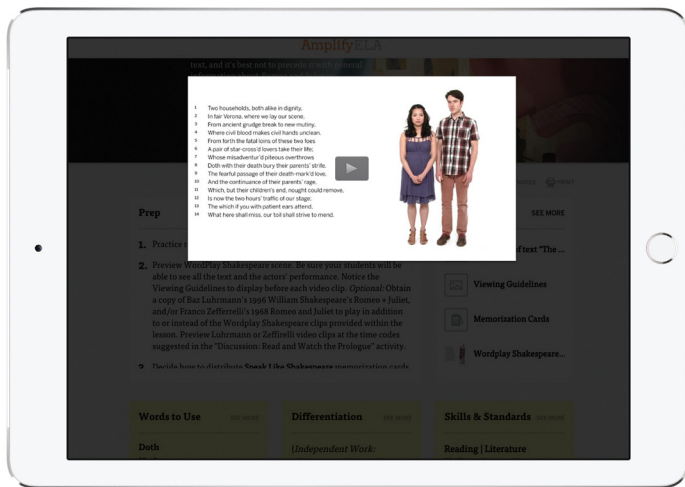


# What's worth reading: Texts to build knowledge and skills

## Text selection for middle school



### Amplify's text selection in its core units

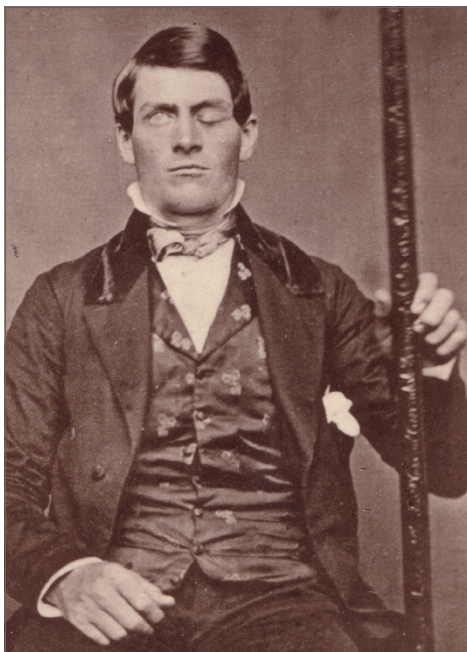
Carefully selected for their adherence to the California's ELA/ELD Framework, the texts in the Amplify curriculum balance literary and informational text, and include a rich representation of genres: novels, plays, poetry, memoirs, and other full-length texts. Moreover, the Amplify team has sequenced these texts to create a "staircase" of steadily increasing complexity as measured by the three dimensions detailed in the CA ELA/ELD Framework: quantitative measures, qualitative measures and task considerations. To account for the wide variation among middle school readers, Amplify provides each teacher with extensive differentiation options from which he or she can choose to ensure that all students can access every one of these texts. This distinctive selection and sequencing process gives students and teachers the materials they need to reach a higher set of standards than they have been required to reach before.

Unlike more traditional textbook publishers, Amplify was founded to create a transformational digital experience for K-12 students and teachers who need to meet the demands of the new CA CCSS for ELA Literacy. In a fundamental sense, Amplify started from scratch. And because we didn't come to this challenge trailing a legacy of past choices and commitments tied to a different set of standards, we were able to choose texts for the simple reason that they were the best solution to the problem in front of us: how to engage middle school students in reading complex text.

To take full advantage of this opportunity, Amplify assembled a team of top-flight educators to explore what middle school students have been reading across the country and to discuss how well these traditional readings could meet the challenge of the new standards. To this group of educators, we added designers and artists—as well as gaming experts and professionals from the entertainment industry—to push us to consider the full range of ways we could use new media to help our students tap into the power of these texts.

At the same time, we also brought in top academics in fields ranging from classics to poetry to political science to history—and invited each to point us toward the richest texts in their disciplines: those best-suited to engage students in the most important parts of the subjects they know so well. We also brought in public intellectuals such as Walter Isaacson (author of *Einstein*; *Benjamin Franklin*; *Steve Jobs*; and *The Innovators*), who could push what we aim to do with those texts. Under Isaacson's guidance, the Frankenstein team developed a unit that reads Mary Shelley's classic alongside the work of Ada Lovelace, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century mathematician who was the first to describe how software and hardware could use algorithms to create art (100 years before the first computer was built). Lovelace (daughter of poet Lord Byron) described her work as a kind of “poetical science” that bridged science and literature. Isaacson suggested that Amplify use authors like Lovelace to frame the literary work of *Frankenstein* within the context of the scientific discoveries exploding across the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to see it as a vision of what might go wrong if we lost control of our own creations.

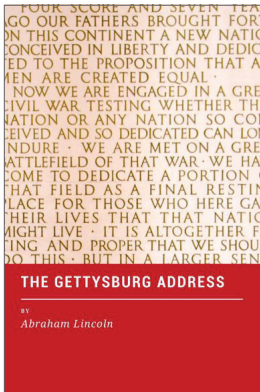
Yet even ideas as compelling as Isaacson's still require a great deal of translation before they can be made to work for middle-schoolers inside of real classrooms. Thus, as deeply as we have committed to bringing in experts who can help us develop wonderful ideas about what a middle school education might look like, we have invested even more seriously in a routine of regular, rigorous, *early* testing in everyday contexts.



Phineas Gage

Through this commitment to student-centered design, we have learned a great deal about which texts really worked for our students, and for which purposes. And because we didn't wait until the entire unit was finished to test parts of it with real students, we were able to use the feedback we received to make real changes. Over and over, our in-classroom testing showed us which texts, which passages, and which ways of engaging with those selections would tap into the motivation that could inspire students to read and reread.

For example, in our early lesson designs for a unit focused on a book about Phineas Gage—an account that explores the history of brain science through the story of a man who survived having an iron rod pass through his skull—we initially asked students to focus on the question that the author poses to the reader: was Phineas lucky? But when we observed the way that students responded to this question in discussion, and, even more important, when we reviewed *the ways they wrote about it*, we discovered that they had little to say. They weren't drawn to focus on the distinctive details in the text



The Gettysburg Address



Romeo and Juliet

that make Fleischman's account different from other accounts of Phineas's story. The students' writing was flat, and they didn't develop the claims they were making. Only when we shifted to questions of what the doctors treating Phineas *misunderstood* about what was happening to him and why—and then to questions about how Fleischman's own melodramatic writing style lured us into our own misunderstandings—did we see evidence of the most animated discussions and the most careful scientific writing.

Similarly, we first tried to teach the Gettysburg Address entirely on its own, without providing students any background information. And we saw students approaching Lincoln's speech like a puzzle, trying to figure out the secret meaning hidden under the challenge of his language. But this out-of-context approach kept them from appreciating what Lincoln was trying to *do*: Because students didn't even know what a "civil war" was, there was no way for them to explore how Lincoln was trying to bring together the different groups that composed his fractured audience. Returning to the drawing board, we developed a sequence of texts that students would read before encountering the Gettysburg Address itself, a sequence that would enable them to understand enough of the situation surrounding the text that they could then tackle the most engaging questions at the heart of it.

By taking time to choose the texts that genuinely interest students and to develop an approach to each text that helps students find the meaning in that text, Amplify ELA has been able to push the limits of text complexity. As a result, some of the sixth- and seventh-grade units, and many of the eighth-grade units, are spent preparing students to make the transition to high school texts. Once in high school, students are suddenly expected to read much more challenging texts and to work with them independently: The complexity of the reading material jumps at the same time that they're supposed to read and write about these texts without any real support. We address this challenge through the use of "stretch texts." In the *Romeo and Juliet* unit, for example, students read a text that's usually reserved for high school curricula—but they do so in a way that's carefully scaffolded to prepare them for the challenges they'll encounter in high school. They don't read the whole play, but instead focus on just five especially compelling selections. As they make their way through the challenges of reading Shakespeare's language, making sense of the play's format, and comprehending a dramatic situation shaped by 400-year-old cultural assumptions, students receive an enormous amount of support. And, as a result, when students encounter a complex text like *Romeo and Juliet* in high school, they'll recognize that they have read this kind of material, and they'll know that they have what it takes to handle it.

Yet, no matter how imaginatively we approached the challenge of selecting texts, our curriculum still includes a number of perfectly traditional readings. Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and Poe's "Tell-Tale Heart," for example, have served as mainstays in middle school curricula for a long, long time. The reason for these choices is simple: These readings work. They are as worth reading now as they were a hundred years ago: They engage the imagination (and the delight, and the terror) of young readers just as powerfully as ever they did. They invite students to take a second look, to figure them out, to make their own sense of what they mean and how they do what they do. And, in the rich conversation that follows, they teach our students to become better readers.

# Content knowledge and interdisciplinary skills: Unit overviews

## Grade 6

Dahl & Narrative  
Tom & Sherlock  
The Chocolate Collection  
The Greeks  
Reading the Novel  
The Titanic Collection

## Grade 7

Red Scarf Girl & Narrative  
Character & Conflict  
Brain Science  
Poetry & Poe  
Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet  
The Gold Rush Collection

## Grade 8

World War II & Narrative  
Biography & Literature  
Liberty & Equality  
Science & Science Fiction  
The Frida & Diego Collection  
The Space Race Collection

## Grade 6

## Dahl &amp; Narrative

**Building knowledge overview**

The first unit of the year lays the foundation for the curriculum to follow. In the first few lessons, students learn how to take full advantage of the digital platform, and start to develop the individual habits and class routines that will drive their steady skill building in writing and reading: how to focus their attention on a single detail (from their experience or the text they're studying); how to write for 12 uninterrupted minutes; how to give and take respectful, targeted feedback.

After a carefully structured sequence of lessons in personal narrative, students gradually apply to their reading what they've learned from their writing—their understanding of the moves that writers make to shape the impact they're making on their audience—focusing primarily on Roald Dahl's memoir of his boyhood in England, *Boy*.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>The unit's emphasis on drawing from prior knowledge begins in the scavenger hunt that opens Lesson 1, where students are asked to fill in missing words in The Gettysburg Address. This process of building on the familiar continues through the unit—and the curriculum.</p> <p>Your students may have read Dahl before and can share what they know about him, his books or perhaps where he was from. If students share the fact that he was born in Norway but later became British, you may use this as an opportunity to challenge students to locate both countries on a world map.</p> <p>This is also the time to get a sharper sense of your students' reading and writing skills. Can they read a text closely and use specific textual evidence to explain the points they make? Can they deliberately choose particular techniques when writing personal narratives—because of the impact they're aiming to create? Does their writing and reading demonstrate their comfort with the conventions of standard English?</p>	<p>The Amplify sixth grade curriculum begins with students sharing memories of special moments in their lives. By listening and responding to each other's experiences, students develop an awareness of the different ways that their peers have tackled the same Writing Prompt—and a greater respect for their classmates.</p> <p>The complexity of Dahl's memoir introduces students to the ways in which rich texts can often be multi-layered and demanding—requiring that students take a second, careful look to catch what they may have missed their first time through. At the same time, it confronts students with a type of autobiographical writing they'll encounter repeatedly over the course of the Amplify curriculum; Ji-li Jiang's <i>Red Scarf Girl</i> and Ben Franklin's <i>Autobiography</i> are other examples.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

One of the core habits cultivated during this unit is annotation—a critical skill for reading closely and writing carefully. Your students may wonder why they need to write notes as they read: “Why can’t I just read it?” they may well ask. “The notes don’t add anything. They just slow me down.” In response you may want to model for them how your own understanding of a text changed when you annotated it. And you may want to point out that you want them to slow down, that you don’t always want them to read as quickly as they can, that sometimes you want them to stop and take another look at something they thought they’d already understood.

**Vocabulary development**

Amplify approaches vocabulary development methodically and deliberately, in a way informed by noted-educator E.D. Hirsch’s belief that vocabulary growth must be “fostered intensively.” Confirm that the selection of words in the lessons is developmentally appropriate for your students, and add or subtract terms as you think appropriate. Slow down if they need more time, or speed up if they are familiar with the words.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

If your students enjoyed Roald Dahl, turn their attention to the Independent Reader’s Guide for the unit in the Appendix. Dahl wrote many books for young readers, both autobiographical and fictional. The guide also suggests an extensive list of texts by other writers, including books about Giants, ghosts and trolls, back to school books, and a list of Misty memoirs. Several multimedia resources are also available.

**Dahl & Narrative | Interdisciplinary overview**

The majority of the units in the Amplify sequence lend themselves to close collaboration among teachers of different disciplines. When appropriate, an interdisciplinary chart will follow the Overview. Collaborate with other teachers; take advantage of a unit where teamwork among ELA, social studies, science and perhaps even art teachers can produce a more engaging unit.

However, don’t be tempted to turn this initial unit into an interdisciplinary experience. You will have many opportunities to do so, as early as the next unit. For now, stick with ELA so that you can keep your students focused on the key practices they’ll need to learn in.

## Grade 6

## Tom &amp; Sherlock

**Building knowledge overview**

Tom Sawyer and Sherlock Holmes are two memorable literary characters that may not seem to have anything in common, but take a second look. Both are larger-than-life: they're cleverer than the rest of us and see things we don't; they take full advantage of the world's opportunities and step in to its challenges; they put their shoulders to the universe and make it move. Both Tom and Sherlock feel almost mythical and thus offer students a way to ease into the next unit's exploration of the Greeks: for though they share some of the qualities of the Greek gods and heroes, they feel less far away and easier to understand.

And there's something about both Tom and Sherlock that makes their stories a good starting place to learn about how to study literary characters. Their stories draw us in and engage us. Each has several different traits in his character that emerge in different situations, so students need to pay careful attention to what they learn about the character from the various scenes in which they display these traits. But neither character changes very much over the course of his story: Sherlock Holmes is pretty much the same person at the end of his story as he was at the beginning (and will be in the next story). Same with Tom. So young readers can focus on understanding the various dimensions of the characters without also having to make sense of how they're changing over time.

Students read and analyze select chapters from Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and two mystery tales by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Students' close study of these two characters will help them appreciate why Tom Sawyer and Sherlock Holmes remain relevant to literary study today.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Mark Twain and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are especially well-known authors—and their most famous characters are among the best-loved in literature. Ask your students what they already know—or sort of know—about these writers and their heroes. They may have heard of Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn; they almost surely know something about Sherlock Holmes and what he does (and the deerstalker cap he wears!). Help your students use each other's knowledge to piece together a fuller picture, so they can see that they already have a basic awareness of these people and their stories, and aren't starting from scratch.</p> <p>You might also ask your students to think about what it might mean to “read like a detective”—to consider how the moves a good reader makes (look for clues, try to draw connections, imagine what might motivate someone to do what she or he does) compared to those of a detective.</p>	<p>Many of your students will read Mark Twain and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle again. A close look at the portrayal of Tom Sawyer will lay a strong foundation for future reading of this novel as well as other texts by Twain.</p> <p>Reading the Doyle texts “like detectives” teaches invaluable reading skills. Looking for clues is a fun way to practice the kind of close attention they'll need to learn to meet the challenges of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy.</p> <p>This unit continues the early process of building a solid foundation of literary skills. The focus here on character study prepares students for the many complex characters they will continue to encounter as they move through Amplify's carefully staged curriculum.</p>



**Suggestions for enrichment**

This unit offers the adventurous teacher a range of opportunities for expanding on the core curriculum. Students might begin by considering the title of the novel, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. What's their idea of what makes an adventure? How do the adventures they're used to seeing in stories compare to the kind they were writing about in the personal narrative portion of the unit?

Both Sherlock Holmes and Tom Sawyer speak in distinctive dialects that your students will likely find interesting. Have them step back and notice their own ways of speaking: ask them to make a list of peer words that they and their friends know but their parents don't—and a list of home words that the people in their family would know, but their friends wouldn't. Sharing these lists can help students recognize that we all have distinctive ways of talking. You might also invite your students to research the use of dialects in other forms of literature, in music, and in their daily lives.

Towards the end of the unit, consider having some fun in the classroom by comparing the characters of Tom and Sherlock. What if these two met? Would Tom be able to trick the great detective? Could he stand in for Dr. Watson?

**Vocabulary development**

As students continue to learn new words in this unit, they'll confront a linguistic challenge. Twain's extensive use of several dialects gives teachers an opportunity to point to vocabulary words that are not part of standard written English. And by comparing these unfamiliar terms to those in Doyle's work, students can learn a great deal about the different kinds of impact that authors can create by varying the voices in which their characters speak.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

Remind students to visit the student Independent Reader's Guide: Tom & Sherlock. There are two guides, one for Twain and one for Conan Doyle. Both offer an extensive reading list of texts by the same authors, as well as texts by other authors who wrote about similar themes, and/or in similar formats. Students who like to read about authors' biographies will find some rich material in the guides, as well as information about where they might learn more. Remind students, too, that the Amplify Library is at their fingertips as well.

**Tom & Sherlock | Interdisciplinary overview**

This unit offers some interdisciplinary study possibilities. It is essentially an ELA unit that continues along the path of building basic skills. Still, depending on the situation in your school, ELA teachers may decide to collaborate with social studies teachers.

One area where collaboration is possible is race relations. In the case of Mark Twain's text, embedded in the lessons are guidelines regarding the use of the term "colored boy" and the "N" word. And in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's texts, students are not likely to understand the derogatory intent when "gypsies" are referenced. Social studies teachers can add background knowledge and point to research possibilities.

Another potential interdisciplinary collaboration is in geography. Much of Twain's work is anchored in specific American locales. The most obvious instance is the Mississippi River. In *Huckleberry Finn* much of the action happens on the river. Learning about the centrality of locations in Twain's novels can build toward future reading.

Many British writers (Doyle is a Scot) often reference India. A geography lesson can add another layer to students' learning. It is an opportunity to learn briefly about Britain's colonial empire.

## Grade 6

# The Chocolate Collection

**Building knowledge overview**

Over the course of this unit, students explore many different aspects of chocolate through disciplines ranging from history, to literature, to biology, to fine art.

Working across media, students explore poems and passages from novels; paintings and photographs; newsreels, letters, and scientific papers.

In the process, they discover how much there still is to learn about a topic they probably thought they knew everything about!

**Source documents include:****Informational texts**

- “Prehistoric Americans Traded Chocolate for Turquoise?” by Christine Dell’Amore from *National Geographic News*
- Letter from Lord Rothschild to Laurence Fish
- “Pilot Dropped Candy Into Hearts of Berlin” by ABC News
- Appendix C Statement from *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* by William A. Cadbury
- “Is It Fair to Eat Chocolate?” by Deborah Dunn from *Skipping Stones*
- “Eat More Chocolate, Win More Nobels?” by Karl Ritter and Marilyn Marchione from Associated Press
- “Can Chocolate Be Good for My Health?” Answers from Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D. from Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research
- “The Sweet Lure of Chocolate” by Jim Spadaccini
- “The Tropics” from *The Story of Chocolate* by National Confectioners Association’s Chocolate Council
- “Good Harvest” by Karen E. Lange from *All Animals* magazine/The Humane Society of the United States
- “Dark Chocolate: A Bittersweet Pill to Take” by Mary Brophy Marcus from *USA Today*

**Literary texts**

- “Chocolate” from *American Smooth* by Rita Dove
- *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris
- *The Dharma Bums* by Jack Kerouac
- Chapter 7—“Monseigneur in Town” from *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

**Other media**

- Act I, Scene Eight from *Così fan tutte: English National Opera Guide 22* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Nicholas John (Book Editor), Marmaduke E. Browne (Translator)
- Several paintings and photographs documenting moments from the history of chocolate

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Your students are probably pretty familiar with chocolate—but what do they really know about it? Ask them to tell some stories about their experiences with chocolate, such as the first time they remember eating it. Then ask what else they might know about chocolate: where it comes from, how it's made, how long people have been eating it, etc.</p> <p>(One book they may have encountered already is <i>The True History of Chocolate</i> by Sophie D. Coe and Michael D. Coe. If not, you may want to recommend it.)</p> <p>You might also ask your students if they know about other snack foods with interesting stories (for example, popcorn). As you open up the stories behind these everyday foods, you'll build your students' interest and confidence.</p> <p>Students have just completed the <i>Titanic</i> research unit, where they learned to how to collect evidence, conduct web-based research, and evaluate the credibility of sources. They'll bring these skills to the Chocolate Collection unit.</p>	<p>When students read about the history of the cocoa bean, its health benefits, and the economic impact it has made all over the world, they will realize the complexity of what may appear to be a straightforward subject. Over the course of the unit, a favorite snack will become a rich topic they can analyze, debate, and write about. As it does, your students may well start to wonder about the stories behind other everyday foods; the Chocolate Collection unit will whet their appetite for further explorations.</p> <p>More fundamentally, students will expand their ideas about what counts as an academic subject. If chocolate turns out to be so complex a topic, what else might be? As students consider how many other elements of their ordinary lives might be worth wondering about, they will recognize that the research they're learning how to do in your class can serve as a tool to explore their curiosity about the world.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Since this ELA unit can incorporate the study of history, science, and art, it has the potential to engage students with a wide range of interests. The history buffs can pursue the intriguing story of chocolate, while the avid young scientists can discover more information about its health benefits. Art enthusiasts may conduct more Internet research or create artistic renditions of their own visions of chocolate.

**Vocabulary development**

The interdisciplinary maps organize key terms within their respective domains. Whether you choose a disciplinary approach or not, you may wish to challenge your students to put the words they encounter in the unit into different categories—and to explain their choices. This approach offers a good way to assess students' background knowledge.

## The Chocolate Collection | Interdisciplinary overview

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science	Art
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Early History of Chocolate” by Amplify Staff</li> <li>• “Prehistoric Americans Traded Chocolate for Turquoise?” by Christine Dell’Amore from <i>National Geographic News</i></li> <li>• Letter from Lord Rothschild to Laurence Fish</li> <li>• “Pilot Dropped Candy Into Hearts of Berlin” by ABC News</li> <li>• Appendix C Statement from <i>Labour in Portuguese West Africa</i> by William A. Cadbury</li> <li>• “Is It Fair to Eat Chocolate?” by Deborah Dunn from <i>Skipping Stones</i></li> <li>• “Eat More Chocolate, Win More Nobels?” by Karl Ritter and Marilyn Marchione from Associated Press</li> <li>• “Can Chocolate Be Good for My Health?” Answers from Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D. from Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research</li> <li>• “Chocolate” from American Smooth by Rita Dove</li> <li>• Act I, Scene Eight from <i>Così fan tutte: English National Opera Guide 22</i> by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Nicholas John (Book Editor), Marmaduke E. Browne (Translator)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Prehistoric Americans Traded Chocolate for Turquoise?” by Christine Dell’Amore from <i>National Geographic News</i></li> <li>• Letter from Lord Rothschild to Laurence Fish</li> <li>• “Pilot Dropped Candy Into Hearts of Berlin” by ABC News</li> <li>• “The Sweet Lure of Chocolate” by Jim Spadaccini</li> <li>• “The Tropics” from <i>The Story of Chocolate</i> by National Confectioners Association’s Chocolate Council</li> <li>• “Good Harvest” by Karen E. Lange from <i>All Animals</i> magazine/The Humane Society of the United States</li> <li>• Appendix C Statement from <i>Labour in Portuguese West Africa</i> by William A. Cadbury</li> <li>• “Is It Fair to Eat Chocolate?” by Deborah Dunn from <i>Skipping Stones</i></li> <li>• “Early History of Chocolate” by Amplify Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Good Harvest” by Karen E. Lange from <i>All Animals</i> magazine/The Humane Society of the United States</li> <li>• “Dark Chocolate: A Bittersweet Pill to Take” by Mary Brophy Marcus from <i>USA Today</i></li> <li>• “Eat More Chocolate, Win More Nobels?” by Karl Ritter and Marilyn Marchione from Associated Press</li> <li>• “Can Chocolate Be Good for My Health?” Answers from Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D. from Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistic depictions of the history of chocolate</li> <li>• Act I, Scene Eight from <i>Così fan tutte: English National Opera Guide 22</i> by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Nicholas John (Book Editor), Marmaduke E. Browne (Translator)</li> <li>• <i>Chocolat</i> by Joanne Harris</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science	Art
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Chocolat</i> by Joanne Harris</li> <li>• <i>The Dharma Bums</i> by Jack Kerouac</li> <li>• “The Sweet Lure of Chocolate” by Jim Spadaccini</li> <li>• “The Tropics” from <i>The Story of Chocolate</i> by National Confectioners Association’s Chocolate Council</li> <li>• “Good Harvest” by Karen E. Lange from <i>All Animals</i> magazine/The Humane Society of the United States</li> <li>• “Dark Chocolate: A Bittersweet Pill to Take” by Mary Brophy Marcus from <i>USA Today</i></li> <li>• Chapter 7—“Monseigneur in Town” from <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> by Charles Dickens</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Topics and Content</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The history of chocolate</li> <li>• The social history of chocolate</li> <li>• Chocolate production, facts, and issues of exploitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The source of chocolate</li> <li>• Health benefits of chocolate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art’s depiction of chocolate in history</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science	Art
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	sanctuary; epicenter; inaudible; relinquished; misconception; enigmatic; inevitable; sustainable; sustain; irrelevant; indifferent; dispute; intermingle; repel; resolve; access; transport; reversing; eliminate; indulgent; indication; contention; coaxing; lavish; procuring; prevalent; idyllic; pious; morose; fibrous; hailing; robust; moderation; caveat	colonialism; Columbus; galley; conquistador; archaeology; bartered; prehistoric; consumers; incorporated	agriculture; migratory; antioxidant; endangered; arterial; cardiovascular; chronic	No additional domain-specific vocabulary words
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. RI.6.1;10 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. RL.6.1 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. W.6.1;2;3;4;5;7;8;9;10 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. SL.6.1;4;5;6 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. L.6.1;2;9	7.11.1:2	MS-LS1-1 MS-LS1-4	1.2 1.3
<b>Skills</b>	Students conduct Internet research; gather evidence; compose argumentative narratives supported by claims; select topics for essays; engage in debate; write compelling introductions and string conclusion; include in-text citations	Students learn about the great voyages of discovery, the locations of the routes. They discuss the exchanges of plants, animals, technology, culture, and ideas among Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas in the 15th and 16th centuries and the major economic and social effects on each continent.	Students conduct an investigation to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence that meet the goals of an investigation. They use an oral and written argument supported by empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support or refute an explanation or a model for a phenomenon or a solution to a problem.	Students process, analyze, and respond to sensory information through the language and skills unique to the visual arts. They discuss works of art in regards to theme, genre, style, idea, and differences in media, and they describe how artists can show the same theme by using different media and styles.

## Grade 6

## The Greeks

**Building knowledge overview**

The Greeks unit offers a glimpse into the timeless treasures that this ancient civilization left for posterity. Students will read an adaptation of the myth of Prometheus by Bernard Evslin. They will then read an excerpt (Book 9) from *The Odyssey* by Homer. The final passage “Arachne” is from *Tales from Ovid* by Ted Hughes. Students will read, analyze, and discuss the legacy of ideas that Prometheus’, Odysseus’, and Arachne’s stories left for future generations.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Students are more likely to engage when they realize how much they already know about a topic and chances are that many of your students have some background knowledge of Greek mythology. Myths are a popular genre in many classrooms; there are many comic books, video and computer games that are based on Greek mythological figures; Hollywood has produced countless movies that feature Greek gods and myths. The Quest Myth World creates an additional layer of background knowledge that propels the unit forward.</p> <p>This unit provides teachers with an excellent opportunity to collaborate with both social studies and art teachers (more below). In designing the interdisciplinary lessons students should be given the opportunity to recall prior knowledge. Students may already be familiar with Plato or Aristotle, or perhaps with Sophocles and his most famous hero, Oedipus the King. Some may have visited museums where ancient Greek art depicts the life of the Greek gods and the mortals they ruled over.</p> <p>This is the fourth unit of the year and students should have mastered several skills that they can draw upon when they embark on this unit. Through memorable characters (Tom Sawyer and Sherlock Holmes) they learned about the art and the power of storytelling in the works of Mark Twain and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. They are now ready to meet and learn from the three new characters, Prometheus, Odysseus, and Arachne, in this case from ancient Greece.</p>	<p>There are several instances in history that we turn to in order to more fully understand who we are today as individuals and as societies. Greek civilization is one of those influential periods in history. Whether through Aristophanes’s comedies, or Aristotle’s ethics, aesthetics and political theory, our students will hopefully continue to read and learn through the eternal works of Greek literature and philosophy.</p> <p>Through the stories of Prometheus, Odysseus, and Arachne students learn important lessons about individuals and the role that they play in the world. The multilayered complexity of this topic prepares them to become more inquisitive readers. They are likely to look at texts as a way to access ideas, to learn more about themselves and the world they live in.</p>



**Suggestions for enrichment**

Looking to learn more about the Greek philosophers? Here is a link <http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html> to an excellent site that will enable you to expand your knowledge. Enriching your own background knowledge will benefit your students as your lessons become more complex and sophisticated.

There is an exciting possibility in the prior knowledge section above. Perhaps hold a “show and tell” of books about ancient Greece that students already own, comic books, games and action figures.

Consider a virtual or an actual visit to a local museum which has some material from the ancient Greeks. From pottery, to jewelry, from sculptures to figurines, Greek art depicts multiple aspects of Greek life. Collaborate with the school's art and social studies teachers around the museum visit. Art, like literature, tells stories, immortalizes moments, and celebrates gods.

The interdisciplinary map below, points to another challenging possibility. An art teacher has several opportunities that are already embedded in the lessons. In Lesson 1 of Prometheus students study two artifacts in two different art forms that depict Prometheus. In Arachne, tapestry is the art form that portrays beauty and strength; it is also the source of the central conflict in the myth. In Lesson 3 of Arachne, students, using either their devices or art material, create an alternative version of one of the character's tapestries.

**Vocabulary development**

Each unit uses vocabulary with its own distinctive characteristics, for example Twain's use of dialect in Tom & Sherlock. In this unit, the extensive study of new words continues the process of developing more competent readers. The vocabulary lessons in the three literary texts of this unit improves students' comprehension, yet also adds to a growing number of words that students will continue to encounter. The interdisciplinary map below points to some words that are domain specific.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

Did you consider inviting teachers from other disciplines to discuss the texts that the Independent Reader's Guide in the Appendix lists? Your colleague's contribution here, discussing some of the texts with the students, may be invaluable. And for those students who are intrigued by Greek art invite the art teacher to perhaps offer more reading material.

The reader's guide offers many exciting texts and links for those students who want to read more myths.

**The Greeks | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p><b>Quest, Myth World</b></p> <p>“Prometheus” from Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths by Bernard Evslin</p> <p>Book 9 from <i>The Odyssey</i>, by Homer</p> <p>“Arachne” from Tales from Ovid by Ted Hughes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pottery of Prometheus, 555 BC, Arkesilas painter</li> </ul>	<p>Ovid background</p> <p>Maps of Odysseus’s journey</p> <p>Ancient Greek Democracy</p>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders and the role they play in society</li> <li>Individual place and responsibility in society</li> <li>Exercising power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tapestry as an art form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural legacy of Greek civilization</li> <li>Political legacy of Greek civilization</li> <li>Rights and responsibilities</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	enlighten; aptitude; sustenance; defy; hover; contemptuous; humility; notion; bleating; yield; brute; bard; bouquet; flock; merciful;	horizon; tapestry;	abide by; defy; endow; sacred; indignation; divine; circumvents
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RL.6.1;2;3;4;5;6;7;9		CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RH.6-8.1.4;5;7
<b>Skills</b>	Students will analyze and cite the texts, identify character traits, closely examine characters’ claims, describe how stories unfold, and determine themes. They will write arguments to support claims, and revise their writing. They will continue to build vocabulary.	Students will develop the ability to identify types of artistic representations and compare the use of literature vs. the use of art to tell stories.	Students will integrate visual information with other information from digital texts, describe how a text presents information, and build vocabulary.

## Grade 6

## Reading the Novel

**Building knowledge overview**

Students read *M.C. Higgins, the Great* by Virginia Hamilton and view photos and illustrations of strip mining.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Although there is no specific place known as Sarah's Mountain, the setting of Hamilton's novel is grounded in a very real place. You might begin the unit with a geography mini lesson: draw your students' attention to the Cumberland Mountains (within Kentucky's Appalachian Plateau). Ask them to imagine what kind of place this is, and to consider how the particularities of this mountain landscape might shape the characters' world views and sense of identity.</p> <p>Hamilton's novel introduces readers to the potentially hazardous conditions that strip mining poses to the environment. Find out what your students know about coal, and the different ways that it's mined. What do we use coal for? Which states produce it? What techniques do we use to mine it? What are the dangers that coal might pose to our environment? By developing this shared knowledge about the novel's context, students will be able to make deeper sense of its meaning.</p> <p>How familiar are your students with close reading? In their earlier grades, many of your students most likely engaged in fairly unsupervised independent reading. They were probably seldom asked to read a literary text closely, identify a character's key traits, or examine the role played by setting in shaping a character's development.</p> <p>It's important for students to adopt an analytic approach to their reading—so give them time to get used to a more structured approach that aims to understand how a novel works and what it means.</p>	<p>Understanding the setting of a literary text can greatly expand the reader's comprehension of the novel's themes. And as they progress through school, students will be asked to explore settings over and over. For example, when students read <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> in seventh grade, their understanding of Chicago's racial tensions will deepen their grasp of the play's situation—and thus of the events that unfold within it.</p> <p>When your students were younger, they may well have read books like <i>The Lorax</i> by Dr. Seuss. Now they're reading <i>M.C. Higgins, the Great</i> by Virginia Hamilton...and looking forward, they might read novels like <i>Ecotopia</i> by Ernest Callenbach. In each of these books, authors use a larger story to dramatize their concerns about the environment. As they make their way through these texts, students will learn to identify the factual frameworks that underlie these fictional narratives—and thereby steadily grow their body of knowledge.</p> <p>As your students develop their close reading skills, they'll grow increasingly able to tackle rich and complex texts—in ways that will greatly increase the delight, and the knowledge, they get from reading them.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Students who enjoyed reading *M.C. Higgins, the Great* might well enjoy other books by Virginia Hamilton. You may wish to assign them an “author study,” wherein students dive deeply into an author’s oeuvre by reading a series of his or her books—and gradually developing a special sensitivity to the specific ideas the author returns to, the kinds of characters to which he or she is typically drawn...and even, perhaps, the style in which he or she brings his or her world to life for us. Information about Virginia Hamilton is readily available on the Internet. For example: <http://www.virginiahamilton.com/virginia-hamilton-books/virginia-ham>.

In the book, Great-grandmother Sarah’s story impacts the lives of M.C. and his family. An interesting research project might involve a search for Sarah’s passage to freedom. Does the text provide enough details for the students to track her path? They might also explore the significance of the fact that her voyage ends in a Southern state rather than a Northern one. This line of research would be especially appropriate for an interdisciplinary approach.

The “environmental buffs” in your class may choose to research strip mining and other methods of extracting coal. A science teacher might play a useful part here; he or she can help students generate research questions and point out resources.

**Vocabulary development**

In addition to learning how to read a novel, students exploring this unit also have a chance to do a good deal of interdisciplinary exploration—as the map below points out. The science section below provides a list of mining terms that might tempt students down these paths.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

For more books by Virginia Hamilton and similar books by other authors, remind students of the Independent Reader’s Guide: Reading the Novel (see Appendix). Therein, they will find an annotated bibliography of Hamilton’s work, as well as classic texts like *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906) by Jack London. More recent popular young adult novels like *Hatchet* (1987) by Gary Paulsen and *The Goats* (1998) by Brock Cole are recommended as well.

## Reading the Novel | Interdisciplinary overview

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<i>M.C. Higgins, the Great</i> by Virginia Hamilton	Strip mining illustration and photos	Sarah's story in <i>M.C. Higgins, the Great</i> by Virginia Hamilton
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah's legacy</li> <li>• The complexity of a forbidden friendship</li> <li>• M.C. and his father</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential hazards of strip mining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah's lasting legacy</li> <li>• The politics of strip mining</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	gingerly; ponderous; cadence; hurtled; abiding; smugly; fathom; dislodge; perspiration; veering; resignedly; spindly; gauged; remnant; quaver; impenetrable; bewildering; brazenly; reckless; remorseful; attuned; soberly; descending; indignant; grudgingly; outlandish; inert; blight; unwittingly; serenely; pungent; resounded; disembodied; blundered	strip mining; coal seam; mining cuts; gashes; subsoil; spoil heap; landslide; vertical; billowed	predicament; blundered; frantic; cherish; defiantly
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1;2.a; 3;4;5;6; CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1;1.b;1.c; 1.e;2;2.b;5 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1; CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4.a; CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4;5	ESS3.C	8.6 8.9.6

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Skills</b>	Students annotate and make connections among annotations; they analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot; they determine themes and central ideas, conduct discussions, and write arguments to support claims.	Students examine the practice of strip mining and assess its impact on the environment. Students explore complex issues surrounding human activities and their effect on natural resources.	Students use a variety of maps and documents to identify physical and cultural features of neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries and to explain the historical migration of people, expansion and disintegration of empires, and the growth of economic systems. Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.

## Grade 6

## The Titanic Collection

**Building knowledge overview**

Over the course of this unit, students explore the story of the sinking of the *Titanic* from a range of different perspectives including history, to literature, to biology, and fine art. Working across media, students explore poems, paintings and photographs; news articles, letters, court documents, and scientific papers...even telegraphs that were sent to and from the *Titanic* as it was sinking!

**Source documents include:**

- *Sinking of the "Titanic" Most Appalling Ocean Horror* by Jay Henry Mowbray
- *A Night to Remember* by Walter Lord
- *Sinking of the Titanic and Great Sea Disasters* edited by Logan Marshall
- "The Iceberg Was Only Part of It" by William J. Broad
- Letter from Mary Lines, 1912
- Testimony of Olaus Abelseth
- "Letter from the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers Union of Great Britain and Ireland" by Ben Tillett
- Telegraphic transmissions to and from the *Titanic*
- "Rusticles on *Titanic* Contain New Iron-Eating Bacteria, Study Says" by Jack Phillips

## Building knowledge

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Because of the popularity of the film <i>Titanic</i>, most of your students will likely be familiar with this historic event. Ask your students what they remember about the tragedy, but remind them to keep in mind that a Hollywood story aims to entertain—and will change historical events to suit this purpose. Encourage them, as they read actual accounts of what happened, to differentiate between the Hollywood story and historical truth.</p> <p>What do your students know about the role that class can play in society? As they delve into the unit's documents, they'll discover that many more passengers in the first-class cabins survived the disaster—because they were evacuated ahead of everyone else. Keeping a focus on class will help your students understand some of the tension on board the ship that is described in the various accounts.</p> <p>This unit may well give your students their first research project of junior high. Did they do similar kinds of research in elementary school? What do they remember about what research is for, and how it's done? How did they take notes? How did they identify reliable sources? Do they know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it? This discussion can establish a crucial foundation for this and future research units.</p>	<p>The <i>Titanic</i> is one of those key historical events that become part of our collective memory. Even though the <i>Titanic</i> was a British ship, the news of its sinking transcended borders.</p> <p>In their global studies courses students will learn about social classes. They will read about the caste system in India and European feudalism. They will also learn about capitalism and socialism and discuss how social scientists evaluate each economic system's impact on society.</p> <p>One of several research units in the Amplify curriculum, <i>Titanic</i> lays a strong foundation—building the key research skills students will need to succeed, and whetting the curiosity that will draw them deeper into topics that weave through the disciplines.</p>



**Suggestions for enrichment**

The interdisciplinary map below makes clear the power of collaborations between ELA and social studies teachers. However, there are other, less obvious collaborations to consider. Is there an architect or an engineer among the math teachers in your school? Naval architecture and marine engineering are fields that can shed light on why the ship sank so quickly. Was there a design problem? What have engineers and mathematicians learned from the *Titanic's* sinking about building safer ships?

Science teachers can contribute as well. Several essays in the selection examine the scientific aspect of the disaster; these essays offer students a chance to explore new content areas, through different disciplinary lenses.

While students should be wary of accepting the film *Titanic* as an accurate portrayal of events, they may gain a great deal from a more skeptical viewing that identifies inaccuracies and explores the impact that these changes might have on the movie audience's understanding of the historical event.

**Vocabulary development**

If you choose to extend the interdisciplinary scope of the unit, select and categorize new vocabulary words. For example, "bacteria" will belong in the science section, while "marine archeology" will belong to the engineering domain.

## The Titanic Collection | Interdisciplinary overview

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sinking of the "Titanic" Most Appalling Ocean Horror</i> (Memorial Edition: 1912) by Jay Henry</li> <li>• Mowbray, PhD, LLD, A Letter from Mary Lines, 1912</li> <li>• Telegraphic transmissions to and from the <i>Titanic</i> (April 14 and 15, 1912),</li> <li>• <i>Sinking of the Titanic and Great Sea Disasters</i> (Chapter VI. "Women and Children First!") edited by Logan Marshall, 1912</li> <li>• Untitled poem by an anonymous author (Read at the <i>Titanic</i> Memorial dedication in Belfast, Ireland—June 1920)</li> <li>• "Discovery of the <i>Titanic</i>" Essay (<i>Lapham's Quarterly</i>)</li> <li>• "Rusticles on <i>Titanic</i> Contain New Iron-Eating Bacteria, Study Says" (<i>Epoch Times</i>, December 6, 2010) by Jack Phillips</li> <li>• "The Iceberg Was Only Part of It" (<i>The New York Times</i>, April 10, 2012) by William J. Broad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Letter from the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers Union of Great Britain and Ireland" by Ben Tillett, April 18, 1912</li> <li>• Testimony of Olaus Abelseth (United States Senate Inquiry, Day 13)</li> <li>• <i>A Night to Remember</i> (Chapter 7: "There Is Your Beautiful Nightdress Gone") by Walter Lord, 1955</li> <li>• First, second, and third class menus</li> <li>• Photos and illustrations of cabins aboard the <i>Titanic</i></li> </ul>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tragedy of the sinking of the <i>Titanic</i></li> <li>• The mystery of the sinking of the <i>Titanic</i> investigated</li> <li>• Press documenting the sinking of the <i>Titanic</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social classes and the <i>Titanic</i> disaster</li> <li>• Lessons learned</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	adjacent; chronological; congruent; drastic; factor; hypothesis; manipulate; origin; reinforce; tentative; unanimous; variable; formulation; magnitude; calamity; peril; ramifications; superfluous; theory; appreciated; stricken; apparatus; havoc; alludes; blunder; ineptitude; distortions; inexplicable; meagre; conclusive; inexorable; negligent; ignominy; sustaining; intricate; memorabilia; despicable; manifestation; proximity; inadequacy; perspective; adjacent; inept; supremacy; plausible; warped; inherent; outdated; infamy; henceforth; ensues; errant; engulfed; deteriorated; debris; assuaged; abyss; clarity; condolences; inexpressible; therefore; provision; transactions; deaden; barred; immitigable; expedition; intersection; irrespectively; intimately; permitted	investigators; enterprising; neglected; class; distinction; inquiries; policy; account; contrast; discrimination; testified; steerage; antagonism; Labour Party
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1;7;8;10 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1; 2;3;4;5;6;7;8;9;10 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1;5;6 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1	Grades 6-8 CA Skills: Research, Evidence, and Point of View. 1;2;3;4;5 8.4.3 8.12.6

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Skills</b>	Students learn how to identify plagiarism, conduct research, identify reliable sources, compare sources, collect evidence, discuss findings, write, revise, and edit essays, and present findings.	<p>Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research. They distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories and they distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.</p> <p>Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them and they detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspective).</p> <p>Students analyze the rise of capitalism and the economic problems and conflicts that accompanied it (e.g., Jackson's opposition to the National Bank; early decisions of the US Supreme Court that reinforced the sanctity of contracts and a capitalist economic system of law). They discuss child labor, working conditions, and laissez-faire policies toward big business and examine the labor movement, including its leaders (e.g., Samuel Gompers), its demand for collective bargaining, and its strikes and protests over labor conditions.</p>

## Grade 7

## Red Scarf Girl &amp; Narrative

**Building knowledge overview**

The unit's opening lesson launches the seventh grade curriculum, and many of the Getting Started lessons aim to build those individual habits and classroom routines that will enable students to work well together as they proceed. At the unit's center is *Red Scarf Girl*, a thrilling memoir of growing up through the upheavals of China's Cultural Revolution. The unit's source materials complement the memoir with a range of propaganda posters that portray an idealized vision of the utopia that the Revolution aims to create—and the role of Chairman Mao within it. Students also examine photographs that present the Revolution in a very different light, and part of their work in the unit is to consider the conflict between these dreamy visions and horrific actualities.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Several lessons in the unit introduce students to the ways that the leaders of the Cultural Revolution used art as a tool of political propaganda. But art can also be used to change the beliefs and behavior of citizens within a democracy. Can your students think of photos, cartoons or drawings that aim to shape the viewer's thoughts or feelings? Their ideas about who to vote for? or how to dress?</p> <p>In earlier units, students acted out scenes as a way to evaluate characters' actions and motives. They use the same approach in this unit, when they portray Jiang's suffering during the dark days of the Cultural Revolution.</p> <p>The first unit of the sixth grade curriculum also begins with a memoir: Roald Dahl's <i>Boy</i>, a remembrance of his childhood in England. And throughout the year, students will read a number of other autobiographical texts. The lessons they learn about writing from experience will prove invaluable as they explore these readings—as will their increasing sense of how to approach an autobiographical text</p>	<p>Global history is part of many junior high curricula. And many high schools will spend a unit—if not a larger portion of time—on the history of China. Reading <i>Red Scarf Girl</i> develops students' familiarity with the subject matter, while the more specialized vocabulary they learn (terms like "communism," "revolution" or "liberate") will deepen students' reading fluency in future encounters with similar texts.</p> <p>When we teach students about the uses of propaganda, whether in totalitarian countries or in democracies, we are fostering responsible citizenship. Ji-li Jiang, the author of the <i>Red Scarf Girl</i>, continually confronted the onslaught of a propaganda machine aimed at children even more than at adults—which may make the posters included within this unit even more compelling to your middle-schoolers.</p> <p>The next unit in the seventh grade sequence is Character &amp; Conflict. The anchor text of the unit, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry, is a play. Students will also watch a film version of the play. They will discuss how actors interpret and portray conflicts through the use of drama.</p> <p>Memoirs describe the stories of individuals, but they also serve as a way of observing, through the perspective provided by those individuals, much larger historical events or eras. For example, seventh grade students will learn about the Harlem Renaissance through the eyes of Langston Hughes, while, in the eighth grade, they will learn about the years leading up to the American Revolution by following the story of Benjamin Franklin.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

With the abundance of digital cameras and cell phones, many teenagers may well consider themselves expert photographers. Nonetheless, they likely could learn a great deal about composition and other artistic techniques from a photography or other fine arts teacher—and thus gain another way of examining the posters that play a large part in this unit.

Similarly, a drama teacher can help students with those lessons where they are called upon to act out specific scenes.

You can encourage and assist your students as they conduct research on the use of art in political propaganda. Many intriguing questions can guide this research. For example: How do we define art? If it is used as a political tool can we still call it art? Is there “good” and “bad” propaganda? How might we evaluate the effectiveness of art used as propaganda?

*The Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution* by Ji-li Jiang is one of many young adult memoirs that have been published in recent years. This is a popular genre for students. They are easily captivated by stories of other young teens. A few examples are: *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Houston and James D. Houston; *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry; *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai. See the independent reading recommendations, noted below, for many other ideas for further reading.

**Vocabulary development**

This unit has great interdisciplinary potential. The chart below lists a number of domain-specific words. Consider, for example, the social studies list: Cultural Revolution; slogan; emblem; revolution; liberate; oppression; political; idealist; and domineering. Students will encounter these words over and over again.

Teachers can also expand the list in the art section. They can draw from a variety of fields, including drawing, photography and graphic art.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

Familiarize yourself with the extensive list of recommended reading in *The Independent Reader's Guide: Red Scarf Girl & Narrative* (in the Appendix). Invite a social studies teacher to join you when you discuss the authors and the events that the books portray. The links also give students an opportunity to view more examples of the uses of art for propaganda purposes.

**Red Scarf Girl & Narrative | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<i>Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution</i> by Ji-li Jiang	Brueghel's Hunters in the Snow, Propaganda posters	Propaganda art The Cultural Revolution
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political memoir</li> <li>Family and loyalty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Images tell stories</li> <li>Analysis of propaganda art</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cultural Revolution</li> <li>Art and politics</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	indistinct; relatively; expectantly; cautiously; irritated; quivered; impact; squabbling; displayed; jostling; flabbergasted; strived; taunt; colliding; pandemonium; fervor; domineering; snide; disheveled	image; zoom; focus; posters	Cultural revolution; slogan; emblem; revolution; liberate; oppression; political; idealist; domineering;
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.1;3 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1;2;3;4;5 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1;2 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2;4a CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5;5	3.1	Research, Evidence, and Point of View: 5 6.6 7.3

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Skills</b>	Students develop observational skills; noticing details, writing details; and focusing on specific moments. They continue to read as skilled detectives; annotating, and rereading.	Students research and describe how art reflects cultural values in various traditions throughout the world.	Students detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspective) Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of China. Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of China in the Middle Ages.



## Grade 7

## Character &amp; Conflict

**Building knowledge overview**

Students read three texts in this unit: *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, “Harlem” by Langston Hughes, and “Sucker” by Carson McCullers. They watch the 1961 movie version of the Hansberry play and also conduct an immersive, multimedia Quest: Black, White and Blues in Chicago. The texts incorporated into the Quest provide a rich historical context for Hansberry’s influential play.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Have your students ever been to the theater? What plays have they seen? One way to open this unit is to ask students about their experience with theater, explore what they know about this art form, and discuss how it differs from other ways of telling a story.</p> <p>In the previous unit, <i>Red Scarf Girl &amp; Narrative</i>, students studied the use of art as propaganda. With this background, they’re ready to consider how theater, too, can function as a political tool. In Act II, Scene 1 of <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>, George Murchison exits the stage after saying to Walter: “Good night, Prometheus!” Walter does not recognize George’s reference, but your students should! In The Greeks unit, they learned about how Prometheus stole fire from the gods and gave it to humankind. This exchange of knowledge across units (and art forms) powerfully illustrates E. D. Hirsch’s contention that: “To become a good comprehender a child needs a great deal of knowledge.”</p> <p>In this unit, as in the rest of the Amplify ELA curriculum, writing activities are carefully developed and deliberately structured to lead students to develop strong, well-supported claims that build into clearly structured arguments.</p>	<p>Students will watch a film version of the play, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>. Can they think of other movies that are based on plays? For example: some of your students may have seen recent productions of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, a play they will read later this year.</p> <p>In every aspect of their lives, students will be exposed to the ways that art is used to convey ideas. Artists, photographers, authors, and playwrights each use their distinctive modes to express opinions (theirs and others’) about the world we live in.</p> <p>The multimedia Quest included within this unit plays a crucial role in what E.D. Hirsch describes as its “intellectual structure.” By engaging students in an immersive experience of the social context surrounding the play, the Quest whets their curiosity and draws them toward knowledge-building explorations of people, events, and places.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Consider this research topic: What political role did theater play at different points in history? Throughout history, theatrical art forms have been used not only to entertain, but also to persuade people to believe and to act in specific ways. This aspect of theater's power may intrigue your students—especially if you help them explore the ways in which advertising can also use imagery and narrative to persuade us.

The Quest offers a change of pace, and you can conduct it after your class reads *Raisin in the Sun*, or at the very end of the unit. Consider when your students are likely to benefit most from the Quest's more hands-on mode of learning. (Keep in mind that the Quest, too, offers a great chance to collaborate with teachers in other disciplines—e.g., a social studies teacher.)

Have you noticed the beautiful paintings that serve as the background to each lesson? These were painted by Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000), and each tells a story. You may also wish to introduce them to other artists of the Harlem Renaissance, such as William H. Johnson, Lois Mailou Jones, and Aaron Douglas. Your school's art teacher can broaden the discussion about the artists and their skills.

Similarly, you may also wish to collaborate with a drama teacher, and work together on those lessons in which students act out scenes.

**Vocabulary development**

Building vocabulary is a fundamental component of the Amplify instructional approach. As described below, the unit contains additional interdisciplinary potential; see the chart below for domain-specific terminology.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

The Independent Reader's Guides (see Appendix) for both *A Raisin in the Sun* and "Sucker" sketch out a wide range of routes for further exploration.

In the reader's guide for *A Raisin in the Sun*, you'll find a reading list divided into historical periods: slave narratives and the post-slavery period, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights era. These lists, too, suggest a range of ways to expand collaboration between your class and social studies teachers in your school.

The reader's guide for McCullers's short story, "Sucker," offers background information about the author, including the fact that she wrote the story at the age of 17—when she was just a few years older than your students! The guide lists many of McCullers's other works as well as other similar texts that your students may choose to read.

**Character & Conflict | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Art
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p><i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry</p> <p>"Huge Success"</p> <p>Letter to Mother by Lorraine Hansberry</p> <p>"Sucker" by Carson McCullers</p> <p>"Harlem" by Langston Hughes</p>	<p>Black, White and Blues in The Black, White and Blues in Chicago Quest</p> <p>Chicago in the early 1950s, photos</p>	<p>Chicago in the early 1950s, photos</p> <p><i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>, the film</p> <p>Jacob Lawrence paintings</p> <p>Photos</p>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characters and conflicts</li> <li>• Dreams deferred</li> <li>• African heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial struggles</li> <li>• Assimilation</li> <li>• Civil Rights era (Quest)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portraits of African-American life (Lawrence paintings; photos)</li> <li>• Visual interpretation (film)</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	<p>doggedly; tentatively; furtively; emphatic; futile; clinically;</p> <p>immoral; meddling; evading; subtly;</p> <p>imploring; ignorance; misgiving; martyr; fester; despise; exasperated;</p> <p>whittling; meddling</p>	<p>assimilation; Uncle Tom; plaintively; resignation; beseechingly;</p> <p>insinuatingly; deferred; efficiency;</p> <p>nobility</p>	<p>No additional domain-specific vocabulary words</p>
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. RL.7.1;3;4;6;7</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. RL.7;1</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.W.7.1;2;5;9</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. SL.7.1;5;6</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.L.7.1;2;4a;9</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. CCRA.4;5</p>	<p>Grade 8 CA SS Standards</p> <p>8.1.2</p> <p>8.6.4</p> <p>8.9.6</p>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RH.6-8.1.4;5;7</p>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Art
<b>Skills</b>	Students evaluate impact of authors' language; they conduct close textual analysis of the text; they analyze characters and their response to conflicts.	Students analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights"). They study the lives of black Americans who gained freedom in the North and founded schools and churches to advance their rights and communities. They describe the lives of free blacks and the laws that limited their freedom and economic opportunities.	Students describe the environment and selected works of art, using the elements of art and the principles of design. They develop increasing skill in the use of at least three different media and they take an active part in a small-group discussion about the artistic value of specific works of art, with a wide range of peer viewpoints being considered.

## Grade 7

# Brain Science

### Building knowledge overview

Each of the three texts covered in the Brain Science unit approach this topic from a different angle and in a different way. John Fleischman's *Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science* is a compelling narrative that weaves together an exploration of science and history around the story of one man's extraordinary experience. By contrast, "Demystifying the Adolescent Brain" by Laurence Steinberg studies the brain from a more strictly biological perspective. Lastly, Oliver Sacks's *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* explores the ways that various neurological conditions play out within the lives of particular individuals, weaving together questions of science, psychology, and philosophy within the context of these distinctly human dramas.

The unit also includes Perception Academy, a Quest that immerses students in a multimedia experience of how different neurological conditions shape the way we process sensation—and thus prepares them for reading *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*.

## Building knowledge

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>You may want to begin this unit by reviewing the work that students did last year with the Chocolate Collection—specifically, their exploration of the effects of chocolate on the brain.</p> <p>Science books are popular among elementary and middle school students. Ask students to share some titles of the books they have read. It is possible that occasionally they may not even realize that the topic of a book they read is related to a field of science. An excellent example is <i>The Lorax</i> by Dr. Seuss—a book that calls upon young readers to be aware of the dangers to the environment.</p> <p>You may also want to open the unit by discussing with your students the challenges they've faced when reading informational texts in the past—especially those that require specific background knowledge. Help students to understand the importance of relevant background knowledge and discuss with them the strategies they might use to gain it.</p>	<p>The news is filled with examples of how science impacts our lives, and many raise questions that your students may find compelling. The recent debate around the measles outbreak, for example, raises some fascinating questions about what vaccines are, how they function, and how we need to understand science in order to make wise choices about our ordinary lives (“should I have my child vaccinated?”).</p> <p>When our students adopt the habit of reading, their reading ability improves. E.D. Hirsch—author of <i>Cultural Literacy</i>—says that “The factual knowledge that is found in books is the key to reading comprehension.” Repeated visits to the Independent Reader’s Guide section—encouraging our students to read on their own—will expand their knowledge. This will prepare them for high school where the classroom texts present an even more difficult challenge.</p> <p>In two of the eighth grade units—Biography &amp; Literature and Science &amp; Science Fiction—students will also wrestle with significant scientific issues. While exploring the life of Benjamin Franklin, for example, students re-create several of his experiments in electricity. To complement their work with <i>Frankenstein</i>—a text deeply concerned with the “scientific” approach to life and its alternatives—students read excerpts from Walter Isaacson’s <i>The Innovators</i>, a work which also connects to questions of science and technology.</p> <p>In these ways, Amplify’s grade-by-grade sequence of increasingly challenging texts prepares students to delve ever deeper into scientific ideas and methods.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

This unit offers you (the ELA teacher) an excellent opportunity to broaden your own background knowledge by learning more about a topic that will likely prove highly relevant to your own work: the workings of the brain. Your ability to discuss science fluently in your classroom will convey to students the importance of reading across the curriculum. The Independent Reader's Guide provides an excellent resource for you, as well as your students, to turn to for additional reading.

As described below, this unit opens readily across the curriculum. You may, for example, wish to collaborate with a science teacher and explore these topics from a scientific as well as a historical perspective. Add an art teacher as well to take advantage on the opportunities for illustrating the materials explored—both the historical and the scientific documents will become much richer. (Note: advance planning usually makes these interdisciplinary collaborations much easier.)

If your schedule has some flexibility, you may wish to engage your students in a research project. A simple online search will show how widely researched the topic of the adolescent brain has become. And several of the topics discussed in this unit have been recently explored in greater depth—in ways that students may find very interesting. For example, Laurence Steinberg has recently expanded his studies of the adolescent brain to explore the impact of groups on adolescent decision-making (see: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2015/03/11/391864852/the-teenage-brain-spock-vs-captain-kirk>).

**Vocabulary development**

Students will encounter some challenging vocabulary in this unit, ranging from Tier 1 academic terms like “associate” and “capable,” to Tier 2, domain-specific words such as “cortex” and “dopamine.”

**Recommendations for Independent Reading**

Turn your students' attention to Independent Readers' Guide: Brain Science (see Appendix). Ask a science teacher to help introduce your students to the extensive list of recommended texts. The guide offers a long list of fictional, informational, and multimedia texts to guide further reading.

**Brain Science | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Science
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science</i> by John Fleischman</li> <li>• “Demystifying the Adolescent Brain” by Laurence Steinberg</li> <li>• <i>The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat</i> by Oliver Sacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science</i> by John Fleischman</li> <li>• “Demystifying the Adolescent Brain” by Laurence Steinberg</li> <li>• <i>The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat</i> by Oliver Sacks</li> </ul>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science detectives</li> <li>• The adolescent brain and us</li> <li>• Reflections on use of journals in search of scientific facts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenge of reaching precise answers in scientific endeavors</li> <li>• The mystery of the brain</li> <li>• Benefits in scientific comparisons</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	confer; hoist; counter; conducts; cultured; bland; array; enable; vital; fundamental; irreverent; indulging; associated; aspects; relatively; enhances; acquire; elicited; simultaneously; capable; exuberant; grave; cordial; scoffed; approximately; abate	cortex; phrenologists; whole brainers; cerebellum; dopamine; cognition; extracts; decay; delirious; fractured; manifesting; speculate; miniscule; malleable; affected; speculation; optimal
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;9 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1;2;5 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1;2 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.CCRA.L.4;5	MS.LS1-3. LS1.d
<b>Skills</b>	Students analyze texts structure and determine central ideas in texts; they also describe how a text engages them. They determine meanings of words in context. They write arguments and support claims using details and relevant information. Students engage in collaborative discussions.	Students plan and carry out investigations. They construct explanations and design solutions.



## Grade 7

## Poetry &amp; Poe

**Building knowledge overview**

This unit begins with three poems: “The White Horse” by D. H. Lawrence, “The Silence” by Federico García Lorca, and “A narrow fellow in the grass” by Emily Dickinson. These are followed by two short stories and a poem by Edgar Allan Poe: “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” and “The Raven.”

Students will also read several informational texts in the multimedia Quest that rounds out the unit, including Mark Twain’s and Rufus Griswold’s reviews of Poe.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Encountering Edgar Allan Poe’s characters for the first time can be daunting for young students. Alienated and detached from the world around them, Poe’s characters may be stranger and more unsettling than any others the students have met in literature. A conversation about how writers choose to depict their characters and the world they live in can help set up these unfamiliar readings.</p> <p>When students read “The Tell-Tale Heart,” they use the M’Naghten Rule to evaluate the narrator’s sanity—thereby bringing the field of psychology into the unit. Some students may already be familiar with famous court cases where the insanity defense was used; others may be familiar with various mental disorders. Encourage students to share what they know, and open their exploration of the science of psychology.</p> <p>Students have mastered several skills on which they can build in this unit. They learned to “read like a detective” when working on the Sherlock Holmes stories, and can draw on these detective skills when they read Poe. Students also have experience reading poetry, including Langston Hughes’s “Harlem.” In exploring that poem, students considered how the poet transforms something as abstract as a dream—and, even more abstractly, a “dream deferred”—into the tangible things that compose our ordinary world. In the Poe unit, students are asked to visualize silence, another abstract concept.</p>	<p>As they move into high school and college, students will encounter an increasing number of literary characters who are alienated from the worlds around them. Whether they read Franz Kafka’s <i>Metamorphosis</i>, or F. Scott Fitzgerald’s <i>The Great Gatsby</i>, discussions of authors’ portrayal of these kinds of characters will lay a strong foundation for reading similar literary texts in the higher grades.</p> <p>When students debate the sanity of the narrator in “The Tell-Tale Heart” they prepare themselves for other texts they may read in which a character’s mental state is uncertain. Henry James’s <i>The Turn of the Screw</i>, for example, also raises the question of whether the story we’re being told is the product of an unbalanced mind. Part of our task in teaching our students to read these texts is to help them understand the ways in which literary texts are often complex and ambiguous.</p> <p>After this unit, students read <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. The play’s prologue is a sonnet. Long passages in the play use poetic techniques. Having some prior encounters with poetry will prepare students for the coming challenges of reading Shakespeare.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

In the first lesson of the unit, after reading D. H. Lawrence's "The White Horse" and García Lorca's "The Silence," students try to visualize the idea of silence and write their own "silent" poems. You may choose to expand on this activity by asking your students to imagine what "silent noise" might sound like. This is an enjoyable way for students to build on the earlier activity, while expanding their creative thinking and writing skills.

Open-ended by design, the unit provides a rich range of activities (skits, videos, stills, and a mystery Quest) that leaves room for your creative additions and embellishments. Invite your students to come up with their own ideas as well.

As indicated below, this unit has interdisciplinary potential; you may want to teach it in collaboration with art and/or drama teachers.

**Vocabulary development**

In addition to this unit's vocabulary lessons (listed in the Art section in the interdisciplinary map below), students will learn words that are domain-specific. You may select more words, depending on your potential collaboration with an art or drama teacher.

**Recommendations for independent reading**

The Independent Reader's Guide: Poetry & Poe includes both expected readings (such as additional poetry by Emily Dickinson) and unexpected ones—like *The Mouse of Amherst*, in which Elizabeth Spires creates a charming portrait of Dickinson as seen through the eyes of a mouse living in her house. You'll also find a mystery: *Emily's Dress and Other Missing Things* (2012) by Kathryn Burak.

To add flavor and context to the Poe stories, the Independent Reader's Guide also includes other ghostly and "whodunit" titles. For example, "The Horla," written by Guy de Maupassant, describes an encounter with a terrifying invisible creature, while "The Yellow Wallpaper" offers us Charlotte Perkins Gilman's famous account of psychological horror.

Beware: the Independent Reader's Guide may become one of your students' favorite places to go to in search of even more scary stories!

**Poetry & Poe | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p>“The White Horse” by D. H. Lawrence</p> <p>“The Silence” by Federico García Lorca</p> <p>“A narrow fellow in the grass” by Emily Dickinson</p> <p>“The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” and “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe”</p> <p>“The M’Naghten Rule,” from Queen v. M’Naghten (1843)</p> <p>Mark Twain’s and Rufus Griswold’s reviews of Poe’s work (in Quest)</p>	<p><i>skit script; skit video; carnival images; casting director video; art director video; character design video; cask stills; cask animations</i></p>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visualizing abstracts</li> <li>• Insanity defense</li> <li>• Ambiguity in texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential in animation</li> <li>• The author vs. the director</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	<p>cunningly; fluently; resembled; acute; vexed; hypocritical; precautions; scarcely; stealthily; hideous; audacity; derision; vehemently; reposed; enveloped; wary; waned; premises; impunity; retribution; accosted; obstinate; succession; colossal; entreating; quaff; melancholy; foul play; respite; laden; divining; countenance; decorum; placid</p>	<p>animatics; director; story boards; skit script; skit video; animation</p>
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1;2;3;4;6;7</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1;4;6</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1;2;3;5</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1;2;3;4;5</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.1;4a</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.4;5</p>	<p>CA Art Standards 6th Grade</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>CA Art Standards 8th Grade</p> <p>2.3</p>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Students conduct close textual analysis and draw inferences from the text. After determining the main idea, students write arguments to support their claims. Students 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.</p>	<p>Students create, perform, and participate in the visual arts. They create an original work of art, using film, photography, computer graphics, or video.</p>

## Grade 7

Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet***Building knowledge overview**

In this introductory unit to the work of William Shakespeare, students read selections from *Romeo and Juliet* in order to encounter the narrative delights of the play's most famous scenes, experience the distinctive thrills of Shakespeare's language and, in the process, further develop the core skills of close reading and careful writing.

To enrich and deepen this experience, students also work with a range of source materials that include film clips and bespoke illustrations of select scenes. They also work with Wordplay Shakespeare, a multimedia platform that uses a split-screen to allow students to watch actors enact a scene while following the text that's being performed.

Students continue their at-home reading with *Summer of the Mariposas*, a rich and engaging young adult novel by Guadalupe Garcia McCall that sets the story of Homer's *Odyssey* in modern-day Mexico.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Many of your students will be familiar with the story of the tragic young lovers: Romeo and Juliet. Sharing this knowledge will build students' confidence as they embark on the challenge of reading Shakespeare. Consider asking students to retell what they know (or think they know) about the story, and then asking them if/how it reminds them of contemporary books, or movies, or songs.</p> <p>In the course of reading <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, students will discuss a range of profound questions about the nature of romantic love, the motives of vengeance, and the forces that fuel family feuds. Several of these themes may well echo with ones your students have encountered in books they read for earlier units: for example, such as the family rivalry that threads through Virginia Hamilton's <i>M.C. Higgins the Great</i>.</p> <p>As you help your students explore the story of Romeo and Juliet, you're also introducing them to a set of strategies that will help them make sense of Shakespearean English. These new approaches will feel more manageable if they feel not-so-somewhat unfamiliar—so help students recognize the set of reading skills that they will be bringing with them to the Shakespeare unit. For example, their work with the language of Mark Twain and Arthur Conan Doyle (in the Tom &amp; Sherlock unit) has taught them a great deal about reading patiently and letting the text gradually make sense.</p>	<p>Since Shakespeare's plays and sonnets are a mainstay of many high school curricula, your students will most likely encounter his language over and over as they progress through school. The comfort and confidence they gain during this unit—their deepening facility with Shakespeare's diction, syntax, and dramatic form—will serve them well in these later reading experiences.</p> <p>Romeo's and Juliet's story is still popular today, and not only because of its engaging plot or the beauty of Shakespeare's language. The play also touches upon universal themes that students will continue to encounter in future readings, in movies, indeed in their own lives.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Part of Shakespeare's lasting legacy is his brilliant language. Send your students on an online scavenger hunt that challenges them to discover phrases coined by the Bard that still resonate today.

Shakespeare's repertoire of insults is rich, various, and often thrilling to students. You'll find a range of "insult generators" online (for example: <http://insult.dream40.org/>) that combine Shakespeare's actual language into new permutations—and help students see the rich playfulness of his use of words.

Your students viewed clips from two different film versions of *Romeo and Juliet*. Did you know that since 1908, dozens of films based on the play have been produced? You can invite your students to research different productions—and compare the different ways in which these productions realize the same play.

Remind your students that they can read the entire play in the Amplify Library.

**Vocabulary development**

Unlike with other units, vocabulary activities in *Romeo and Juliet* are embedded within the lessons. While reading Shakespeare is intellectually challenging it can also be fun. Shakespeare used—and sometimes invented—many strange and wonderful words still in use today.

**Recommendations for independent reading**

Turn your students' attention to the extensive list of recommended texts in the Independent Reader's Guide. The first section, A Pair of Star-Cross'd Lovers, lists literary works that were influenced by *Romeo and Juliet*. Point those students who want to read more of Shakespeare's timeless masterpieces to the Shakespeare and Co. section. The Poem's the Thing lists novels written in verse. The guide also lists several multimedia resources.

**Romeo & Juliet | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , by William Shakespeare	Clips from Baz Luhrmann's 1996 <i>Romeo + Juliet</i> and Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>  Illustrations
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A story in a sonnet</li> <li>• Power of hate and power of love</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors/directors interpret text</li> <li>• Illustrating scenes</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	<p>doth; hath; art; thou; thee; hast; lest; shalt; wretched; hapless; elated; fortunate; courteous; civil; impolite; brash; insolent; dishonorable;</p> <p>infamous; lauded; revered; vile; repugnant; exemplary; irreproachable; gallant; reckless; craven; timorous</p>	No additional domain-specific vocabulary words
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1;4;7</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. W.7.1;a,b,c,d;2;4;5</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. SL.7.1b,c,d</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. L.7.1;4;5</p>	<p>2.0</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>4.3</p>
<b>Skills</b>	Students paraphrase lines from Shakespeare and explain their paraphrases. They analyze the meaning and uses of metaphor and trace extended metaphors throughout a passage. They memorize and perform lines from Shakespeare, using intonation and gestures that convey the meaning of the words.	<p>Students create, perform, and participate in the visual arts and apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.</p> <p>Students take an active part in a small-group discussion about the artistic value of specific works of art, taking into account a wide range of the viewpoints of their peers.</p>

## Grade 7

# The Gold Rush Collection

### Building knowledge overview

Over the course of this unit, students explore different aspects of the Gold Rush through the disciplines of literature and history.

Students learn about the “gold fever” that spread across California during the 1800s through a wide range of primary and secondary sources, which include excerpts from a memoir by Mark Twain, Walt Whitman’s poetry, contemporary letters, photographs, paintings, recipes, and song lyrics.

The unit culminates in an independent research project through which students use these materials to piece together their own understanding of the complex story of the California Gold Rush.

### Source documents include selections from:

- “California Culinary Experiences,” *The Overland Monthly* by Prentice Mulford
- “Oh My Darling Clementine” by Percy Montrose
- *Sights in the Gold Region, and Scenes by the Way* by Theodore T. Johnson
- “The Magic Equation,” from *California: The Great Exception* by Carey McWilliams
- “Good Haul of Diggers,” from *Digger: The Tragic Fate of the California Indians from the Missions to the Gold Rush* by Jerry Stanley
- *Roughing It* by Mark Twain
- “Letter the Tenth: Amateur Mining—Hairbreadth ‘Scapes, &c.,” from *The Shirley Letters from California Mines in 1851–1852*, by Dame Shirley
- “Pioneers! O Pioneers!” from *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman

### Photos and Artwork:

- *Head of Auburn Ravine*, Unknown Artist (1852)
- *Gold Mining at Sutter’s Mill, Coloma, California*, Unknown Artist (19th century)
- *James Marshall at Sutter’s Mill, Coloma, CA in 1848*, Unknown Artist
- *The Gold Seeker*, (Between 1849 and 1852)
- *The Last War-Whoop* by A. F. Tait (1856)
- *California Gold Diggers. Mining Operations on the Western Shore of the Sacramento River*, (1849-1852)
- *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, W.J. Morgan & Co. (Lithographer)(19th century)

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Familiarize yourself with the rich and diverse texts in this unit. There are many historical and political issues to explore, and a wide range of background knowledge on which your students can build. You might, for example, discuss coal mining, a topic your students originally encountered in the Reading the Novel unit. Or you might ask your students what they already know about American pioneers: the challenges faced by the Western settlers; the devastation inflicted upon Native Americans during America's westward expansion...</p> <p>A general discussion about gold as a mineral and as a commodity might also be interesting. What do your students know about gold—what it is, what we use it for (currency? electronics? art?), how we mine for it. You might focus on the question of why we consider gold to be so valuable. As you lead them down some of these paths, students will see how readily the topic of gold opens up into some fascinating areas of inquiry.</p> <p>This unit is not the first research your students have done. Spend a few minutes discussing the research skills that they have already developed. What do they remember about choosing research sources? About developing research questions?</p>	<p>In California, most students learn about the Gold Rush in the fourth grade—so you can assume that your students will come to this unit with prior knowledge. You can also count on students soon heading into studies of American history that will build on what they will learn in this unit.</p> <p>Nonetheless, students may well be surprised by what they learn about the Gold Rush in this unit. For example, most of your students are probably unaware of the extraordinary poverty in which most of the prospectors lived.</p>



**Suggestions for enrichment**

The interdisciplinary map below makes clear the power of collaborations between ELA and social studies teachers.

Is there an economist on your faculty? He or she may assist students who wish to continue to learn about the economic history of gold. Students might also consider learning more about how today's financial markets operate and what role gold plays in the commodities market.

A science teacher can guide students who want to learn more about gold. What is this element and what makes it special? How does its chemical structure explain its remarkable properties—for example, its extraordinary conductivity.

In the Amplify Library, students will find Alison Hart's *Murphy, Gold Rush Dog*. A historical novel written from a dog's-eye view, Hart's story follows the adventures of Sally and her mother in Alaska at the turn of the century.

**Vocabulary development**

This is a research unit. Students will conduct an independent search on the Internet and will select the texts they will use. This is an excellent opportunity for students to find new vocabulary words. Encourage each of them to come up with five words and share them with the rest of the class.

**Gold Rush Collection | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “California Culinary Experiences,” from <i>The Overland Monthly</i> by Prentice Mulford</li> <li>• “Oh My Darling Clementine” by Percy Montrose</li> <li>• <i>Sights in the Gold Region, and Scenes by the Way</i> by Theodore T. Johnson</li> <li>• “The Magic Equation,” from <i>California: The Great Exception</i> by Carey McWilliams</li> <li>• “Good Haul of Diggers,” from <i>Digger: The Tragic Fate of the California Indians from the Missions to the Gold Rush</i> by Jerry Stanley</li> <li>• <i>Roughing It</i> by Mark Twain</li> <li>• “Letter the Tenth: Amateur Mining—Hairbreadth ‘Scapes, &amp;c.,” from <i>The Shirley Letters from California Mines in 1851–1852</i> by Dame Shirley</li> <li>• “Pioneers! O Pioneers!” from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> by Walt Whitman</li> <li>• <i>Head of Auburn Ravine</i>, Unknown Artist (1852)</li> <li>• <i>Gold Mining at Sutter’s Mill, Coloma, California</i>, Unknown Artist (19th century)</li> <li>• <i>James Marshall at Sutter’s Mill, Coloma, CA in 1848</i>, Unknown Artist</li> <li>• <i>The Gold Seeker</i>, (Between 1849 and 1852)</li> <li>• <i>The Last War-Whoop</i> by A. F. Tait (1856)</li> <li>• <i>California Gold Diggers. Mining Operations on the Western Shore of the Sacramento River</i>, (1849-1852)</li> <li>• <i>Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way</i>, W.J. Morgan &amp; Co. (Lithographer)(19th century)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “California Culinary Experiences,” from <i>The Overland Monthly</i> by Prentice Mulford</li> <li>• <i>Sights in the Gold Region, and Scenes by the Way</i> by Theodore T. Johnson</li> <li>• “The Magic Equation,” from <i>California: The Great Exception</i> by Carey McWilliams</li> <li>• “Good Haul of Diggers,” from <i>Digger: The Tragic Fate of the California Indians from the Missions to the Gold Rush</i> by Jerry Stanley</li> <li>• <i>Roughing It</i> by Mark Twain</li> <li>• “Letter the Tenth: Amateur Mining—Hairbreadth ‘Scapes, &amp;c.,” from <i>The Shirley Letters from California Mines in 1851–1852</i> by Dame Shirley</li> </ul>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The complex story of the Gold Rush</li> <li>• Documenting the Gold Rush</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quest for gold and injustice</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	amateur; eras; precipitated; whim; oeuvre; domain; rotundity; culinary; deemed; insertion; feat; leaden; censured; floundered; preceding; epoch; satiety; diabolical; ingenuity; manipulation; attire; remote; overshadowing; omnivorous; fruitful; behold; disputed; confidence; coaxing; lavish; procuring; prevalent; idyllic; peer-reviewed; rigorous; satirical; pious; morose; fibrous; hailing; robust; moderation; caveat; penultimate; enclose; procured; duly; assure; apropos; gravely; erroneous; auriferous	migration; natural; disseminated; prospecting; stratifications; refinement; ornamental; regulation; destructive; protocol; repatriation; migratory;
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.1 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1; 2;3;4;5;7;8;9;10 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1;4;5;6 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1;4	Grades 6-8 CA Skills: Research, Evidence, and Point of View. 1;2;3;4;5  CA content standard 8.8
<b>Skills</b>	Students conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. They learn how to tell the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, determine if a source is reliable, and understand the ethical uses of information. They produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience and they develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research. They distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories and they distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.  Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them and they detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspectives). Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the West from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.

## Grade 8

## World War II &amp; Narrative

**Building knowledge overview**

Like the other beginning-of-the-year units, World War II and Narrative transitions students from writing to reading. Students start by writing about their own experience, and soon alternate these narratives with more analytical writing, as they also begin to take on the challenges of reading a complex text. In each of these activities—narrative writing, analytic writing, and close reading—students are learning the core skill of focus. Whether close reading or “close writing,” students learn to focus in on a single moment of their experience—or a single passage from the text—and stick with it: to describe what they see in that detail and what they think about it. As they explore Roald Dahl’s rich memoir of his time as a young man in colonial Africa and as a pilot in World War II, students learn the power of close attention.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>In the sixth grade, students read the first installment in Roald Dahl’s multi-part memoir, <i>Boy: Tales of Childhood</i>. This background gives them an understanding of the author’s childhood, as well as practice reading memoirs analytically. You may want to start this unit by asking students what they remember about <i>Boy</i>—as well as what they may know about Dahl’s other books (e.g., <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i>, <i>James and the Giant Peach</i>).</p> <p><i>Going Solo</i> is the sequel to <i>Boy</i>, and about a third of the way into the story, Dahl starts to describe his time serving as a pilot in Britain’s Royal Air Force during WWII. Your eighth-graders may know a good deal about the war, but are likely unaware of how it played out in areas under British control, such as the part of East Africa that Dahl describes. Take the opportunity to deepen students’ understanding of the political situation (“Why is Dahl trying to stop the convoy of Germans from leaving from Dar es Salaam when war is declared?”) and the geography against which it plays out (“To where are the Germans trying to escape to? Why there?”)—the memoir easily opens up avenues into different kinds of background knowledge.</p>	<p>If you take a quick look at the sequence of the units in the eighth grade, you’ll see that many of the literary texts that students read are personal narratives. For example, in the Biography &amp; Literature unit, students read excerpts from Benjamin Franklin’s autobiography, in the Liberty &amp; Equality unit, students read passages from Frederick Douglass’s personal narrative, and in <i>Frida &amp; Diego</i>, students analyze excerpts from the couple’s correspondence.</p> <p>Through these very personal perspectives, students learn a great deal about the social and historical contexts that surround them.</p> <p>As they deepen their sense of what it was like for these particular people to live in the middle of these times and places, students make these distant events feel less long ago and far away.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

*Going Solo* is Roald Dahl's memoir about his thrilling travels in Africa and his harrowing experiences in World War II. Why did England consider North Africa strategically important for the war? A social studies teacher can help students develop a deeper historical understanding of the events that Dahl describes—and might prove an excellent inter-disciplinary collaborator.

There is a long list of adult authors who write about their youth in books that thrill young readers—Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* series, and Tobias Wolff's *This Boy's Life* are just a few examples. Some of these books are more heavily historical, while others lean more toward coming-of age issues; all of them have a great deal to teach young readers.

**Vocabulary development**

The chart below lists a number of domain-specific words that exemplify some of this unit's interdisciplinary potential. Consider, for example, some of the words on the social studies list: reconnaissance; regalia; neutral; deploy; apparatus; unscathed; evacuated; squadron and incendiaries. Encourage students to use these words in their proper context. For example, do your students know of someone “stationed” overseas? What do they know about countries that remained “neutral” during a war?

**Recommendation for independent reading**

The Independent Reader's Guide: World War II & Narrative provides a number of avenues for further exploration.

In the section More About Dahl, you'll find books that feature characters who, like the young Dahl, are “going solo”; for example, *James and the Giant Peach* (1961) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964).

The next three sections in the guide list books about British colonialism, sea adventures, and Africa. In the Air lists books by and about pilots. The following section suggests reading poetry by pilots who used verse to convey their experience of war.

**World War II & Narrative | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<i>Going Solo</i> , by Roald Dahl	<i>Going Solo</i> , by Roald Dahl (The social studies teacher may choose to include texts documenting events in WWII)
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strength of details</li> <li>Recording memories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring bravery</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	breed; dialects; jargon; conventional; sinewy; eccentricities; pantomime; genuine; apparition; eternal; clambering; stocky; canter; prancing; scampering; colossal; contempt; sterilized; reptilian; employ; vapid; species; ostentatiously; revolving; ruses; bearing; extended; equivalents; superbly; imminent; sensible; incessantly; rasping; dewlap; mesmerized; panting; trance; intricate; literally; cascade; downcast; craggy; prophecies; virtually; cope; extricate; escapade; companion; primitive; inefficient; tolerated; billowed; spellbound; penultimate; morale; dicey; astronomical; glamorized; doleful; convey; despicable; feasible; flagrant	reconnaissance; regalia; stationed; defensive; neutral; solitary; deploy; necessity; apparatus; unscathed; swarming; enigmatic; despondent; evacuated; cluster; squadron; incendiaries
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RI.8.1;2;3;5;6 CA CCSS.ELA- Literacy.8.8.1; 2;3;5 CA CCSS.ELA- Literacy.SL.8.1 CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1;4a CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. CCRA.L. 4;5	CA Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills (6-8)  Chronological and Spatial Thinking: 1  Research, Evidence, and Point of View: 2
<b>Skills</b>	Students write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. They analyze in details the structure of specific paragraphs in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept. Students 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.	Students explain how major events are related to one another in time. They distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.

## Grade 8

# Biography & Literature

### Building knowledge overview

This unit provides a uniquely engaging path into the remarkable life of Benjamin Franklin. Consider the content-rich texts from which the unit's readings are selected:

- Walter Isaacson's *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*
- Franklin's *Autobiography*
- Franklin's various writings and correspondence,
- The Declaration of Independence

In addition, the unit incorporates several of Franklin's scientific experiments, offering students the chance to encounter directly a central aspect of Franklin's work.

### Building knowledge

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>The unit opens by asking students to draw upon their background knowledge: What do you know about Benjamin Franklin? If your students have already learned about the Revolutionary War—and the authors of the Declaration of Independence—you may want to expand the prompt to explore a wider range of knowledge about Franklin's background in, for example, science and politics.</p> <p>As you draw connections to what students have learned previously, you may want to revisit Character &amp; Conflict, the unit in which students encountered Langston Hughes's idea of "dreams deferred." Within this framework, students encounter the ideals of the Founding Fathers that "all men are created equal" as one moment in a journey that has stretched from America's very beginnings through its long history with slavery and its long struggle for civil rights.</p>	<p>Looking forward, we see how Biography &amp; Literature lays a strong foundation for the next unit, Equality &amp; Liberty, which includes excerpts from the works of Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and Harriet Ann Jacobs. The careful sequencing of the units—what E.D. Hirsch calls their "intellectual structure"—provides a logical framework that students can navigate successfully.</p> <p>When students read and analyze the works of Isaacson and Franklin they will continue to build upon the skills they learned in an earlier unit. But they also lay strong foundation for the future.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Students begin the unit by looking at a picture of Benjamin Franklin, and sharing what they already know about this founding father.

You may wish to expand the range of stimuli to which students are responding by providing additional portrayals of Franklin, such as selections from among the many cartoons describing Franklin's scientific work. Challenge your students to find other depictions of this remarkable man—especially those that show off the wide range of roles he played as a writer, a diplomat, a scientist, and a statesman. If students do not recognize Franklin's picture on the \$100 bill, you might show them that as well—and perhaps challenge more advanced students to conduct further research on the process that determines who appears on our currency.

A particularly engaging way to start the unit is by leading students into a scientific experiment that resonates with one of Franklin's. A hands-on experience of static electricity, for example, can give students a firsthand understanding of the questions that fascinated Franklin—and the approach he took to answering them.

You might extend this multi-disciplinary approach to Franklin by collaborating with other teachers. There are few figures who lend themselves more fully to interdisciplinary study than Franklin, who seems a perfect opportunity for teamwork among faculty drawn from ELA, social studies, science and perhaps even art. (See the interdisciplinary chart below for a list of the fields of study in which Franklin operated.)

**Vocabulary development**

If you choose an interdisciplinary approach to teaching this unit, the interdisciplinary map lists vocabulary words in their specific domains. Consider posing a challenge to your students. In pairs or groups ask students categorize the vocabulary words and compose domain specific sentences that justify their choices. Students will remember words that are used in context.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

Turn your students' attention to Independent Reader's Guide: The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Franklin: An American Life by Walter Isaacson. There are numerous sections in the guide: All about Benjamin Franklin lists informational texts. More informational texts are listed in Non-fiction about the American Revolution. Works of fiction appear in the Historical Fiction about the American Revolution section of the guide. More texts are listed in the next three sections, More about Colonial Life, Poetry, and Science.

The final section, Media, lists online resources about Ben Franklin and the American Revolution.

Primary sources seekers can turn to a second selection of texts, Founding Documents where they will find crucial pages from American history were written during key events.



**Biography and Literature: Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Science	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p><b>Isaacson:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing Benjamin Franklin,</li> <li>The Founding Father Who Winks at Us;</li> <li>Franklin's Conversational Style;</li> <li>Franklin Arrives in France;</li> <li>Franklin Gets in Character;</li> <li>Franklin's Autobiography</li> </ul> <p><b>Franklin:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Silence Dogood's First Letter to the New-England Courant;</li> <li>Silence Dogood's Second Letter to the <i>New-England Courant</i>;</li> <li>Introduction to His Autobiography</li> <li>Franklin on the Junto;</li> <li>Franklin on the Library;</li> <li>Dranklin on Self-Discipline;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Isaacson:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin the Scientist;</li> <li>Franklin and Lightening</li> </ul> <p><b>Franklin:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin on Static Electricity, May 25, 1747</li> <li>Ben Franklin: Electricity Experiments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Isaacson:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin Arrives in France;</li> <li>Franklin Gets in Character;</li> <li>Franklin's Desire for Independence,</li> <li>Jefferson's Role in The Declaration of Independence</li> <li>Franklin's Revision of The Declaration of Independence</li> <li>The Declaration of Independence</li> </ul>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background</li> <li>Silence Dogood</li> <li>Franklin's writing style</li> <li>Growing fame</li> <li>Jefferson's/Franklin's writing styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin the scientist, background (consider the scientific revolution as context)</li> <li>Franklin the scientist, lightening/electricity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin the diplomat</li> <li>Franklin the Founding Father</li> <li>The Declaration of Independence</li> <li>Jefferson/Franklin in context of Enlightenment/influences</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	theories; schemes; pragmatism; proposed; rhetoric; assumed; alter ego; apprentice; labor; arbitrary; pseudonym; prudish; rural; indulge; catalog; manuscript	electric charge; jolt; neologism; battery; charged; neutral; condense; conductor; conservation of charge; insulated; grounded; momentum; insulated	diplomat; strategist; civic; idealism; federal; Enlightenment; enlightened; irrational; tribune of liberty; feudal; elite; subjugating; drafting; alterations; determinism

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Science	Social Studies
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. CCRA.L.4;5</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RI.8.1;2;3;4;5;6; 8</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RL.8.1;3;4;5;6</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA. SL.8..1;1b;c;d</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1;1c;2;5</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1;4a;5</p>	MS-PS2-1;2;3;5	<p>8.1.2</p> <p>8.2.3</p>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Reading informational texts closely.</p> <p>Summarizing, identifying details and using evidence in analysis.</p> <p>Building vocabulary and integrating new words into writing.</p>	<p>Asking questions and defining problems.</p> <p>Planning carrying out investigation.</p> <p>Building vocabulary and integrating new words into writing.</p>	<p>Framing questions that can be answered by historical study and research.</p> <p>Analyzing primary sources.</p> <p>Building vocabulary and integrating new words into writing.</p>

## Grade 8

## Liberty &amp; Equality

**Building knowledge overview**

In the course of this unit, students read selections from the following texts:

- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass
- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Ann Jacobs
- *The Boys' War: Confederate and Union Soldiers Talk About the Civil War* by Jim Murphy
- The Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln

Students also watch Chadwick Boseman (who played Jackie Robinson in *42*) reading excerpts from Douglass's autobiography, and listen to recordings of excerpts from other texts in the unit.

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>In fifth grade, students learned about the Declaration of Independence, so you may want to start the unit by reviewing the Declaration of Independence with them—and explore how this document captures our nation's founding ideals about equality and slavery.</p> <p>While all of the texts in this unit are deeply grounded in the historical and social context of the Civil War, you and your class will be approaching them from an ELA perspective. A social studies teacher might focus on the significance of the events described in these texts, using questions like these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which events set the context for The Gettysburg Address?</li> <li>• Which followed from it?</li> </ul> <p>In this unit, students will draw on a different set of comprehension skills to tackle different kinds of questions, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does Lincoln's use of specific words and phrases shape the overall meaning of the text?</li> <li>• How do the changes that Lincoln made from one draft of The Gettysburg Address to the next change the impact it makes on his audience?</li> </ul>	<p>The Liberty &amp; Equality unit complements the sequence of topics that California students move through as they progress from American history (in the fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades) into the principles of American democracy and economics (in the twelfth). When students explore the firsthand accounts of those who experienced these events, they gain a deeper understanding of the Civil War's human dimension.</p> <p>This unit, as indicated below, is a natural fit for a multi-disciplinary approach. Consider the important skills that students learn in it and can rely upon in the future. For example, students often encounter political speeches as texts they need to memorize, nothing more. In this unit, however, students learn how the Gettysburg Address works—how Lincoln used various rhetorical devices to shape his speech's impact. The understanding of rhetoric that students develop from their study of The Gettysburg Address will help them make sense of other examples of powerful public oratory, such as the speeches of Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

Consider this research topic: How might Frederick Douglass's autobiography have shaped how Americans viewed slavery? How many Americans read Douglass's Narrative when it was written? Did President Lincoln read it? How significant was Douglass's work to the Abolitionist movement? These and many other questions can guide students who want to learn about the role that literary texts play in shaping history.

Encourage your students to read Booker T. Washington's autobiography, *Up From Slavery*. Like Douglass, Washington was born a slave, and, like Douglass, he played an influential role in politics. After the Civil War, Washington became one of the leading educators in the African-American community. A comparison between these two men's lives might interest students who like to learn about history through the lives of men and women whose stories weave through it.

Do your students know about Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Infantry Regiment? The Fifty-fourth was one of the first African-American regiments in the Civil War, and its soldiers served with distinction and honor. If students decide to research this topic further, make sure to point them toward the filmic account of this event, *Glory*.

**Vocabulary development**

Because the texts in this unit lean heavily toward historical events, students might have fun shifting the words they find to other contexts. How, for example, might they use the word "profitable" in their own lives? How would they use the term "characterized" to discuss literature?

**Recommendation for independent reading**

*The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* was an immediate sensation when it was first published in 1845. Since then, many narratives detailing the horrors of slavery have been published. The slave narratives section provides an extensive list of these books. You'll also find fictional accounts of the period in the Novels about slavery section—the most famous of which is *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Douglass's autobiography emphasizes the crucial role that education played in his life. Students who find Douglass's life story intriguing can turn to the Independent Reader's Guide: Liberty & Equality (and see Appendix).

**Liberty & Equality | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p><i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave</i> by Frederick Douglass</p> <p><i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> by Harriet Ann Jacobs</p> <p>Excerpts from <i>The Boys' War: Confederate and Union Soldiers Talk About the Civil War</i> by Jim Murphy</p> <p>The Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln</p>	<p><i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave</i> by Frederick Douglass</p> <p><i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> by Harriet Ann Jacobs</p> <p>Excerpts from <i>The Boys' War: Confederate and Union Soldiers Talk About the Civil War</i> by Jim Murphy</p> <p>The Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln</p>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strength of Frederick Douglass's rhetoric</li> <li>• The power of personal narratives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A historical view of evolving ideas: from Jefferson to Douglas to Lincoln</li> </ul>
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	<p>extent; odiousness; profitable; humane; ascertain; infernal; amid; abundance; evinced; equivalent; privation; consumed; characterized; conspired; reverberate; jargon; ineffable; dehumanizing; obdurate; defiled; noble; unpardonable; supposition; unjust; sundered; suppress; imbibe; mutually; severity; eminent; indispensable; capacity; ambitious; persevering; artful; availed; immutable; debasing; homage; servile; insensible to reproving; sparingly; inconsistent; former; latter; consummate; mangled; subversion; perpetrator; galling; maxim; egotistical; hazard; incur; abhorrence; atrocious; odium; subjected; compliance with divest; incompatible; orator; emancipate; divest; vindication of; sustain; animate; inanimate; conception; conviction; disposition; aggravated; subsist; legitimate; lax; conspicuous; administrate; aggregate; cite; coincide</p>	<p>odiousness; profitable; humane; infernal; abundance; evinced; equivalent; privation; consumed; conspired; reverberate; jargon; dehumanizing; defiled; noble; unpardonable; unjust; sundered; suppress; eminent; indispensable; ambitious; availed; immutable; debasing; homage; servile; insensible to reproving; consummate; mangled; subversion; perpetrator; galling abhorrence; atrocious; odium; subjected; compliance with divest; incompatible; orator; emancipate; divest; vindication of; sustain; conception; conviction; disposition; aggravated; legitimate; administrate; aggregate</p>
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.1;2;3;5;6;7</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1;2;b</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1;2;6</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1;4a</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4;5</p>	<p>8.1.2</p> <p>8.9</p> <p>8.10.4</p>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies
<b>Skills</b>	Students trace the development and interplay of two ideas in a non-fiction text. They determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. They develop and support claims with arguments that utilize text from both literary, non-fiction, and secondary sources.	Students analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights..."). They analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and realize the ideals of The Declaration of Independence. They discuss Abraham Lincoln's presidency and his significant writings and speeches and their relationship to the Declaration of Independence, such as his "House Divided" Speech (1858), The Gettysburg Address (1863), Emancipation Proclamation (1863), and the inaugural addresses (1861 and 1865).

## Grade 8

## Science &amp; Science Fiction

**Building knowledge overview**

This unit starts two trailblazing women who charted new paths in literature and computer science: Mary Shelley and Ada Lovelace. In *Frankenstein*—a seminal work of science fiction and a timeless literary classic—Shelley investigates the ethical questions raised by scientific exploration and probes the limits of prejudice and compassion. In the notes she wrote about Charles Babbage’s analytical engine, Lovelace envisioned the modern computer 100 years before its invention. Both Shelley and Lovelace imagined new worlds shaped by technological innovation—and, in the process, provoked us to confront fundamental questions about the connections between human beings, monsters, and machines.

In the first sub-unit, students read Gris Grimly’s spectacular *Frankenstein*, a graphic novel that creates a parallel, visual dimension to Mary Shelley’s 1818 edition. Students then write an essay that begins by arguing both sides of a question: whether Frankenstein’s creature should ultimately be considered human. In the Poetical Science sub-unit, students read two poems, a speech, and excerpts from the first chapter of Walter Isaacson’s *The Innovators* to compare and contrast the ways in which William Wordsworth, Lord Byron, and Ada Lovelace viewed our relationship to technology.

**The unit’s readings include:**

- *Gris Grimly’s Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and Gris Grimly
- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- Introduction to *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *History of a Six Weeks’ Tour Through a Part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland: With Letters Descriptive of a Sail Round the Lake of Geneva, and of the Glaciers of Chamounix* by Mary Shelley
- Selections from *The Innovators: How a Group of Hackers, Geniuses, and Geeks Created the Digital Revolution* by Walter Isaacson
- “Sketch of the Analytical Engine Invented by Charles Babbage” by L.F. Menabrea, translated with notes by Ada, Countess of Lovelace
- “Debate on the Frame-Work Bill, in the House of Lords, February 27, 1812” by Lord Byron
- “The Tables Turned” by William Wordsworth
- “All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace” by Richard Brautigan

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Frankenstein...the name conjures up images of a green-skinned monster and sends chills shivering down the spine. But what do your students really know about this fictional character? Many think Frankenstein is the name of the “creature” in Mary Shelley’s novel. Finding out what your students know or think they know about the scientist and his creation can be instructive. Resist the temptation to clarify the facts in the novel before students read Shelley’s masterpiece. Leaving questions unanswered will motivate students to look for the correct answers as they read.</p> <p>The interdisciplinary map below reminds us that students can draw upon their knowledge from a wide range of subjects. When they read <i>Frankenstein</i>, some students may draw upon their scientific knowledge—perhaps, even, what they’ve learned about recent developments in cloning. Reading about the remarkable work of Ada Lovelace may challenge what they think they know about computers—and the men who invented them!</p> <p>In the Poetical Science sub-unit, students read several texts that have similar themes—which are not immediately obvious. To bring these connections to the surface, students will read the texts closely (independently and in groups) and debate the authors’ different points of view.</p>	<p>Although Frankenstein’s “creature” may be the part of the novel that has made the greatest impact on pop culture, the ideas that weave through Shelley’s work may well end up stirring your students more deeply. The inner struggles of Shelley’s protagonist reveal the inherent conflicts in man’s relentless quest for knowledge. As they confront the big ideas raised by Shelley’s work, students experience the power of literature to get us to confront ideas that challenge us to reconsider those beliefs we take for granted.</p> <p>This unit offers students excellent practice in analyzing how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. In the Poetical Science sub-unit, students explore various perspectives on our human relationship with technology; for example, students connect Wordsworth’s poem to a passage from <i>Frankenstein</i>.</p>



**Suggestions for enrichment**

Since its publication in 1818, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* has been a source of inspiration for movies, poems, painting, and books. The Independent Reader's Guide: Science & Science Fiction can provide a good starting point for a research project in which students trace out—and compare—the range of ways in which Shelley's novel has been “translated” into these different forms.

The full title of Mary Shelley's novel is, *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*. Students who enjoy the challenge of philosophical debates can engage in this series of questions: Who was Prometheus? How does the sub-title of Shelley's novel play off its main title? What do Victor Frankenstein and Prometheus have in common? Or is it the “creature” who is being compared to Prometheus? (Students read about Prometheus in The Greeks unit).

**Vocabulary development**

The vocabulary list in this unit ranges across fiction and non-fiction—from *Frankenstein*, a 19th-century novel, to Walter Isaacson's 21st-century portrayal of Ada Lovelace. Challenge students to select 19th-century words that we no longer use, and perhaps find some words in Isaacson's text that they consider archaic.

**Recommendation for independent reading**

The first section of the reader's guide, *Adaptations of Shelley's Frankenstein*, lists several graphic novels that have adapted the novel. The next section lists Frankenstein spin-offs. The mad scientists and experiments gone bad section expands on the theme of potential dangers in scientific explorations.

## Science &amp; Science Fiction | Interdisciplinary overview

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Science	Social Studies	Art
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<p><i>Gris Grimly's Frankenstein</i> by Mary Shelley and Gris Grimly</p> <p><i>Frankenstein</i> by Mary Shelley</p> <p>Introduction to <i>Frankenstein</i> by Mary Shelley</p> <p>"The Tables Turned" by William Wordsworth</p> <p>"All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" by Richard Brautigan</p>	<p><i>The Innovators: How a Group of Hackers, Geniuses, and Geeks Created the Digital Revolution</i> (Chapter 1, "Ada, Countess of Lovelace") by Walter Isaacson</p> <p>"Sketch of the Analytical Engine Invented by Charles Babbage" by L.F. Menabrea, translated with notes by Ada, Countess of Lovelace</p>	<p><i>Through a Part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland: With Letters Descriptive of a Sail Round the Lake of Geneva, and of the Glaciers of Chamouni</i> by Mary Shelley</p> <p>"Debate on the Framework Bill, in the House of Lords, February 27, 1812" by Lord Byron</p>	<p><i>Gris Grimly's Frankenstein</i> by Mary Shelley and Gris Grimly</p>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	Frankenstein's moral struggle	The potential dilemmas of scientific progress	Advantages and disadvantages of the Industrial Revolution	Artistic interpretation of the novel
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	oblivion; exertion; utility; fortitude; repellent; onslaughts; avidity; eloquence; irrevocably; arduous; lustrous; inarticulate; receding; elapsed; enormity; console; depraved; infamy; prolonged; ignominy; sublime; subdued; scourge; distinguish; tranquil; gratify; winding; excluded; verge; excursion; insurmountable; inquisitive; unremitting; propagated; calamity; deranged; vernal; omnipotence; stigma; populace; penultimate; abnormal; melodramatic; detonation; romantic; empirical; ethical; finite	paroxysms; indefatigable; inanimate; psychological; sanity; empirical; omnipotence	oblivion; exertion; utility; fortitude; avidity; eloquence; irrevocably; arduous; lustrous; receding; elapsed; enormity; console; depraved; sublime; subdued; scourge; distinguish; gratify; winding; excluded; verge; excursion; inquisitive; unremitting; propagated; calamity; deranged; vernal; abnormal; melodramatic; romantic	Visual art vocabulary

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Science	Social Studies	Art
<b>Standards</b>	<p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RL.8.</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.RL.8</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.W.8.</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.SL.8.</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.L.8.1;4a</p> <p>CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.CCRA.L.4,5</p>	MS-LS4-5	7.10	4.0 4.2
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Students develop and refine an arguable claim that compares, contrasts, or otherwise juxtaposes at least two separate moments in a text. They unpack the connotations of diction and imagery and analyze their implications for character and plot development. They develop and refine an evidence-based definition of an abstract concept.</p>	<p>Students apply an understanding that in artificial selection, humans have the capacity to influence certain characteristics of organisms by selective breeding. One can choose desired parental traits determined by genes, which are then passed on to offspring.</p>	<p>Students analyze the historical developments of the Scientific Revolution and its lasting effect on religious, political, and cultural institutions.</p>	<p>Students responding to, analyzing, and making judgments about works in the visual arts</p> <p>Students analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art, including their own, according to the elements of art, the principles of design, and aesthetic qualities.</p> <p>Students develop a theory about the artist's intent in a series of works of art, using reasoned statements to support personal opinions.</p>

## Grade 8

## Frida &amp; Diego Collection

**Building knowledge overview**

Over the course of this unit, students explore many different aspects of the work of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera through disciplines ranging from history, to literature, to biology, to fine art.

Working across media, students explore poems and passages from novels; paintings and photographs; and newsreels, letters, and scientific papers.

**Source documents include:****Informational texts**

- Excerpt: “Rockefellers Ban Lenin in RCA Mural and Dismiss Rivera” from *The New York Times*
- Excerpt: “Statement by Frida Kahlo” from *My Art, My Life: An Autobiography* by Diego Rivera
- Excerpt: “Frida Becomes My Wife” from *My Art, My Life: An Autobiography* by Diego Rivera
- “Detroit Industry: The Murals of Diego Rivera” from NPR.org
- “My Diego,” by Frida Kahlo
- “Letter to Ella and Bertram Wolfe” from *The Letters of Frida Kahlo: Cartas Apasionadas* by Frida Kahlo
- Excerpt: “Life With Frida” from *Frida’s Fiestas: Recipes and Reminiscences of Life with Frida Kahlo* by Guadalupe Rivera and Marie-Pierre Colle
- Excerpt: “Frida Kahlo” from the Smithsonian

**Literary texts**

- “Sonnet 130” by William Shakespeare

**Other media**

- The unit’s content includes photographs, paintings, and murals of and by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.

## Building knowledge

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Have your students ever heard of Frida Kahlo or Diego Rivera? Project some of their paintings and ask your students for their first impressions. Or print out copies, and ask students to write about one of the paintings that grabs their attention.</p> <p>In earlier ELA units such as Red Scarf Girl &amp; Narrative (seventh grade), students consider the way that art can function as propaganda. Ask students to consider other imagery—such as magazine advertising—that also aims to change what people believe and how they act.</p> <p>Your eighth graders have likely done various forms of research—and they probably encountered obstacles along with their successes. What were some of the challenges they encountered while conducting research? How did they figure out their topic, or the right questions to ask? How difficult was it to write an essay using the information they gathered? Discussing with your students the skills they'll need for research-based writing can build their self-understanding and confidence.</p>	<p>Over the course of this unit, students study the artistic works of Kahlo and Rivera and also do a great deal of reading. Students read passages drawn from the artists' own memoirs and letters, as well as essays written by art critics, journalists, and biographers. This approach to the study of a subject prepares them for the interdisciplinary quality of future academic work. By exploring the contexts that surround Kahlo and Rivera's paintings, students are more likely to look beyond other works of art they encounter. They may ask: what more can I learn about this painter? or this poet? When we encourage curiosity and teach research skills, we are instilling independent habits of learning.</p> <p>Kahlo and Rivera's art takes center stage in this unit, but their backgrounds—particularly Rivera's—play a significant role, too. As students explore his murals' depiction of the struggle of workers, they may well become interested in learning more about the Great Depression. Similarly, as students learn about the conflict between Rivera and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., they will be introduced to the kinds of political disputes they will learn more about later.</p> <p>Students will engage in research both in high school and in college. The Amplify ELA research units, included in the curriculum in each grade, prepare them for this task. Students learn how to identify reliable sources, take notes, paraphrase, avoid plagiarism, cite multiple sources, provide bibliographic information, and write well-structured essays grounded in evidence.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

This interdisciplinary unit explores the societal, historical, and political contexts surrounding the art of Kahlo and Rivera—and thus invites collaboration with teachers from social studies and art.

In the seventh grade unit, *Red Scarf Girl & Narrative*, students learned about how the Chinese government used art as a tool to influence behavior. Diego Rivera, as an individual artist, also aimed for his images to shape what his audience thought and how they acted. Are these both forms of propaganda? How does Rivera's work compare with that of other artists whose work is shaped by similarly "political" intents?

Sometimes we lose sight of the art when we focus on the larger contexts surrounding the artists. Some of your avid art students may want to dig more deeply into the art for its own sake—and focus their attention on the artistic talent of Kahlo or Rivera.

**Vocabulary development**

The interdisciplinary map below groups vocabulary words according to their specific domain. Whether you choose to follow this map or not, consider the significance of context in the study of vocabulary. Students are more likely to both comprehend and remember words when they are discussed in context.

**The Frida & Diego Collection | Interdisciplinary overview**

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Texts/ Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt: “Rockefellers Ban Lenin in RCA Mural and Dismiss Rivera” from <i>The New York Times</i>, May 10, 1933;</li> <li>• Excerpt: “Statement by Frida Kahlo” and Excerpt: “Frida Becomes My; Wife” from <i>My Art, My Life: An Autobiography</i> by Diego Rivera, 1960;</li> <li>• “Detroit Industry: The Murals of Diego Rivera” from NPR.org, April 22, 2009; “My Diego,” in <i>The Diary of Frida Kahlo</i>, by Frida Kahlo (Diary published: 1995);</li> <li>• “Letter to Ella and Bertram Wolfe,” in <i>The Letters of Frida Kahlo: Cartas Apasionadas</i>, by Frida Kahlo, October 18, 1934;</li> <li>• Excerpt: “Life With Frida” in <i>Frida’s Fiestas</i>, by Guadalupe Rivera and Marie-Pierre Colle, 1994;</li> <li>• Excerpt: “Frida Kahlo” from <i>Smithsonian</i>, 2002;</li> <li>• “Sonnet 130” by William Shakespeare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flower Day (Día de Flores) by Diego Rivera, 1925;</li> <li>• Photo of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo, 1939;</li> <li>• Photo of Diego Rivera sketching part of his Rockefeller Center mural, 1933;</li> <li>• Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird by Frida Kahlo, 1940;</li> <li>• Detroit Industry (South Wall);</li> <li>• Man, Controller of the Universe at the Palacio de Bellas Artes by Diego Rivera, 1934;</li> <li>• Dream of a Sunday Afternoon on the Alameda Central by Diego Rivera, 1947</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Rockefellers Ban Lenin in RCA Mural and Dismiss Rivera,” <i>The New York Times</i>, May 10, 1933;</li> <li>• “Detroit Industry: The Murals of Diego Rivera” by Don Gonyea (NPR), April 22, 2009</li> </ul>
<b>Topics and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between Frida and Diego</li> <li>• A study of Frida Kahlo’s writings</li> <li>• A study of Diego Rivera’s writings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study of Frida Kahlo’s artwork</li> <li>• Study of Diego Rivera’s artwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art and politics</li> <li>• Diego Rivera’s politics</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Art	Social Studies
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	consecutive; copious; exonerated; exposition; ludicrous; naïve; opposition; relinquish; rudimentary mentality; roguish; ruthless; capricious; cloying; ushered; flanked; merits; brilliancy; concise; conjecture	mural; sketch; scaffold; mezzanine; chiaroscuro; fuchsia; fresco; iconic; commissioned; aesthetic	plagiarism; derogatory; impartial; libel; Socrates; Ford; Rockefeller; Lenin; communism; controversy; emancipation; unification; Great Depression; imperative
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RI.8.1;3;7 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RL.8.1 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.W.8.1;2;5;9 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.SL.8.1;5 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy.L.8.1;2;9	1.1 1.3 3.1	8.11.2 8.12.4
<b>Skills</b>	Students evaluate credibility of sources; conduct research; recognize plagiarism; analyze descriptive language; conduct Socratic seminars, and gather evidence	Students use artistic terms when describing the intent and content of works of art. They analyze the use of the elements of art and the principles of design as they relate to meaning in video, film, or electronic media. They examine and describe or report on the role of a work of art created to make a social comment or protest social conditions.	Students identify the push-pull factors in the movement of former slaves to the cities in the North and to the West, and their differing experiences in those regions. They discuss entrepreneurs, industrialists, and bankers in politics, commerce, and industry (e.g., Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Leland Stanford).



## Grade 8

## The Space Race Collection

**Building knowledge overview**

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik into orbit. This small satellite circled the earth every 92 minutes at a speed of 18,000 miles per hour. The Soviets were ecstatic. The Americans were not. They were shocked and humiliated that the Soviets had beaten them into space. And thus began the Space Race, a fierce competition between the world's two superpowers that would continue for nearly 18 years.

In this unit, students explore different aspects of the Space Race through texts that range from firsthand accounts by astronauts (both American and Soviet), to scientific analyses of the lunar landscape, to newspaper articles, to presidential memoranda.

As students reach the end of the unit, they synthesize the information they've gathered in a culminating research assignment that's part essay, part audio-visual.

In addition to photos and videos, source documents include text selections from:

- *Rocket Boys: A Memoir* by Homer Hickam
- *A Ball, a Dog, and a Monkey: 1957—The Space Race Begins* by Michael D'Antonio
- "Memorandum for the Vice President" by John F. Kennedy
- "Moon Speech—Rice Stadium" by John F. Kennedy
- "A Seagull in Flight" from *Into That Silent Sea: Trailblazers of the Space Era, 1961–1965* by Francis French and Colin Burgess
- "First to Fly," *Into That Silent Sea: Trailblazers of the Space Era, 1961–1965* by Francis French and Colin Burgess, 2007
- "In the Event of Moon Disaster" by William Safire (July 18, 1969)
- *Moon dust: In Search of the Men Who Fell to Earth* by Andrew Smith, 2005
- "Buzz Aldrin on His Lunar Home, the Eagle" by Marc Myers
- *Two Sides of the Moon: Our Story of the Cold War Space Race* by David Scott and Alexei Leonov with Christine Toomey
- *Flight: My Life in Mission Control* by Christopher C. Kraft
- "What the Moon Rocks Tell Us" by Kenneth F. Weaver
- *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* by Carl Sagan
- "Life on Mars to Become a Reality in 2023, Dutch Firm Claims" by Karen McVeigh

**Building knowledge**

Prior knowledge	Future learning
<p>Your students might have fun if you start this unit (which is about the real science of outer space) by exploring their experience with science fiction. Ask students to share their favorite movies, novels, and comic books. Are they <i>Superman</i> fans? Do they have a favorite outer space movie? You could follow up by asking which of the things that happen in these movies (or comic books) could actually happen.</p> <p>What do your students know about the history of aviation? When did human beings first fly?</p> <p>These early aviators paved the way for the astronauts and cosmonauts that your students will learn about in this unit. Sharing what they know will nurture your students' sense of <i>not</i> coming to this topic cold.</p> <p>This is the last of several research units in the Amplify ELA curriculum. Your students can now draw upon the skills they've steadily developed: they can conduct Internet research, identify reliable sources of information, create an outline for their projects, and organize the data they find.</p>	<p>Students sometimes feel a disconnect between what they learn in school and the things that really interest them. The Space Race Collection unit offers a wonderful chance for you to help them bridge this gap: few topics are as interesting to young men and women than the stories of how we've taken on the challenge of taking to the skies.</p> <p>Encourage your students to visit the NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) website, where they will learn about past missions to space and future endeavors as well.</p>

**Suggestions for enrichment**

In 1895, Jules Verne, one of the fathers of science fiction, published *From Earth to the Moon*. Students who are fans of science fiction can research the history of the genre, and see how the meaning of “science fiction” has changed through time.

Private companies have recently joined national governments in the field of space exploration. Who are the people involved in this exciting new endeavor? What have they tried to accomplish—and have they succeeded? This ever-developing topic can be an interesting challenge for the technology buffs in your classroom.

Encourage students to continue reading Homer Hickam's memoir, *Rocket Boys: A Memoir*—and then suggest they watch the excellent film based on the book: *October Sky*. Ask students to identify the true facts in the movie and separate those from Hollywood's fiction.

**Vocabulary development**

This is the final unit in the eighth grade. Amplify ELA has designed its vocabulary curriculum to help students master 500 or more new words each school year—in order to dramatically improve their ability to comprehend complex texts.

## The Space Race Collection | Interdisciplinary overview

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science
<p><b>Texts/ Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Space Race: An Introduction” by the editors of <i>Lapham’s Quarterly</i> (2014)</li> <li>• <i>Rocket Boys: A Memoir</i> by Homer Hickam, 1998</li> <li>• <i>A Ball, a Dog, and a Monkey: 1957—The Space Race Begins</i> by Michael D’Antonio, 2007</li> <li>• “Memorandum for the Vice President” by John F. Kennedy (April 20, 1961)</li> <li>• “Moon Speech—Rice Stadium” by John F. Kennedy (September 12, 1962)</li> <li>• “A Seagull in Flight,” from <i>Into That Silent Sea: Trailblazers of the Space Era, 1961–1965</i> by Francis French and Colin Burgess, 2007</li> <li>• “First to Fly,” from <i>Into That Silent Sea: Trailblazers of the Space Era, 1961–1965</i> by Francis French and Colin Burgess, 2007</li> <li>• “In the Event of Moon Disaster” by William Safire (July 18, 1969)</li> <li>• <i>Moondust: In Search of the Men Who Fell to Earth</i> by Andrew Smith, 2005</li> <li>• “Buzz Aldrin on His Lunar Home, the Eagle” (<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>, May 16, 2013) by Marc Myers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Space Race: An Introduction” by the editors of <i>Lapham’s Quarterly</i> (2014)</li> <li>• “Memorandum for the Vice President” by John F. Kennedy (April 20, 1961)</li> <li>• “Moon Speech—Rice Stadium” by John F. Kennedy (September 12, 1962)</li> <li>• “In the Event of Moon Disaster” by William Safire (July 18, 1969)</li> <li>• <i>Two Sides of the Moon: Our Story of the Cold War Space Race</i> by David Scott and Alexei Leonov with Christine Toomey, 2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What the Moon Rocks Tell Us” (<i>National Geographic</i>, December 1969) by Kenneth F. Weaver (with photo)</li> <li>• <i>Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space</i> by Carl Sagan, 1994 (with photo)</li> <li>• “Life on Mars to Become a Reality in 2023, Dutch Firm Claims” (<i>The Guardian</i>, April 21, 2013) by Karen McVeigh</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Two Sides of the Moon: Our Story of the Cold War Space Race</i> by David Scott and Alexei Leonov with Christine Toomey, 2004</li> <li>• <i>Flight: My Life in Mission Control</i> by Christopher C. Kraft, 2001</li> <li>• “What the Moon Rocks Tell Us” (<i>National Geographic</i>, December 1969) by Kenneth F. Weaver (with photo)</li> <li>• <i>Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space</i> by Carl Sagan, 1994 (with photo)</li> <li>• “Life on Mars to Become a Reality in 2023, Dutch Firm Claims” (<i>The Guardian</i>, April 21, 2013) by Karen McVeigh</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Topics and Content</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenging path to space exploration</li> <li>• Childhood memoirs and space exploration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political dimensions of the Space Race</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future of space exploration</li> </ul>

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science
<b>Domain-specific vocabulary (samples)</b>	consecutive; copious; derogatory; impartial; ludicrous; naïve; opposition; relinquish; unmanned; accordance; therefore; inquiry; application; obligations; pre-eminence; extending; strife; postpone; incumbency; broadcast; sheathed; telemetry; disclosed; prolonged; surmised; scope; cast; detached; encumbrance; audible; ordained; sacrifice; foremost; insignia; ascent; outskirts; undertaken; significance; dismantle; painstaking; gradual; prompted; rendezvous; apogee; choreography; androgynous; equalized; rapt; toggle; mute; visceral; monikers; brethren; calculating; overrule; revere; muse; evaluate	exonerated; libel; deceleration; résumé; rudimentary; writ; ordained; sacrifice; foremost; insignia; ascent; disengaged; perishing; propose; outskirts; undertaken; significance; dismantle; painstaking; gradual; transmissions; prompted; androgynous; equalized; rapt; toggle; mute; visceral; monikers; brethren; calculating; infant; overrule; revere; muse; evaluate	exposition; celestial; ballistic; aerodynamic; thermal; constellations; orbiting; aviation; sacrifice; ascent; disengaged; perishing; propose; outskirts; undertaken; dynamics; trajectories; dismantle; welding; gradual; transmissions; prompted; rendezvous; maneuvers; choreography; androgynous; equalized; visceral; calculating; propulsion; technician
<b>Standards</b>	CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. RI.8.1;3;8;9 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. W.8.1;2;3;7;8;9;10 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. SL.8.1;5;6 CA CCSS.ELA.Literacy. L.8.1;4a	CA SS Standards/grade 8 8.12.9	CA SCI Standards/grade 8 MS-PS2-1 CA 6-8 skills/ Research, Evidence, and Point of View 1;2;3;4

Disciplines	ELA/Literacy	Social Studies	Science
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Students use their research skills to explore the Internet, identifying dependable sources for information about their chosen topics. They then create an outline or sketch for their projects. They organize their research information and examine the elements of a good introduction. They write an introductory paragraph for their papers. Students use citation guidelines to complete both in text citations and a works-cited page for their sources. They use their research from the collection and the Internet to create a multimedia project.</p>	<p>Students name the significant inventors and their inventions and identify how they improved the quality of life (e.g., Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Orville and Wilbur Wright).</p>	<p>Students examine connections of Engineering, Technology, and Applications of Science. They examine the uses of technologies and how any limitations on their use are driven by individual or societal needs, desires, and values; by the findings of scientific research; and by differences in such factors as climate, natural resources, and economic conditions.</p> <p>Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research. They distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories. They distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories. They assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.</p>