream* lesson plans.

- www.penguin.com/static/pdf/teachersguides/midsummer.pdf Links to a complete teacher's guide to teaching *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that includes scene synopses, comprehension questions and more.

- www.loc.gov/poetry/180/ Poetry 180 features daily poems to read/listen to for middle and high school students.

- www.poetryfoundation.org/ Site provides poems and poetic resources.

- www.poetryoutloud.org/

- Features poems and recorded poems for use in the classroom.

- www.poets.org/ Contains poetry lesson plans, essays about teaching, a glossary of poetry terms and more.

Lesson Sequence — Unit Progression

The Unit Progression gives weekly examples of how to teach to the unit-specific Learning Targets over the course of nine weeks. Teachers should adjust the pace as needed for their individual classes.

Launching the unit will involve exposing students to various types of expression — watching scenes and film clips, listening to poetry readings, and so on. Students will read, listen, see and respond to these various forms and practice a few of their own to help prepare them for the upcoming unit's tasks.

Week 2 brings the introduction to William Shakespeare. Since this will likely be a first exposure to Shakespeare, students will first learn about Shakespeare himself through various biographical resources. Next, students will get a cursory look at Shakespeare's time, noting characteristics of Elizabethan England and Elizabethan theater. After, students will be introduced slowly to the language, learning about iambic pentameter, rhyme and Elizabethan vocabulary. Please note that some of this can be combined with launching the unit in Week 1 in order to provide additional time for students to read the play itself.

Once introduced to Shakespeare, students will begin reading the comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Week 3. Students will first use character maps and scene summaries to understand the basic plot and characters of the play. They will then begin reading passages and scenes, conducting close readings and analysis when prompted and performing aloud periodically as a class to understand that seeing Shakespeare is as important (if not more important) than reading it.

After reviewing the majority of the play, students will be broken into groups and assigned select scenes to analyze, rewrite and perform. In Week 4, this project gets underway. Students will take on different roles in the group and be responsible for interpreting the scene in their own way. Scenes can be modernized or altered regarding setting and language as long as the plot and connection to the work as a whole remain consistent. Students are expected to prepare their scene for either live performance, a filmed recording (video), or an animated/illustrated work with narration. The form of expression and division of tasks is up to each individual group, requiring creativity, initiative, adaptability and responsibility. Students will then spend Week 5 sharing and evaluating one another's scene presentations, comparing and contrasting the different forms with the original and analyzing the effectiveness of the choices of each group.

In Week 6, students will move into the study of poetry, being exposed to a diverse group of poets and poetic forms. Students will learn how to approach a poem, first looking literally, then analyzing language and structure and ultimately gleaning tone and meaning. This approach will be modeled as a class, conducted in groups, in pairs and as individuals to ensure competency with the study and analysis of poetic language and form. A variety of poems with varied degrees of difficulty and subjects should be used. See suggested texts and links in additional resources for ideas. Seek out poems that are relatable to your particular students, perhaps connected to earlier work in the classroom or across curriculums.

Once students are fluent in poetic analysis, they will participate in and observe poetry circle discussions in Week 7. These discussions run similarly to the fishbowl Socratic seminar from Unit 2 where students will read a poem, prepare analysis and simply sit in a circle to discuss the poem(s) with one another over a period of time determined by the teacher. It is recommended to include some element of choice in these discussions. Perhaps have a list of poems and allow students to select the poem they prefer to discuss at the start of the class or week. The analysis should be done for homework as class itself will consist of a few circles a day where students can first share their analysis and then pose questions, offer answers, and reflect on the meaning and personal connections inspired by each piece.

Following poetry circles, students are ready to write original poems in Week 8. These poems can vary in form and length. Assignments can be open or structured or a combination of both, depending on the age and ability of students. Some days, students should be given model structure/form or asked to write a version of a poem already studied; other days, students can write found poems or be given poem starters or fill in the blank poems. Teachers should encourage a variety of styles and allow for freedom of expression however it is appropriate.

The final week of the unit, students will be asked to revise, publish and share their personal poetry portfolios in a classroom coffee house poetry reading. Students can put their portfolios together electronically or bind them in a book. They can read them aloud in the coffee house or simply show them or have a recording to share. Regardless, each student should be given the opportunity to participate in some way in the event. Teachers should consider bringing in refreshments or snacks and decorations to celebrate this culmination of the unit and of the year. Teach students to snap (as they do in coffee houses during poetry readings or open mics) so students can congratulate each other for conquering their own expression and having the confidence to share it with their peers. This event should be a celebration of the growth of seventh grade, inspiring students to continue their own path of expression and rewarding them for a year of self- and social discovery.

Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations

When selecting books, text complexity matters. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, three factors should be considered when the teacher is choosing texts: 1) Qualitative Measures, 2) Quantitative Measures, and 3) Reader and Task Considerations. For more information on these measures, see the following website: www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/standard-10-range-quality-complexity/measuring-text-complexity-three-factors/.

As a result of research conducted in 2013 on text complexity, updated information was added to Appendix A of the CCSS to reflect the new expectations required of students in order to meet College and Career Readiness (CCR) by high school graduation. The table below shows the six different measures found reliable for measuring text complexity and their corresponding grade levels.

Common Core Band	ATOS (Accelerated Reader)	Degrees of Reading Power®	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	Text Evaluator
2nd-3rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	100 – 590
4th-5th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	405 – 720
6th-8th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	550 – 940
9th-10th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	750 – 1125
11th-CCR	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.20	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	890 – 1360

Table 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges From Multiple Measures, taken from www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-A-New-Research-on-Text-Complexity-revised.pdf, which can be found on the website www.corestandards.org/other-resources/.

Appendix B: Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners

When choosing instructional strategies, teachers should consider the multiple learning styles, backgrounds and abilities of all students. Research shows that to promote ELA/literacy skills, teachers should incorporate a mix of whole-group, peer-paired and independent activities into instructional procedures. Below is a list of research-based strategies recommended to promote literacy skills in the five essential areas of reading (comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonics and phonemic awareness).

Comprehension Strategies

- KWL Charts, Venn Diagrams, T-charts, etc.
- Interactive Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Story Boards, Sketch to Stretch, etc.
- Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsud7AQWva8)
- Focus Questions

Comprehension Strategies with Cooperative Learning (Collaboration)

- Guided Reading, Literature Circles, Book Talks, etc.
- Readers Theater, Role Play, Reciprocal Reading, etc.
- Shared/Buddy/Paired Reading
- Think-Pair-Share, Turn-and-Talk, etc.
- Jigsaw (e.g., www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov18/vol76/num03/Let's-Get-Jigsaw-Right.aspx)
- Socratic Seminar (grade 2: www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBfH_fhAme0; for older students: www.youtube.com/watch?v=69Qv3I0nuNg)
- Fishbowl
- Four Corners (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2XmJQ9FL5A)
- Gallery Walk (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNT3PZP2obU)

Vocabulary Strategies

- Word Walls
- Word Analysis, Word Sorts (e.g., Making Words), Word Games (e.g., UpWords, BINGO)
- Word Ladders
- Concept Mapping (great for ELL students/differentiation), Concept Circles, Frayer Model, etc.
- Alpha Boxes (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBGB7CiN0bQ)

- List-Group-Label (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=K731qicwYcY)
- Non-Linguistic Strategies (visuals)
- Analogies, Connect-Two, etc.

Fluency Strategies

- Daily Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Record Self/Listen to Self
- Listen to Stories Using Technology
- Repeated Readings
- Choral Reading

Phonemic Awareness/Phonics Strategies

- Making Words
- Word Ladders
- Centers/Literacy Stations
- Guided Reading
- Interactive Writing