

# Quests

Quests bring students together for an immersive team experience that feels so much like a game, they won't notice how much they're learning. Students collaborate to solve mysteries, explore neurological disorders, and make sense of historical events. These week-long narrative lesson plans build on the literacy skills students have been developing in traditional lessons while shaking up classroom routines and allowing students to take the lead.

## **Quests are dramatic.**

During the week of a Quest, students take on new roles and new goals. Amplify ELA aims to create fresh motivations for students by connecting each classroom activity to an exciting situation that the class needs to solve together. Quests encourage all students to take new risks and engage more deeply with their work and with each other.

## **Quests create new connections.**

Quests are intended to serve as a jumping-off point, providing students with the opportunity and incentive to delve more deeply into in a new field of study. Quests are packed with a variety of content-rich texts and other media, allowing students the autonomy to explore texts as dictated by their curiosity both inside and out of class. The lesson plans provide students the space to create personal relationships with the texts they've chosen, so as to give them keys to new bodies of knowledge.

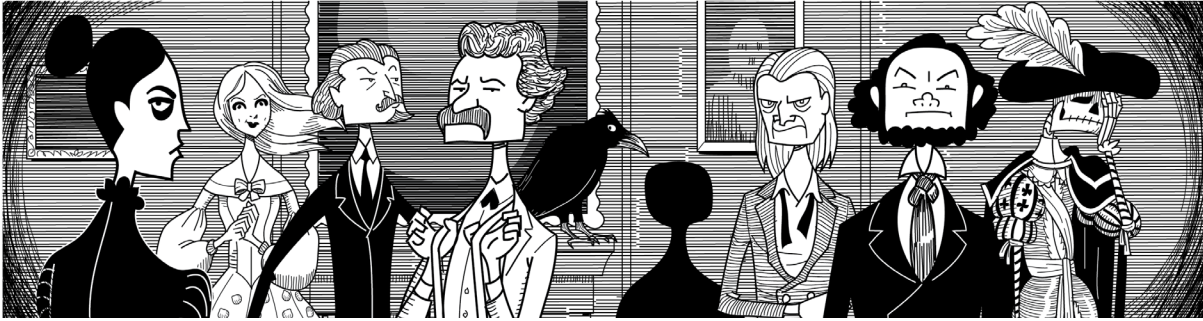
## **Quests are collaborative.**

Quests create multifaceted opportunities for students to interact in pairs, groups and together as a whole class. Discussions, both in-character and out-of-character within the contexts of the works they read, are critical to each lesson, and students are encouraged to cooperate to achieve their goals.

## **Quests are unique.**

Each Quest is created specifically for the unit, with the needs of the student in mind and further meant to improve and enrich each lesson unit. When we create a new Quest is created, we begin by asking "What do we love about this text, and how can we get students to love it, too?"

Following is a summary of each Quest and its goals.



### Who Killed Edgar Allan Poe?

This Quest incorporates bold visualizations and a wry sense of humor to highlight the macabre fun of Poe's Gothic style. Students role-play as characters from Poe's poems, short stories, and even his biography, as they try to solve an elaborate murder mystery. To unravel the plot, students practice close reading of new primary source documents and additional works of Poe's not previously encountered in the curriculum. They will use a digital, interactive detective notebook that allows them to collect and organize their evidence as they work toward the creation of an opinion piece proving the identity of the murderer in this mystery.

### Tom Sawyer, Treasure Hunter

Adapted from the work of Mark Twain, students begin this Quest with a piece of a treasure map leading to Tom and Huck's treasure—collecting another six pieces will be their challenge. The Quest aims to capture Tom Sawyer's love of intrigue and high adventure, using a scavenger hunt to motivate students to do close readings of the text. Each leg of the competition requires students to work in groups and complete a short piece of writing that will earn them the next clue. The collaboration and competition of the exercise creates a highly social and energetic atmosphere that reawakens Twain's joyful writing.



### The Emancipation Project

The Emancipation Project Quest employs reproductions of primary source documents to prepare students for college and career readiness by asking them to explore a large body of information and draw multiple connections and inferences from it. In this Quest, students play the role of intrepid investigators exploring the experience of slavery from every historical aspect. The Quest incorporates a wealth of media, from spoken testimonies to illustrated newspaper clippings and recorded music, in order to envelop students in the world of Frederick Douglass and the nation at that time.

### Black, White and Blues in Chicago

Understanding Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* takes a strong foundation of historical knowledge. In this Quest, students build their own knowledge of the period through a digital recreation of 1950s Chicago. Students can read essays, watch interviews, and listen to music to assemble a deeper understanding and affinity for the book and its historical and geographical context. Through class discussions, students will share what they've discovered and relate it to the characters and events of the play.



### Declare Yourself!

The fate of a nation is put in the hands of the students in this Quest about the Declaration of Independence. The Declare Yourself! Quest is intended to pose the same question to students as that which confronted the Second Continental Congress: Should we sign this declaration or not? To find the answer, students have the opportunity to adopt the identities of various delegates from the Second Continental Congress. Through the course of the lesson, students assume each delegate's position on the debate and try to win over their opponents using evidence, argument, and teamwork. In this Quest, students work independently and in small groups to create well-formulated positions from an ample selection of primary source documents. Students must defend their opinions in front of the class with opinion pieces intended to recreate the energetic debates from the time period of the American Revolution.



### Myth World

There's no one way to interpret Greek myths. Each myth can be enjoyed without context, and yet also connects in ways great and small to other myths from the canon. This Quest is an exploration designed to make students more broadly literate in the world of Greek mythology.

In Myth World, students can use their devices to climb Mount Olympus or cross the Mediterranean Sea to Crete, reading new myths that take place in each setting. Class discussions can also further help students to create small communities—not unlike a Greek chorus or council—as they learn to share knowledge about this historical period.

### Perception Academy

The Perception Academy Quest takes students through a series of interconnected activities that focus on brain disorders and how they alter what we perceive about the world around us. In this Quest, each group of students works with a different case study from Oliver Sacks' acclaimed book, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. The Quest employs games and multimedia to help students comprehend this deeply complicated medical subject.

