



*Storytelling
and
The
Common Core
Standards*

Grades 6 - 12

From the Youth, Educators and Storytellers Alliance

July, 2013

STORYTELLING AND THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS, GRADES 6 – 12

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The arts strengthen education. Research confirms a positive relationship between arts education and academic success for both elementary and secondary students. Benefits include gains in intelligence (IQ), grades and performance on standardized tests. For students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, the arts improve educational attainment and increase the likelihood of attending a postsecondary institution. – National Endowment for the Arts Fact Sheet, Spring 2013.

WHY IS STORYTELLING AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF AND ASSET TO EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES?

An excerpt from *Teaching Storytelling: A Position Statement* from the Committee on Storytelling of the National Council of Teachers of English, available at <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/curr/107637.htm>

“Why Include Storytelling in School?”

Students who search their memories for details about an event as they are telling it orally will later find those details easier to capture in writing. Writing theorists value the rehearsal, or prewriting, stage of composing. Sitting in a circle and swapping personal or fictional tales is one of the best ways to help writers rehearse.

Listeners encounter both familiar and new language patterns through story. They learn new words or new contexts for already familiar words. Those who regularly hear stories, subconsciously acquire familiarity with narrative patterns and begin to predict upcoming events. Both beginning and experienced readers call on their understanding of patterns as they tackle unfamiliar texts. Then they re-create those patterns in both oral and written compositions. Learners who regularly tell stories become aware of how an audience affects a telling, and they carry that awareness into their writing.

Both tellers and listeners find a reflection of themselves in stories. Through the language of symbol, children and adults can act out through a story the fears and understandings not so easily expressed in everyday talk. Story characters represent the best and worst in humans. By exploring story territory orally, we explore ourselves—whether it be through ancient myths and folktales, literary short stories, modern picture books, or poems. Teachers who value a personal understanding of their students can learn much by noting what story a child chooses to tell and how that story is uniquely composed in the telling. Through this same process, teachers can learn a great deal about themselves.

Story is the best vehicle for passing on factual information. Historical figures and events linger in children's minds when communicated by way of a narrative. The ways of other cultures, both ancient and living, acquire honor in story. The facts about how plants and animals develop, how numbers work, or how government policy influences history—any topic, for that matter—can be incorporated into story form and made more memorable if the listener takes the story to heart.

Children at any level of schooling who do not feel as competent as their peers in reading or writing are often masterful at storytelling. The comfort zone of the oral tale can be the path by which they reach the written one. Tellers who become very familiar with even one tale, by retelling it often, learn that literature carries new meaning with each new encounter. Students working in pairs or in small storytelling groups learn to negotiate the meaning of a tale.”

Myth: The *Standards* don't have enough emphasis on fiction/literature.

Fact: The *Standards* require certain critical content for all students, including: classic myths and stories from around the world, America's Founding Documents, foundational American literature, and Shakespeare. Appropriately, the remaining crucial decisions about what content should be taught are left to state and local determination. In addition to content coverage, the Standards require that students systematically acquire knowledge in literature and other disciplines through reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

From the Common Core Standards web site page: <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/myths-vs-facts>

"Almost all children experience the world of storytelling before they begin their journey into the world of mathematical thinking, and there's an intriguing possibility that providing children with experience with storytelling may later enhance their ability to tackle problems in the mathematical arena." – Daniela O'Neill, University of Waterloo scientist, in a study first published in the June 2004 issue of *First Language*

WHAT THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS SAY ABOUT “STORYTELLING”:

Narrative Writing:

“Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain. In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator’s and characters’ personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense.

“In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information. In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.”

Creative Writing beyond Narrative:

“The narrative category does not include all of the possible forms of creative writing, such as many types of poetry. The Standards leave the inclusion and evaluation of other such forms to teacher discretion.”

- *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Appendix A, pgs. 23 and 24.*

Grades 6 – 12 ELA Common Core Standards Connections in Speaking and Listening:*

Whatever their intended major or profession, high school **graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively to others so that they are able to build on others’ meritorious ideas while expressing their own clearly and persuasively.**

New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. The Internet has accelerated the speed at which connections between speaking, listening, reading, and writing can be made, requiring that students be ready to use these modalities nearly simultaneously. Technology itself is changing quickly, creating a **new urgency for students to be adaptable in response to change.**

Range of Text Types for 6–12*

Students in grades 6–12 apply the Reading standards to the following range of text types, with texts selected from a broad range of cultures and periods.

Stories

Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels

Drama

Includes one-act and multi-act plays, both in written form and on film

Poetry

Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics

Literary Nonfiction

Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience

*The above information was also noted on page 6 of the 2012 publication of *Storytelling and the Common Core Standards*.

This publication, our second endeavor at connecting the work of YES storytellers and educators, begins with the repetition of the information for Grade 6, from the 2012 publication of *Storytelling and the Common Core Standards*. Including Grade 6 in both booklets acknowledges the inclusion of the grade in both elementary and middle school educational institutions. This information was submitted by Jane Stenson.

GRADE 6

Contributed by Jane Stenson

STORYTELLER'S NOTE: In middle school reading and writing skills are taught but are often in service to the content areas. Enter storytelling, the auditory and oral access to understanding and personal development. Developing the ability to speak in a logical and heartfelt manner, to express a point of view and support your thinking are skills which storytelling units develop. If middle school students express their individuality and identity in the oral mode, it is the ability to tell stories – myth, folktales, personal narratives, (even) jokes – that develops student confidence and interaction.

Reading, Literature:

Key Ideas and Details

RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

In many books, both fiction and non-fiction, certain pieces of our cultural history are not shared, for example, the internment of the Japanese during WWII. Inviting a storyteller into the school who has a story about her family's situation during WWII, for example, can fill in the text's gaps.

OR if that is not possible, have students interview persons alive during that war and present their findings as a narrative will develop important content. When the "whole story" or clear removal of information and its impact on people's lives, has been eliminated from school texts, the teacher's obligation to the "whole truth" will develop the idea of "whose history is being written."

RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

As a class determine the themes of the text. Divide students into small critical groups. Have each group take one of the themes and orally develop the narrative using that theme and the way it is supported. Present the narratives to the class.

RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Invite a storyteller such as Syd Lieberman to tell his longish story of Gettysburg "Abraham and Isaac: Sacrifice at Gettysburg". At the conclusion ask questions about the personalities of Lincoln and of Isaac Taylor, emphasizing the importance of the people or characters in the story. Then review the Gettysburg Address, line by line, for student understanding. The told story allows students who struggle with reading to participate in the higher order thinking required in this activity.

Craft and Structure

RI.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

XXX Storytelling provides context clues for more difficult vocabulary. In the Lieberman's story the words "dedicated," "consecrated" or "hallowed" ground did not have to be explained for the students.

If words are unfamiliar, they can be listed, meanings looked up, and a discussion had that explains what clues the storyteller gave to share the word's meaning.

RI.6.5. 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.

In pulling out a piece of the story for analysis, ask how this piece fits or does not fit into the story. Ask, "If removed, what would happen to the story?"

GRADE 6, continued**RI.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.**

Ask why the author wrote this story and specifically, "What passages from the story demonstrate that?" Establish the conflict or problem or question of the story and which characters and how their actions support which point of view. Continue the conversation with how the narrator represents the author's viewpoint. Following an oral story, students consistently ask the teller about the ideas shared in the story. "Did you say that the US Army gave the Indians blankets infected with smallpox?" The storyteller can ask the students about the various points of view represented by each of the characters.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**RI.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.**

XXX Too bad storytelling is not one of the choices, BUT!, here's the answer: especially for students in sixth grade who struggle to read, students can understand and attend to a told story more easily than they can to print. Broadening the acceptable literary styles to include spoken word, storytelling, poetry, readers' theatre, etc gives ALL students access to content.

RL.6.9. Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and, poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Noticing the types of language, the sensory imaging, the stretch of a novel, and the fast action of an adventure story all have something important to say about cultural and historical topics. Noticing that information contained in a STORY is most easily remembered is perhaps the most important aspect of this standard.

GRADE 6, continued**Reading, Informational Text:****Key Ideas and Details****RI.6.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.**

Give students a variety of "situational" stories (but one at a time!) about the dilemmas of real people/citizens or non-citizens, have them apply the Strategic Academic Controversy (SAC) methodology to the stories to identify and critically analyze the situations. How does the story of a person's life relate to the logical delineation of an argument? Is it possible to have compassion for an individual while recognizing the legal or ethical difficulty of the position? Share associated handouts that include primary and secondary sources. The excellent example and explanation of the methodology is Jim Winship's and James Hartwick's "Using Story to Understand the Reality of Undocumented Latino Youth" in Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom by Stenson and Norfolk (Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, 2012).

RI.6.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

After hearing the first-person accounts - stories - of survivors of the Holocaust for example, students are asked to summarize the events leading up to the person's incarceration, life in the camp, and release/escape. Interviewing witnesses to an event will provide first person accounts, often with conflicting information! Like a news reporter, the student can keep asking questions in order to piece the puzzle of "What happened?" together.

RI.6.3. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

XXXIn a study of the crafting of the Constitution, knowing the stories of what certain men requested in terms of government and who spoke for what will have students arrive at the meaning and flexibility of the document which has held our country together... and recognition that we still struggle with many of the same issues.

Craft and Structure**RI.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.**

Vocabulary is accessed more easily in a told story than from text. Words not immediately understood should be listed and looked up and discussed as well as what the teller did that helped student understanding.

RI.6.5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally). And, analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

Tell an adventure story which speaks to a time in US history; tell an African-American folktale such as a B'rer Rabbit story. Compare the way information is presented, the push of the plot, the problem, and the point of each story.

When a particular continent or topography is being studied, tell several folktales from that area to gain understanding of the culture. Tell personal stories or historical stories about the area to determine other information. The told story implies the liveliness of the area and the folktale is indigenous to its area,

RI.6.6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

This would be a good activity to practice on a social studies text. Whose history is written? Who was left out? What group profited from this war? How did people move into or out of an area? Social studies is the study of all the people. What stories do the people tell?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**RI.6.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.**

Visual information can aid a storyteller, too. The use of large photographs or power point behind the storyteller to show images broadens understanding. Similarly enhance the experience with print in visual format.

GRADE 6, continued**RI.6.8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.**

In an election year the rhetoric can be organized into distinct columns – the facts, the opinions, and the reasoned judgments!

RI.6.9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

*Excerpts from Syd Lieberman's **Christmas 1914** handout: [Syd's use of these shows how the storyteller moves toward accurate and compelling ideas searching all the while for a person whose story can be told within the details of the event/situation and fundamental humanity...a most interesting and aspiring way to teach use of primary and secondary sources.]*

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_truce

British and German troops meeting in No-man's land during the unofficial truce (British troops from the Northumberland Hussars, 7th Division, Bridoux-Rouge Banc Sector)

Though there was no official truce, about 100,000 British and German troops were involved in unofficial cessations of fighting along the length of the Western Front.[8] The first truce started on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1914, when German troops began decorating the area around their trenches in the region of Ypres, Belgium.

2. <http://history1900s.about.com/od/1910s/a/chritmastruce.htm>

During World War I, the soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit. Though Worl War I had been raging for only four months, it was already proving to be one of the bloodiest wars in history. Soldiers on both sides were trapped in trenches, exposed to the cold and wet winter weather, covered in mud, and extremely careful of sniper shots. Machine guns had proven their worth in war, bringing new meaning to the word "slaughter."

3. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/25/weekinreview/>

Next morning the mist was slow to clear and suddenly my orderly threw himself into my dugout to say that both the Germans and Scottish soldiers had come out of their trenches and were fraternizing along the front. I grabbed my binoculars and looking cautiously over the parapet saw the incredible sight of our soldiers exchanging cigarettes, schnapps and chocolate with the enemy. Later a Scottish soldier appeared with a football which seemed to come from nowhere and a few minutes later a real football match got underway.

4. *My Dear Sister Janet,*

It is 2:00 in the morning and most of our men are asleep in their dugouts-yet I could not sleep myself before writing to you of the wonder of the events of Christmas Eve. In truth, what happened seems almost like a fairy tale, and if I hadn't been through it myself, I would scarce believe it. Just imagine: While you and the family sang carols before the fire there in London, I did the same with enemy soldiers here on the battlefields of France! I never hope to see a stranger more lovely sight. Clusters of tiny lights were shining all along the German line, left and right as far as the eye could see. And so, dear sister, tell me, has there ever been such a Christmas Eve in all history? And what does it all mean, this impossible befriending of enemies?

GRADE 6, continued**Writing:****Text Types and Purposes**

W.6.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

Giving students a variety of "situational" stories (but one at a time!) about the dilemmas of real people/citizens or non-citizens, have them apply the Strategic Academic Controversy (SAC) methodology to the stories to identify and critically analyze the situations. The excellent example and explanation of the methodology is Jim Winship's and James Hartwick's "Using Story to Understand the Reality of Undocumented Latino Youth" in Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom by Stenson and Norfolk (Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, 2012).

W.6.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

Analyzing the personal stories of people involved in a situation (war, genocide, the depression, immigration, rallies, etc.) especially if the age of the 'speaker' approximates the student's age is the most potent way to help students examine an historical or cultural topic.

W.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Crafting non-fiction narratives/historical fiction is NOT easy. Researching the geography or setting, creating memorable, historically accurate characters who were part of an event are the beginning of the narrative. Beyond researching text, a painting or artwork from or about an era can be helpful. An excellent example is Sherry Norfolk's article "The Great Depression" in Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom by Stenson and Norfolk (Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, 2012).

GRADE 6, continued**Production and Distribution of Writing**

W.6.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

See responses to 1 – 3 above.

W.6.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

In small groups, have students critique their peers as each reads his/her work aloud, using the reader's physical responses as a guide to finding new words and phrases for revisions.

W.6.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

Working with a partner or a small group requires much communication from informational and literary sources (My Ancient Roman blog); determining the best way to present the studied material requires much direct conversation and layout work. All are part of the storyteller's toolbox.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

Because the research skills--not limited to the internet--require strong teaching/learning, and because the course content of 6th, 7th and 8th Grade social studies needs to be taught/learned, short content topics can be assigned, but the presentations can be oral so that the entire class has access to the information and the presentations, and so that each student has the opportunity to practice public speaking.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).

b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).

Coordinating informational and various literary genres allows the student to gain a more complete understanding of a time or a culture.

GRADE 6, continued**Speaking and Listening:****Comprehension and Collaboration**

SL.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

Giving students a variety of "situational" stories (but one at a time!) about the dilemmas of real people/citizens or non-citizens, have them apply the Strategic Academic Controversy (SAC) methodology to the stories to identify and critically analyze the situations. The excellent example and explanation of the methodology is Jim Winship's and James Hartwick's "Using Story to Understand the Reality of Undocumented Latino Youth" in Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom by Stenson and Norfolk (Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, 2012). YES, this is listed in each set of 6th Grade standards because it involves reading, writing, speaking and listening.

SL.6.2. Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

Just as storytellers have different styles, so too do different media presentations.

SL.6.3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

See #1 above.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

The storyteller's toolbox includes the presentation of self through facial expression and body movement. Because standing in front of a group and speaking can be terrifying to 6th Graders, coaching and more intimate ways of practicing (small comfortable groups) is important. Storytellers experienced at working in educational settings make great coaches.

SL.6.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

SL.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Use storytelling tapes found at the library to study the varieties of ways people present material or tell stories. Taking the time to conscientiously study presentation gives students choices – from fun to formal to hair-raising to laid-back styles...and it is important to fit the style with the content.

Jane Stenson has also contributed the GRADE 8 section of this publication. See information about Jane at the end of that section.

GRADE 7

Contributed by Sherry Norfolk

Reading Standards for Literature:**Storyteller's reminder:**

“The research strongly suggests that the English language arts classroom should explicitly address the link between oral and written language, exploiting the influence of oral language on a child’s later ability to read by allocating instructional time to building children’s listening skills, as called for in the Standards....**This focus on oral language is of greatest importance for the children most at risk— children for whom English is a second language and children who have not been exposed at home to the kind of language found in written texts** (Dickinson & Smith, 1994). Ensuring that all children in the United States have access to an excellent education requires that issues of oral language come to the fore in elementary classrooms.

“Because...children’s listening comprehension likely outpaces reading comprehension **until the middle school years**, it is particularly important that students in the earliest grades build knowledge through being read to as well as through reading, with the balance gradually shifting to reading independently. **By reading a story or nonfiction selection aloud, teachers allow children to experience written language without the burden of decoding, granting them access to content that they may not be able to read and understand by themselves. Children are then free to focus their mental energy on the words and ideas presented in the text, and they will eventually be better prepared to tackle rich written content on their own.**”

--Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards (p. 27) (Bold added by author)

In other words, middle school students profit from hearing text as well as reading it – and for those students who need support the most, oral text provides valuable scaffolding to reading comprehension. Oral text allows students to practice and acquire basic comprehension skills, becoming progressively more competent in order to respond successfully to advanced challenges.

“Art is the Idea Bridge--Text to Art, Art to Text--envisioning ideas.”

-- Polk Brothers Foundation for Urban Education

With that in mind, the Storyteller’s Responses that follow each standard use story as the “Idea Bridge”, aligning reading with the interpretation of oral text.

GRADE 7, continued**Key Ideas and Details**

RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Tell Greco-Roman myths and legends focused on a particular theme (Who am I? How do I meet a challenge? What is my fate?). Follow with a discussion of what was understood but not said explicitly: what conclusions did students draw and why?

RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Ask students to determine the theme of the myths and analyze how this theme was developed within each text and within the group of texts, then, write an objective summary of the overall presentation.

RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

How does the setting (TIME and PLACE) determine the need for these myths and the types of characters and actions that they describe? Do the same characters/ archetypes appear in modern stories? Do those characters do the same types of things and meet the same types of challenges?

Craft and Structure

RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meaning; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

*Share "Sympathy," by Paul Laurence Dunbar. This poem inspired the title to Maya Angelou's autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. What does "caged bird" refer to? Why does it sing? Why does the poet repeat the phrase, "I know why the caged bird..." over and over?*

RL.7.5 Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contribute to its meaning.

Perform poems by Paul Laurence Dunbar (or listen to Bobby's Norfolk's Dunbar Out Loud [August House, 2006]), including "Negro Love Song." What is the setting of this poem? Who is the intended audience for these revelations? How is this information conveyed in the text? Ask students to re-write it in prose as a conversation between two people, or as a play script and share these with the class. Discuss how the form changed the content and meaning.

RL.7.6 Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Perform or listen to a recording of "The Party," a dialectic poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Who is the narrator? How is this conveyed? How did the storyteller/reader indicate different characters? How did the storyteller indicate different characters and the narrator? How did her voice, posture, body language, and facial expression reflect the attitudes and emotions of the characters?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.7.7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, stage, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film.)

*How does the written version of *The Party* differ from Bobby Norfolk's audio version on *Dunbar Out Loud*? Analyze the impact of vocal inflection, tone, pacing, etc., vs. the printed word. Assign pairs of students different stanzas of this or another Dunbar poem to interpret through body language, gesture, facial expression.*

RL.7.8 N/A

GRADE 7, continued

RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Paul Laurence Dunbar's father, Joshua Dunbar, escaped from a plantation in Kentucky via the Underground Railroad and joined the 55th Massachusetts Regiment of the Union army, serving in the Civil War. Dunbar's pride in his father's achievements inspired poems like "Our Martyred Soldiers", "Whistlin' Sam", "W'en Dey 'Listed Colored Soldiers" and "The Colored Soldiers." "The Colored Soldiers" praises the brave black men who, like Dunbar's father, had served in the union army during the Civil War. After oral presentations of one or more of these pieces, ask students to compare and contrast a nonfiction historical account of African American soldiers in the Civil War with Dunbar's portrayal.

RL.7.10 N/A

Reading Standards for Informational Text:

Key Ideas and Details

RI.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inference drawn from the text.

Through a performance such as Noa Baum's 'A Land Twice Promised,' students will be introduced to information, opinions, people, and concepts that require thoughtful response. What did the text explicitly say? What did it infer? Why do students draw these inferences?

(See Noa's article, "Storytelling Across Borders," in Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom [Parkhurst Bros., 2012])

RI.7.2 Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Working in small groups, ask students to determine the central ideas in 'A Land Twice Promised,' and discuss how these ideas were developed in the text. Then each group creates an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events.)

Did ideas influence the individuals or the other way around in this story? Ask small groups to discuss and explain their conclusions.

Craft and Structure

RI.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Share a video of Jay O'Callahan telling the acclaimed "Forged in the Stars: a NASA story" (commissioned by NASA in 2008 to celebrate the national space agency's 50th anniversary). As they listen, ask students to quickly jot down any words or phrases that he uses in the piece, then gather in small groups to discuss meaning and tone. Are there any repeated phrases or words that take on different meanings within the context of the story? Report out to group.

RI.7.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of ideas.

What major sections can the class identify? How did each section support the whole? Were there any sections that didn't seem to contribute an important part of the whole?

RI.7.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of the others.

What is Jay's purpose in this story? Is his personal point of view obvious? How does he distinguish the points of view of the various people in the story?

GRADE 7, continued**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

RI.7.7 Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the meaning of the words).

The “audio” version can be your own fluent, expressive reading of the text to the students! Hearing the text read aloud allows students to hear the pronunciation of difficult vocabulary and to integrate images and create understanding. Try this: ask students to read the print text first (just a paragraph or two), then read it aloud to them. Discuss which version helped them understand the material and why; then move on to other media.

RI.7.8 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

After hearing the oral/aural text, struggling students will be better able to identify and discuss the specific claims in the text, and to evaluate the evidence.

RI.7.9 Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

Read aloud! In the Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy (48: April 7, 2005) Albright and Ariail state, “Research indicates that motivation, interest, and engagement are often enhanced when teachers read aloud to middle school students.” Some educators recommend reading aloud at least three times a day in content areas – always with expression, fluency, and animation.

RI.7.10 N/A

GRADE 7, continued**Writing Standards:****Test Types and Purposes****W.7.1. Write arguments to support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence.**

- a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

“Narrative is also a potent persuasive tool, according to Patrick Corm Hogan and other researchers, and it has the ability to shape beliefs and change minds,” reports The Scientific American (9/18/08). Following Noa Baum’s story about the encounter and subsequent relationship between an Israeli woman and a Palestinian woman, ask students to choose one woman’s perspective and write an argument for that point of view. What claims does she make? How does she back up those claims? Does she provide data or stories? What data and/or additional anecdotal information can the student find to support her reasoning?

W.7.2 .Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships among ideas and concepts.
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Engage students in the life of George Washington Carver by telling a story about a portion of his many-faceted life, then prepare to write a class biography: assign students to each choose and research one aspect of his life or one of his many scientific contributions to agriculture, using the research findings to write an informative article to be compiled into a G.W. Carver biography, complete with relevant charts, graphs, photos, etc.

W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

GRADE 7, continued

Tell a true or fictionalized story about the Underground Railroad, then discuss the elements of the narrative:

Who is escaping to freedom?

What specific factors or conditions have contributed to their decision to escape?

Where did they start from, where did they go and how did they get there? What kind of map did they use? What dangers did they encounter along the way? How did they avoid or deal with these dangers? Who helped them? What codes did they use?

Discuss the definition of historical fiction (weaving facts into a fictionalized story = historical fiction). In pairs, ask students to research and write historical fiction narratives about the Underground Railroad.

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above).

Historical fiction narratives about the Underground Railroad should reflect the intended audience (peers), the nature of the story (dramatic, serious, dangerous, even life-threatening), and should evoke clear sensory images and emotional engagement.

W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions N/A)

Pair writing teams to read their stories aloud and provide feedback on the clarity of the sequence and action, the description of the characters and setting, etc. What works best in the story? What questions have been left unanswered? What anachronisms appear in the story? How can the story be told with more drama or suspense?

W.7.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

Resulting stories can be published online, complete with sources and links – or can be translated into digital storytelling with images, narration, and music.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.7.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

The historical fiction research project addresses this standard by providing a meaningful context for research and investigation of the time period and the issues surrounding slavery and escape to freedom.

W.7.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Results of print and digital research will necessarily be paraphrased when they are embedded in the stories; stories can be documented with correctly cited sources.

W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- a. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).
- b. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary non-fiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.”).

Both parts of this standard can be applied to evaluate the historical fiction stories, analyzing the historical accuracy, reasoning, and relevant supporting documentation.

Range of Writing

N/A

GRADE 7, continued**Speaking and Listening Standards:****Comprehension and Collaboration**

SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
- d. Acknowledged new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

Working in pairs and/or small groups on the UGRR project (or many of the other projects outlined above) provides students with opportunities to work collaboratively to research, evaluate, discuss, create and perform their stories.

SL.7.2. Analyze the main idea and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally), and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

Students can share their G.W. Carver biographical narratives orally, using vocal inflection, facial expression, body language, charts, graphs, photos and props. Follow each presentation with peer feedback, analyzing the way in which these additions clarified and supported the main idea and provided supporting details and evidence.

SL.7.3. Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Within any effective biographical narrative, claims of the subject’s character are supported by anecdotal evidence. Peer discussions can focus on what claims are being made within each narrative, and the ways in which those claims are (or are not) supported.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.7.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

The projects outlined above provide ample opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to meet this standard.

SL.7.5. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

See SL.7.2, above.

SL.7.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Sharing historical fiction stories allow students to demonstrate use of both formal language (narration) and informal language (character parts) within the same text.

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies:

See above; all non-fiction reading, writing, and speaking/listening standards have been addressed through History/Social Studies projects.

Sherry Norfolk is an internationally recognized storyteller, teaching artist, keynote speaker, and author. Sherry’s residency programs are in demand and recognized as curriculum-spanning and engaging for both students and teachers. Sherry is also the co-author of the award-winning resources [The Storytelling Classroom: Applications Across the Curriculum](#), [Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom](#) (with Jane Stenson and Diane Williams. Both publications: Libraries Unlimited), and [Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom](#) (with Jane Stenson. Parkhurst Brothers, Inc., 2012). In 2012, Sherry was one of thirty teaching artists from across the country who completed the first National Seminar for Teaching Artists at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Contact Sherry at shnorfolk@aol.com.

Authors of the Common Core Standards: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers

Title: Common Core State Standards

Publisher: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington D.C. Copyright Date: 2010

GRADE 8

Contributed by Jane Stenson

Reading:

STORYTELLER’S NOTE ON STORYTELLING and READING: Educational research tells us that thinking skills of visualization, inference, and synthesis are necessary to read well. Listening to stories provides the opportunity to learn and practice these skills before students are required to attend to a text. Storytelling or listening to a told story engages the student in a personal way and encourages the mind to access the content; then the discussions of inference, citing evidence, establishing key ideas, etc, can be employed and practiced...and the student can be successful. Later, the student can go to the text as review of the content and practice reading skills.

Key Ideas and Details**RL.8.1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.**

Ask one group of students to retell a portion of the text to another group of students. Have the second group of students, after listening to the retelling, find passages in the text that support the retelling. Have this second group retell the same or another portion of the text to the first group. Have the first group make inferences based on the retelling. Have a volunteer student retell a section of the text to the entire class. Call on students to identify where the text leaves plot points open-ended and to tell a story that resolves the uncertainties. (Permenter)

Storytelling derives directly from understanding of a text, by asking "What does this mean?" Moving information from expository text to narrative allows the student greater access to the variety of ways of understanding. Hearing a story and then reading the text means depth understanding rather than coverage can be the focus. Literature circles led by students while teachers scaffold the discourse helps eighth grade students become responsible for their learning.

RL.8.2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development and summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Have students work in their critical groups to identify two or more themes of the text at hand. Then have the first partner retell the story in his or her own words. When the student finishes, have his or her partner identify moments of the retelling in which the theme is developed. Have students switch roles and repeat the exercise to gain more perspective on the same theme. (Permenter)

RL.8.3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Reading fiction and non-fiction is a natural process for storytelling. Images float in reader's head, characters are pictured, the plot synthesizes with what the reader already knows about the events/situations. Central to storytelling as well as reading instruction is telling what happens, discussing how and why characters behave as they do, understanding the environment in which everything occurs, and knowing the big ideas or theme.

Literature

Alcott, Louisa May. Little Women

Twain, Mark. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

L’Engle, Madeleine. A Wrinkle in Time

Cooper, Susan. The Dark Is Rising

Yep, Laurence. Dragonwings

Taylor, Mildred D. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

Hamilton, Virginia. “The People Could Fly.”

Paterson, Katherine. The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks

Cisneros, Sandra. “Eleven.”

Sutcliff, Rosemary. Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad

GRADE 8, continued*Drama*

Fletcher, Louise. *Sorry, Wrong Number*

Goodrich, Frances and Albert Hackett. *The Diary of Anne Frank: A Play*

Poetry exemplifies the use of images or 'drop away moments'

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. "Paul Revere's Ride."

Whitman, Walt. "O Captain! My Captain!"

Carroll, Lewis. "Jabberwocky."

Navajo tradition. "Twelfth Song of Thunder."

Dickinson, Emily. "The Railway Train."

Yeats, William Butler. "The Song of Wandering Aengus."

Frost, Robert. "The Road Not Taken."

Sandburg, Carl. "Chicago."

Hughes, Langston. "I, Too, Sing America."

Neruda, Pablo. "The Book of Questions."

Soto, Gary. "Oranges."

Giovanni, Nikki. "A Poem for My Librarian, Mrs. Long."

Craft and Structure**RL.8.4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meaning, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.**

Using fiction, discuss the use of particular words to create images, and to expand the images with metaphor. Then invite a storyteller into the classroom known for image-making to tell stories. Student discussion with the storyteller about language, as well as about structure, and themes, and how the themes are developed through the plot structure and language choices will help students understand the craft of story writing.

RL.8.5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

STORYTELLING: Particularly for reluctant readers, 'high and low' stories as well as YA (young adult) novels allow student access and development of reading skills such as the structure of text and how the text fits and relates to each other. Because storytelling initially removes the reading function in favor of auditory/speaking functions, all students are able to participate in discussions about meaning, character development, use of metaphor, setting in order to develop skills...and then return to the text.

RL.8.6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

ASSIGN: Using texts by L.H. Anderson discuss how storytelling elements arise throughout the book and why the novels are so compelling. Using Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry by Mildred .D. Taylor, show how storytelling elements move the reader toward a more universal understanding about being African-American in America.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**RL.8.7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.**

STORYTELLING as a diverse format: Student environments are bombarded with sounds and pictures while a storytelling environment asks the student to relax into a deep listening posture to access the content and style of the performance. Professional storytellers who demonstrates or emphasize a cultural point of view allows students a sort of "sliding glass door" into another culture. From this, students can see the humanity and critical depth of the culture – an important understanding in our diverse society.

RL.8.8. Delineate and evaluate the arguments and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

STORYTELLING such as storyteller Tim Tingle's Trail of Tears story or any of the stories on the RaceBridges.net digital offering encourages students to hear about situations and people who do not necessarily make the evening news or

GRADE 8, continued

whose stories are marginalized. Practicing the skill of delineating arguments/claims via an auditory format extends student abilities.

RL.8.9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

ASSIGN: Critical groups, each using at least two texts on the same topic, will compare the authors' approach and style in delineating their themes. Examples might include:

- *Holocaust: 1.The Book Thief by John Boyne and 2.The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by Marcus Zusak and 3.Number the Stars by Lois Lowry*
- *The American Revolution: 1.The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing: Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: The Pox Party by M.T. Anderson and 2. FORGE by L.H. Anderson, and 3. Remember Valley Forge: Patriots, Tories and Redcoats Tell their Stories by National Geographic*

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.8.10. Read and compare literary texts and informational texts independently and proficiently.

The search for levels of meaning and multiple themes, the use of language for conventionality and clarity, as well as looking at the structure of the story/text and what sort of knowledge is required to understand the text are broadened by an auditory approach.

Storytellers are experts at bringing to life a wide range of literary nonfiction. After a visit from a storyteller of this caliber, students should be invited to retell the story in a variety of mediums, such as through music, art, drama, and poetry. Transferring the text into a variety of different genres cements the content in terms of comprehension and makes long-term retention more probable. (Permenter)

GRADE 8, continued**Writing:**

STORYTELLER'S NOTE: Storytelling, whether as listener or teller, is fundamental and critical in achieving the thought processes that go into writing. Book and film reviews are increasingly fond of terming an author a 'storyteller', but the act of orally creating a story is fundamental to the writing process. That being said students in the middle school need to combine speaking, listening, and reading in order to write. Maintaining the oral and auditory modes in middle school assists the educational goal of directing students outward rather than a self-pre-occupation. Writing is about narrative structure, the interaction of character development, sensory environments, interesting twists of plot, and BIG ideas: what is this story about? In writing the author must recognize the reader by writing for understanding. This is as true for fiction as for expository text. And, it is the narrative that is remembered by the listener and the reader.

Text Types and Purposes**W.8.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence**

W.8.1.a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

W.8.1.b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

W.8.1.c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.

W.8.1.d. Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.1.e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

STORYTELLING and EXPOSITORY TEXT: Having students write five paragraph expository themes is standard fare. But! It is the image placed into a narrative that stirs the argument, causing the heart to act on an issue; that's storytelling. Students do need to understand the presentation of a logical and reasonable argument in verbal and written form, and they must learn to combine the logic with "drop-away" heartfelt images which are the 'persuaders.' Both are necessary to educate students to argue and support their claims. [Norfolk, Stenson, Williams. Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom. Libraries Unlimited, CA: 2009.]

ASSIGN: students to convert the expository material at hand into a story with a theme, a plot arch, characters, drop away moments and dialogue. Ask volunteers to read their stories to the rest of the students. The listeners take notes that draw evidence from the original text to support the interpretation of it shared in story form by the volunteer students. (Permenter)

W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow, organizing ideas, concepts and information into broader categories, include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.2.b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations or other information and examples.

W.8.2.c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships among ideas and concepts.

W.8.2.d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

W.8.2.e. Establish and maintain a formal style.

W.8.2.f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

STORYTELLING and STRUCTURED ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY (SAC) methodology

Articulated by Johnson and Johnson, the Structured Academic Controversy method of examining and organizing a point of view on a controversial topic is employed in many Middle Schools. SAC is a method, using reading and speaking skills, of teaching middle school students to understand the complexities of a socio-political situation or controversy. It begins

GRADE 8, continued

*with a story – a real story - like an undocumented college age student seeking admission to a university. In small groups students study the pros and the cons of the issue and have discussion, learning that it is possible to have empathy for the person's plight, while simultaneously entertaining the cognitive/reasonable pro or con. See Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. (1995). *Creative Controversy: Intellectual Conflict in the Classroom* (3rd ed.) Edina, MN: Interaction. [Stenson, Norfolk. *Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom – Who Tells the Story?*. Parkhurst Bros, Publishing, Inc, Little Rock: 2012.]*

W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.8.3.a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and a point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters, and organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

W.8.3.b. Use narrative techniques such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

W.8.3.c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

W.8.3.d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory languages to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

W.8.3.e. provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

STORYTELLING, NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND IMAGERY: WRITING NARRATIVE NON-FICTION: factual stories, historical fiction

Writing a narrative of an (historical) event or a biography or some other non-fiction topic is precisely what middle school students can be asked to do. A fact-based report, a chronological list is deadly dull and rarely gets to the 'heart' of the matter. Students can be asked to put facts into a meaningful narrative frame.

Assigning historical fiction such as Laurie Halse Anderson's CHAINS and its sequel FORGE demonstrate the strong research, weave of historical events, and meaningful characters; this is what good storytelling accomplishes.

Many storytellers are published authors. Bringing in a professional, published storyteller to speak of the number of drafts that go into a final product and what it is like working with an editor is inspirational and instructive to students who tend to think that "hot off the press" is the way to write.

A SPOKEN WORD EVENT for middle school:

*Art teacher Lea Lazarus and Poet Sue Gundlach combine their work every year to offer Middle School students a 10 week seasonal studies of "Winter" or "Fall", or "Spring" where they produce images of the season with words and visual arts. Each student ultimately combines her/his work into a handmade book, and collectively produce a Spoken Word event to which families and the community are invited. [Norfolk, Stenson, Williams. *Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom*. Libraries Unlimited, CA: 2009]*

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. (refer to standards 1-3)

STORYTELLING: The recent wave of "Moth" and similar personal narrative venues where people 'tell' or 'read' their written work can be and is reproduced in middle school settings so that students hear as well as read each others' productions to listen for clarity of plot and understanding. The listening students take notes on the clarity of structure, use of language, development of themes for discussion.

W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (editing for conventions should demonstrate command of standards 1-3)

The STORYTELLING process is the creative process. Plus, storytelling includes active speaking and listening as each time the story is told, the teller and the listeners co-construct the narrative. The teller is so present for the listener that the teller may shift words and plot to accommodate the listeners' needs. ASSIGN: In critical groups have students 'tell' and 'read' their writing to their peer group, looking for clarity of structure, use of language and theme development.

GRADE 8, continued

W.8.6. Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

DIGITAL STORYTELLING at every level is available to produce composites of images accompanied by speech that not only provides a camera-lens approach to story, but allows story writers and tellers to create a narrative. There is an important distinction: a pictorial review with words of, for example, a vacation is NOT necessarily a story. While increasingly popular, it is story structure that creates the narrative; students must recognize the difference.

Many storytellers maintain webpages, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and personal blogs, receiving and responding to hundreds of posts centered on their writings. Inviting a professional storyteller who can speak to the demands and to the importance of these methods of maintaining connections to people globally is a wonderful way to direct students--most of whom are already engaged in some capacity in these media—and their writing in a more productive, academically-based manner. (Permenter)

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

STORYTELLING: every story answers a question or problem within a narrative structure. The research project can be presented in expository as well as narrative form.

W.8.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.8.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research as in--

W.8.9.a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards for Literature standards, e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new."

W.8.9.b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary non-fiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced."

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of disciplines-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

The 20th/21st CENTURY PROJECT

Finding a long term, culminating project for eighth graders before they move on to high school is best accomplished by having the student determine the topic to pursue through primary and secondary research, reflection with a group of 'critical' friends, written and spoken presentations.

ASSIGN a topic: Choose an invention, idea, community/national leader, situation or event that has happened in the last 100 years that has informed and changed the world. Showing your work, prepare a written document including visuals, charts and/or graphs for statistical information, and a spoken word narrative (fiction or non-fiction, or narrative non-fiction) that supports your "BIG" ideas.

RESEARCH: Using multiple print and digital sources, prepare an annotated bibliography that you have analyzed for credibility and accuracy. Include non-fiction, fiction, and various artworks that demonstrate your breadth of knowledge. From this research you will frame your topic and intent.

CRITICAL GROUP: This is a working group of three or four of your peers to help and question you as you proceed. You are meant to assist them in their work as well.

CENTURY PRESENTATIONS: Throughout, there will be check-ins with your group and with faculty. One week before the final, faculty will meet with each group to hear and discuss pieces of each student's work. The CENTURY PRESENTATIONS are given in a large room (gymnasium) with each student showing the written report, supporting chart, graphs and artworks, and telling the spoken word narrative (poems, story, music) that enhanced the understanding of your topic. Your audience is – at least – the seventh grade and your families.

GRADE 8, continued

ASSESSMENT: Is on-going as this is a long-term project. The student will complete a checklist of accomplishments and write a narrative describing the process and situations faced as the project progresses. Student will assign a grade(s) based on criteria determined by all students. Faculty comments are added to the student narrative and a grade(s) assigned based on student and faculty assessment criteria.

GRADE 8, continued**Speaking and Listening:**

STORYTELLER'S NOTE: STORYTELLING may or may not be found in Forensics competitions in today's Middle Schools. Certainly the "MOTH" has pursued the five minute personal narrative – as if a life could be condensed to five minutes! Nevertheless, storytelling is an important skill for students to develop, and the classroom is the ideal place. Media is telling us stories, yet the student can create and tell her/his own story. All their lives – baby, school age, teenager, young adult to middle to old adult – the way one tells the story means (s)he gets the friend, the job, the opportunity. Storytelling is fundamental to who we are as people: Who Tells the Story?

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-to-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.8.1.a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.1.b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

SL.8.1.c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations and ideas.

SL.8.1.d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

STORYTELLING and STRUCTURED ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY or SAC:

*SAC is a method, using reading and speaking skills, of teaching middle school students to understand the complexities of a socio-political situation or controversy. It begins with a story – a real story - like undocumented college age students seeking admission to a university. In small groups students study the pro and the con of the issue and have discussion, learning that it is possible to have empathy for the person's plight, but cognitively/reasonably side either pro or con. See Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. (1995). *Creative Controversy: Intellectual Conflict in the Classroom* (3rd ed.) Edina, MN: Interaction.*

[Stenson, Norfolk. [Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom: Who Tells the Story?](#) Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, Inc., Little Rock: 2012.]

SL.8.2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, emotional, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

ASSIGN students to choose an informational topic (teacher choice of topics with some flexibility) and have each student approach the meaning of the topic from an artwork, or media news, youtube, a newspaper, or Wikipedia, etc. What is the source expressing about the content of the topic? What is the 'author's' point of view?

SL.8.3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.8.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Divide the class into however many groups as you have different types of sources of information, assigning each group to the study of the material through one of those sources. Have groups prepare a story to tell the class about what using their source was like, what they learned, and how they learned it. (Permenter)

SL.8.5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

GRADE 8, continued*A SPOKEN WORD EVENT for middle school*

Art teacher Lea Lazarus and Poet Sue Gundlach combine their work every year to offer Middle School students a 10 week seasonal studies of "Winter" or "Fall", or "Spring" where they produce images of the season with words and visual arts. Each student ultimately combines her/his work into a handmade book, and collectively produce a Spoken Word event to which families and the community are invited. [Norfolk, Stenson, Williams. *Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom*. Libraries Unlimited, CA: 2009]

Particularly in historical or science events, the human factor – or how these factual presentations impact the stories people have about their lives – is a compelling argument to use multimedia and visual displays.

SL.8.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

LEARNING TO 'TELL' A STORY – telling a story differs in significant ways from giving a report. It's not reading or memorization. The fine art of narrative, including dialogue and description, is sure to help middle schoolers relax into a confident, conversational style that will serve their 'report-giving' and public speaking efforts. Using a story to illustrate a point of view is an effective way to promote discourse.

The POURQUOI PROJECT

A combination of science, storytelling and book-making

To emphasize the many ways of knowing and the many languages of which we are capable, a project that includes in depth science and art through storytelling is something eighth graders can share through an artistic rendering in a beautiful book of the telling of the tale and the scientific explanation.

ASSIGN: Determine a scientific question about which you are curious and that could have many answers – both factual and fanciful. You will need to know the scientific answer and will need to create a How and Why (pourquoi) or Creation narrative. Topics about the creation of the moon, the size of an animal's tail, why birds fly south (or north) in winter, or a particular land formation – in short the domains of science and technology: physics, chemistry, biology or earth and space are topics where questions abound.

The QUESTION: determine your question remembering that you will need to present science and artwork to tell the story.

RESEARCH: Using multiple print and digital sources prepare an annotated bibliography of credible and accurate sources.

Creating the NARRATIVE: We will review plot structure via a storyboard format and then you will write a narrative non-fiction story. Your question's answer is given in narrative form to allow you to produce the fanciful yet scientific tale.

Working with a 'critical' peer group, review each others' narratives before proceeding.

BOOK-MAKING:

- *(research) I will demonstrate brush, cutting, and collage techniques to be used*
- *(application) practice these*
- *(planning and reflecting) plan the illustrations you will need, incorporating the art techniques*
- *(application) determine simple text, associating the text and the illustrations*
- *(reflection and expression) map out your book of 8 pages – use four long sheets folded in half and stapled to create your map your book – both text and illustrations.*
- *(critical review) have your critical group review your book map for accuracy, clarity, and the relationship of the illustration to the text*
- *create a mock book of the illustrations and text for each page, including a title page*
- *make your book*

TELLING and READING to younger students: When complete we will travel to younger grades for you to tell and read the pourquoi tale and discuss the project.

GRADES 6 – 8 (in conjunction with Grade 6 CCS)

History/Social Studies:

STORYTELLER’S NOTE: Storytellers who have researched important events and situations of US history, world events, and the world’s cultures have much to offer Middle School students. The Trail of Tears, The Gettysburg Address, Apartheid, Women at the Well, Genocides are story-gifts where students can listen to a teller’s non-fiction narrative or a docent’s tale. An interesting goal would be that the study of every geographic and political area would include the hearing or reading of the folktales of the region. Inside the meaningful frame of the storyteller’s wisdom, students can easily retain the information required by the following standards long after the teller has left the school.

Key Ideas and Details

RH.6-8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

The prominence of media and the requisite critical thinking skills to analyze primary and secondary sources suggests that storytelling skills of speaking and listening be employed as teaching tools in the social studies classroom. No longer is the world solely about printed text as the keeper of information. Students must understand what print as well as "people" are saying about the environment, about the government, about industry and labor, and about the economy. Students are bombarded by CNN, videos, youtube, and graphics that seek to manage information in order to persuade.

RH.6-8.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

*Excerpts from Syd Lieberman’s **Christmas 1914** handout: [Syd’s use of these shows how the storyteller moves toward accurate and compelling ideas searching all the while for a person whose story can be told within the details of the event/situation and fundamental humanity...a most interesting and aspiring way to teach use of primary and secondary sources.]*

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_truce

British and German troops meeting in No-man’s land during the unofficial truce (British troops from the Northumberland Hussars, 7th Division, Bridoux-Rouge Banc Sector)

Though there was no official truce, about 100,000 British and German troops were involved in unofficial cessations of fighting along the length of the Western Front.[8] The first truce started on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1914, when German troops began decorating the area around their trenches in the region of Ypres, Belgium.

2. <http://history1900s.about.com/od/1910s/a/chritmastruce.htm>

During World War I, the soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit. Though Worl War I had been raging for only four months, it was already proving to be one of the bloodiest wars in history. Soldiers on both sides were trapped in trenches, exposed to the cold and wet winter weather, covered in mud, and extremely careful of sniper shots. Machine guns had proven their worth in war, bringing new meaning to the word "slaughter."

3. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/25/weekinreview/>

Next morning the mist was slow to clear and suddenly my orderly threw himself into my dugout to say that both the Germans and Scottish soldiers had come out of their trenches and were fraternizing along the front. I grabbed my binoculars and looking cautiously over the parapet saw the incredible sight of our soldiers exchanging cigarettes, schnapps and chocolate with the enemy. Later a Scottish soldier appeared with a football which seemed to come from nowhere and a few minutes later a real football match got underway.

4. *My Dear Sister Janet,*

It is 2:00 in the morning and most of our men are asleep in their dugouts-yet I could not sleep myself before writing to you of the wonder of the events of Christmas Eve. In truth, what happened seems almost like a fairy tale, and if I hadn't been through it myself, I would scarce believe it. Just imagine: While you and the family sang carols before the fire there in London, I did the same with enemy soldiers here on the battlefields of France! I never hope to see a stranger more lovely sight. Clusters of tiny lights were shining all along the German line, left and right as far as the eye could see. And so, dear sister, tell me, has there ever been such a Christmas Eve in all history? And what does it all mean, this impossible befriending of enemies?

GRADES 6 – 8, continued**RH.6-8.3. Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).**

Be certain to understand that each of these processes is culturally defined, that is, the process happens differently in different governing areas.

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. Stories and storytelling about an event or situation, its immediate and long range impact on people’s lives, how leadership responds, and the fundamental nature of being human and alive happens best with a story rather than a chronological list. Stories allow the complexities and even the messiness of an event to be portrayed while providing a meaningful frame so people can understand the event.

Craft and Structure**RH.6-8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.**

Listening to an historical story allows the listener to infer a word’s meaning, thereby practicing a necessary skill for vocabulary discussion and reading. Vocabulary development in eighth grade should move contextually toward complex third level words which are attributable to a skills or knowledge base, such as martingale, girth, dressage.

RH.6-8.5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

ASSIGN: In critical groups students can read and discuss how two or more historical novels and a non-fiction text and a news report present information about an event or situation, that is, sequentially, comparatively and causally. Examples might include

Colonization: 1. Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science by Aronson and Budha and 2. Salt by Kurlansky and 3. The Cod’s Tale by Kurlansky. In critical groups have students compare and contrast the information presented in each book about colonization. Have students build a map that demonstrates the connection between cod, salt, and sugar in the colonization and growth of North and South America. Determine characters whose lives changed as a result of these spices and create (to write and tell) their stories.

Holocaust: 1. The Book Thief by John Boyne and 2. The Boy in the Stripped Pajamas by Marcus Zusak and 3. Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

The American Revolution: 1. The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing: Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: The Pox Party by M.T. Anderson and 2. FORGE by L.H. Anderson, and 3. Remember Valley Forge: Patriots, Tories and Redcoats Tell their Stories by National Geographic

RH.6-8.6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas****RH.6-8.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.**

In storytelling, the pictures are inside the heads of the listener. Images of an event, moments frozen in time of a war, of a big event in a town, of a landscape must be part of what is taught/learned in the social studies class. Understanding does not come from charts and graphs – they can be employed for emphasis, but they are not the stuff of building strong, compassionate citizenry. However, increasingly, as tellers perform narrative non-fiction stories from history and science, they incorporate photographs, example: In Beth Horner’s The Silver Spurs about a Confederate soldier and his daughter Minnie, Beth turns large photos to the audience at the finish of the story to show that these were "real" people.

RH.6-8.8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Curiously, YA historical narratives can and should be required reading and can broaden the discussion of fact, opinion and reasoned judgment for middle school students. Because history does not happen in a vacuum and can be messy for characters who must make decisions, historical fiction enlarges the student understanding that HIS/HER behavior is critical in determining citizenship. Note Lowry’s Number the Stars (Holocaust) or Tingle’s How I Became a Ghost about the Trail of Tears.

GRADES 6 – 8, continued

RH.6-8.9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Note examples under standard 2 and standard 5.

Range of Reading and Level of text Complexity

RH.6-8.10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

United States. "Preamble and First Amendment to the United States Constitution". (1787, 1791)

Lord, Walter. A Night to Remember

Isaacson, Phillip. A Short Walk through the Pyramids and through the World of Art

Murphy, Jim. The Great Fire

Greenberg, Jan, and Sandra Jordan. Vincent Van Gogh: Portrait of an Artist

Partridge, Elizabeth. This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie

Monk, Linda R. Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution

Freedman, Russell. Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott

Macaulay, David. Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction

Mackay, Donald. The Building of Manhattan

Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. The Number Devil: A Mathematical Adventure

Peterson, Ivars and Nancy Henderson. Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone

Katz, John. Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho

Petroski, Henry. "The Evolution of the Grocery Bag."

*"Geology." U*X*L Encyclopedia of Science*

"Space Probe." Astronomy & Space: From the Big Bang to the Big Crunch

"Elementary Particles." New Book of Popular Science

California Invasive Plant Council. Invasive Plant Inventory

Jane Stenson's 30-year teaching career has always included storytelling. Jane has also produced numerous storytelling events, including the Betty Weeks Storytelling Conference for Educators (1997 – 2004). Co-author of the award-winning resources The Storytelling Classroom: Applications Across the Curriculum, Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom (with Sherry Norfolk and Diane Williams. Both publications: Libraries Unlimited), and Social Studies in the Storytelling Classroom (with Sherry Norfolk. Parkhurst Brothers, Inc., 2012), Jane is also co-chairperson for YES! Alliance. Jane will participate in the 2013 National Seminar for Teaching Artists at the John f. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Contact Jane Stenson at stenson.stories@gmail.com.

GRADES 9 – 10**Contributed by Lyn Ford**

Storytellers' visits are both informative and enriching experiences. A storyteller's repertoire can include fiction and nonfiction, poetry and readings from theatrical works, folktales and historic presentations, as well as creative presentations that are unique to each teller. By connecting with a local storytelling organization and inviting tellers who offer various types of presentations to make a series of visits to the classroom, an educator can provide opportunities for students to: compare literature and literary formats as spoken and written word, with the potential for cross-over studies in drama/theater; determine central ideas and assess their connotations per classroom studies; evaluate the premise and analyze the text of each narrative, and analyze and appreciate the craft, style, and structure of each teller's presentation. A storyteller's presentation overarches many ways of learning, leveling the playing field for all types of learners.

PUZZLES IN PROSE: MYSTERIES, CODES, AND TRICKSTERS

STORYTELLER'S NOTE: I selected a short story from the works of Edgar Allen Poe, "The Gold Bug", as the major focus of my work on the Common Core Standards for Grades 9 and 10. It should be noted that the exemplars for literature for students in grades 9 – 12 include Poe's work: the popular poem, "The Raven", and the suspenseful story, "The Cask of Amontillado". In addition to these examples, I have suggested works that open possibilities for discussions and explorations of the English language as it is presented now, and as it was used in the 19th century; one is a selection from the 56 stories of Sherlock Holmes, and the other is an adaptation of an African American folktale whose roots can be traced to the storytelling traditions of West Africa. The presentation of these stories and supporting and corresponding materials can lead to discussion and argument regarding:

- *respect for and biases toward the languages, behaviors, and "dialects" of others;*
- *the meaning of "literacy", and what skills this term will require in the future, and*
- *the importance of knowledge, inquiry, logic, and reasoning.*

A SECOND NOTE: "The Gold Bug" includes Poe's attempt to set African American dialect of the 19th century into a written format, as well as references to the character Jupiter as "negro" and "n----". Therefore, introductory information should be shared on the history, politics, attitudes, and circumstances of the first half of the 18th century in the United States. Suggested reading material to share and discuss prior to a focus on this short story include your choices of supplemental details from:

- *Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave, by Laban Carrick Hill. Little, Brown, and Company, 2010. This picture book can guide students into considering what "literacy" means.*
- *The Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit, retold by Julius Lester. First edition from Dial Books, 1987. *[RL.9-10.2]*
- *The short biography of Edgar Allan Poe at <http://poestories.com/biography.php>*

The corresponding work of fiction that I selected for students' consideration of and reflection on, and "play" with cryptic messages is "The Adventure of the Dancing Men" by Arthur Conan Doyle.

Corresponding works of nonfiction in history, social studies, and mathematics are:

- *Mysterious Messages: A History of Codes and Ciphers, by Gary Blackwood. Dutton Juvenile, 2009 (An easier read, suggested for Grades 5 – 8 but interesting for younger teens through adults).*
- *"Our Story" and "our Dream" at the website of Wakami USA: www.wakamiusa.com*
- *100 Math Brainteasers (Grades 7 – 10), by Zbigniew Romanowicz. Tom eMusic, 2012.*

Aforementioned corresponding exemplars from the Common Core Standards Appendix B:

- *"The Raven", by Edgar Allan Poe.*
- *"The Cask of Amontillado", by Edgar Allan Poe.*

OKAY, LAST NOTE: Or, shall we call all of this a prologue? For some entertaining resources and lighthearted curricular connections, look at one of my favorite websites: www.shmoop.com where the subtitle is "We Speak Student". The version of "The Raven" that is available for viewing at this site includes a picture of Oscar the Grouch, and a bug-eyed, broken-hearted Poe in a trash bin. See what else is there!

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**A synopsis of the “The Gold Bug”:**

Intellectual and poverty-stricken William Legrand contacts the narrator, telling him to come and visit at his home, a shack on Sullivan’s Island in North Carolina. After being bitten by a gold bug (a scarab-like beetle that is thought to be made of pure gold), Legrand is obsessed with searching for a treasure. The search party will include: Legrand; Jupiter[RL.9-10.2], a freed man who remains his loyal and worried servant, and the narrator. The narrator doubts Legrand’s sanity, knowing Legrand recently suffered the loss of his wealth and seems fixated on finding the treasure.*

Legrand can’t display the gold bug for the narrator, since, after capturing it, he loaned it to a “Lieutenant G—”. He draws a picture of the bug; to the narrator, the drawn image looks more like a skull than a beetle. Legrand is deeply insulted; he inspects his own drawing, then stuffs it into a drawer. When Legrand locks the drawer, the discomfited narrator leaves for his home in Charleston.

A month later, Jupiter visits the narrator and asks him, on behalf of Legrand, to return to Sullivan’s Island. Jupiter says Legrand has been behaving strangely. The narrator goes to Legrand. Legrand tells him they must take the gold bug, tied with a string, on an expedition. After trekking through the wilderness of Sullivan’s Island, the treasure-seekers find a certain tree. Legrand orders Jupiter to carry the gold bug up this tree. Jupiter finds a skull, and Legrand tells him to drop the bug through one of the eye sockets. After mistaking left for right, Jupiter finally drops the bug through the correct eye socket, determining the spot where they must dig for the treasure. They find a treasure buried by Captain Kidd; the narrator estimates its value to be worth a million and a half dollars.

With the treasure safely secured, Legrand explains how, thanks to events that occurred after finding the gold bug, he knew about the treasure’s location. It is revealed that Legrand’s behaviors were all a deception, that the paper on which the bug had been drawn had really been a bit of parchment, and the skull the narrator saw was really a pirate’s symbol already on the parchment. Legrand is once again a wealthy man, thanks to his intellect and curiosity.

*It should be noted that Poe’s work includes stereotypical characterizations in the persona of Jupiter and his treatment and mimicking by Legrand** [L.9-10.6], thus placing the story in the era of the antebellum South. Also, Legrand is not physically bitten by a scarab-like beetle, but rather by the possibility of finding the treasure and regaining his recently lost wealth.*

“The Gold Bug” was first published in 1843 in the “Philadelphia Dollar Newspaper”. It may be the first story to use cryptography in its plot, and is considered one of the first examples of detective fiction.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**A synopsis of “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”:**

A gentleman by the name of Hilton Cubitt asks for Sherlock Holmes' help. An illustration of little dancing men, drawn like hieroglyphs on a piece of paper, in chalk on a wall or door, and on a windowsill, has terrified his American wife, Elsie. Cubitt knows very little of his wife's background, and has promised to ask her no questions about her time in America. But they have been happily married for three years. When the drawings appear, first on a letter Mrs. Cubitt receives from Chicago, their effect on Elsie causes her husband to seek Holmes' assistance.

Holmes realizes that the little pictures are symbols, some kind of code. To unravel the mystery, he will have to learn more about the Emily's past. The last message is a startling one that causes Holmes and Watson to rush to Cubitt's estate, Ridling Thorpe Manor: “ELSIE PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD”.

Holmes and Watson reach the manor in Norfolk, only to find Cubitt dead from a bullet wound to the heart and his wife seriously wounded in the head. Inspector Martin of the Norfolk Constabulary believes this a murder-suicide attempt. Holmes doesn't see things in this way: Why were there three shots, the third shot leaving a bullet hole in the windowsill, yet only two chambers in Cubitt's revolver are empty? Why is there a large sum of money in the room? Why is the flowerbed trampled just outside the window, and why is there a shell casing there? Holmes suspects a third person is involved, and that this person is the one who has been sending the hieroglyphic messages.

Holmes strangely seems to know a name, “Elrige's”, that Cubitt's stable boy recognizes as the name of a local farmer's. Holmes quickly writes a message using the dancing men hieroglyphics, and sends the boy to deliver the message to a lodger at Elrige's Farm. Holmes has learned both men's names by deciphering the dancing men code.

The lodger is an American, one Mr. Abe Slaney. When he receives the message, he rushes to Ridling Thorpe Manor, unaware that Elsie is dying and couldn't have sent a message. He is seized as he comes through the door, and tells his story. He is Elsie's former fiancé and has come from Chicago to England to woo her back. She had fled from him because he was a dangerous criminal, something Holmes has already learned through his telegraphic inquiries to the US. In a violent encounter with Cubitt, in which Cubitt drew his own gun and fired at Slaney, Slaney shot back at Cubitt and killed him. Then Slaney fled. Apparently distraught at finding her husband dead, Elsie shot herself.

Although Slaney is truly and extremely upset that Elsie is wounded, he admits that his more threatening messages were the result of losing his temper at Elsie's apparent unwillingness to leave her husband. The money found in the room was apparently Elsie's bribe for Slaney, her attempt to make Slaney go away.

Slaney is arrested and later tried. Because of mitigating circumstances, he escapes execution. Elsie survives and recovers from her own serious injuries. She spends her life helping the poor and administering her late husband's estate.

“The Adventure of the Dancing Men” was first published by Arthur Conan Doyle in 1903, in the series of thirteen stories known as “The Return of Sherlock Holmes”.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**A synopsis of “Brer Rabbit and Brer Lion”:**

On a terribly windy day, when the wind blew so hard that it frightened him, Brer Rabbit attempts to run home and accidentally runs in to Brer Lion. When asked why he is running, wily Brer Rabbit tells Brer Lion he should run, too, for a hurricane is coming.

Brer Lion says, “I’m too heavy to run, Brer Rabbit. What am I going to do?”

Brer Rabbit tells Brer Lion to lie down. But Brer Lion is afraid that the wind will pick him up and blow him away. Brer Rabbit tells Brer Lion to hug a tree. Brer Lion is afraid the wind will blow all day and night. Brer Rabbit suggests that he tie Brer Lion to a tree. “Brer Lion liked that idea.”

Tied to a tree and tired of hugging it, Brer Lion comments that he doesn’t hear a hurricane. Brer Rabbit says, “Neither do I.”

Brer Lion says that he hears no wind. Brer Rabbit agrees, “Neither do I.”

Brer Lion notices that the leaves on the trees aren’t moving. Brer Rabbit agrees that they are not. So Brer Lion tells Brer Rabbit to untie him. But Brer Rabbit says he is afraid to untie that lion.

Brer Lion roars, so loudly that “the foundations of the Earth start shaking.” This brings other animals to see what is happening. When they see Brer Rabbit standing next to a defeated Brer Lion, and recognize that the little rabbit has tied the fierce lion to a tree, they gain a new respect for Brer Rabbit and don’t “mess” with him.

A variant of this story is also available in the picture book, Brer Tiger and the Big Wind, by William J. Faulkner. William Morrow & Company Library, 1995.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Reading Standards for Literature:****Key Ideas and Details****RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.**

Present information on the antebellum South, particularly of the area of Charleston and South Carolina. With this information in mind, facilitate a discussion of the characterizations of Legrand and Jupiter. How are they evidence of the mindsets and lifestyles of the time? What do they infer about Poe’s perceptions in the 1840s?

Read or reread Julius Lester’s version of “Brer Rabbit and Brer Lion”. The protagonist and antagonist in this retelling of an African American folktale are symbolic. Students may assess the characteristics each represents. Reflections:

- *Was Brer Rabbit truly afraid of a hurricane, or trying to frighten and escape from Brer Lion?*
- *What unspoken message do you think is encoded in the imagery of the rabbit standing next to the entrapped lion?*

Ask students to explain the evidence that supports their opinions.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

The course of the narrative of “The Gold Bug” is complex, but its central idea speaks to the success that intellect and curiosity can achieve. List all ideas that students express, and facilitate a discussion of their proofs for these ideas.

**In order to give a quick historical background to the persona of freed man and servant Jupiter, share the “Introduction” to the book, The Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit, retold by Julius Lester (first edition, 1987, Dial Books). Then invite a storyteller to share stories of Brer Rabbit, particularly those in which the trickster-hero uses his head to get out of trouble, or read two or three such stories to your students (examples: “Brer Rabbit and Brer Lion” [pg. 60] and “Brer Rabbit Takes Care of Brer Tiger” [pg. 62], in Lester’s first collection of retold folktales). Compare the concept of the trickster-hero with Legrand’s persona.*

After reading “the Gold Bug”, review the trickster-hero folktales shared by the storyteller. Assess the similarities between inferences of the central idea of “The Gold Bug” and these folktales.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Analyze Legrand’s characterization from the beginning to the end of the story: as the plot progresses, how does his characterization change?

Craft and Structure**RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e/g/. how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).**

Print out copies of “The Gold Bug”. Prior to reading the story, share and explain the following activity, a word page challenge, with your students. A similar word list may be created by your students for “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”.

Compare the language of the three narratives: “The Gold Bug,” “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”, and “Brer Rabbit and Brer Lion”. Reflections:

- *Which story seems to include the most formal examples of “English”? What words and phrases prove this formality? How does this language compare to both the teacher’s and the students’ everyday manner of speaking?*
- *Which story seems to be the easiest to read? What makes it an easier read? List proofs of its readability and discuss the types of descriptive phrases or words, action verbs, and plot structure used in this story.*
- *Which narrative is the easiest to remember and retell? Why does each student think his or her choice is the easiest? Share your own versions of this story.*

GRADE 9 AND 10 ACTIVITY: “The Gold Bug”

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.R.9-10.4

Challenge: Determine the meaning of the following words and phrases—what do *you* think they mean?

Huguenot
Mortification
Fort Moultrie
Tenanted
Palmetto
sweet myrtle
horticulturist
coppice
burthening
entomological
Swammerdamm (Swammerdam)
manumitted
scarabaeus
dispirited
skiff
tulip-tree
foresters
halloo
colloquy
Zaire, digested in aqua regia
Regulus
Captain Kidd
Golconda
cipher
abstruse
cryptographs
enigma
juxtaposition
Sanguine
hostel
grandiloquence
coadjutors

Read “the Gold Bug” to your self, or share “The Gold Bug” in by reading in small groups. Find each of the above words or phrases in the story; circle each and assess its meaning in the structure of the sentence and scene; then use a dictionary or internet search to find the true meaning of the word, and a thesaurus or thesaurus app to find contemporary synonyms for the word. As you read, add interesting, confusing, or difficult words and phrases and their meanings to this list. Locate any mentioned geographical sites on a map.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued

RL.9-10.5. Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

“The Gold Bug” is a story in which things are not always what they seem. It is also considered one of the first American “mystery” stories. Its construction facilitates this standard’s stated analysis.

Similar analysis can be done after reading “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”.

RL.9-10.6. Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Compare the stories of Brer Rabbit with the tales of Anansi the Spider and other tricksters such as Ijapa the Tortoise or Wakaima the Hare by inviting a storyteller/griot to share tales and cultural background on them. Assess the similarities between the stories and their protagonists, noting that the folktales from the African continent are centuries older than their adaptations in the Americas.

Read “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”, one of Doyle’s 56 stories of Sherlock Holmes. Analyze the use of cryptic messages in both Poe’s and Doyle’s work. Reflection: The messages in both works were created for different intentions. What were those intentions? How does secrecy or deception have a negative impact in each story?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.9-10.7. Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*).

After his fall from a wealthy lifestyle, Legrand lives in a shack on Sullivan’s Island near Charleston, South Carolina. An illustration of a cabin from the era of captivity in the Americas is available at

<http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/SlaveTrade/collection/large/COFFIN.JPG>

Compare this illustration with illustrations of modern-day cabins. Imagine living in Legrand’s shack; write a description of that lifestyle.

An original illustration for “The Gold Bug”, by Felix O.C. Darley, and information on Poe’s work are available at

<http://users.telenet.be/d.rijmenants/en/goldbug.htm>

The scene is of the three men—Legrand, Jupiter, and the narrator—and the Newfoundland dog digging at the site of Captain Kidd’s treasure. Ask students to share what they see and what they think is missing from the scene. Compare the image with Howard Kidd’s illustration of Captain Kidd’s treasure at

http://giam.typepad.com/.shared/image.html?/photos/uncategorized/c_kidd_4x.jpg

RL.9-10.8 (Not applicable to literature)

RL.9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

“The Gold Bug” begins with this quotation:

What ho! What ho! This fellow is dancing mad!

He hath been bitten by the Tarantula.

All in the Wrong.

Poe credited these lines to “All in the Wrong”, a 1761 play of 1761 by Arthur Murphy. Poe’s editor, Thomas Ollive Mabbott, said Poe may have made up this quotation (and, perhaps the play?). The “quotation” refers to Legrand’s odd behavior. But that reference to “All in the Wrong” foreshadows the use of the gold bug as a false lead.

Before they have completed the story, ask students what they think this “quotation” means. Then ask for their ideas after they’ve completed the story. Finally, confirm the connotations and foreshadowing Poe shared in this “epigraph”.

In a play called “No One’s Enemy but his Own,” by Arthur Murphy (Irish barrister, actor, and playwright, 1727 - 1805), we find the lines, “He dances about the world, as if he was bit by a tarantula. Dancing is his ruling passion.” Compare this to Poe’s “quotation”—might Poe have misquoted Murphy?

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

RL.9-10.10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9 – 10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9 – 10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

The following texts from the Grades 9–10 text exemplars in Appendix B of the Common Core Standards correspond to or can enrich a study of the works I have used in my example activities. These selections can be utilized in comparisons of language, flow and imagery of wording, and any other way your mind finds to creatively incorporate them into studies:

Shakespeare, William. The Tragedy of Macbeth

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Raven."

Cullen, Countee. "Yet Do I Marvel."

Walker, Alice. "Women."

Washington, George. "Farewell Address."

Lincoln, Abraham. "Gettysburg Address."

Lincoln, Abraham. "Second Inaugural Address."

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano. "State of the Union Address."

King, Jr., Martin Luther. "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

King, Jr., Martin Luther. "I Have a Dream: Address Delivered at the

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Haskins, Jim. Black, Blue and Gray: African Americans in the Civil War

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Reading Standards for Informational Text:****Key Ideas and Details**

RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. *See RL.9-10.1*

RI.9-10.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. *See RI.9-10.2*

RI.9-10.3 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. *Create a timeline for “The Gold Bug” or “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”, identifying those actions or events or settings that signal a change in scene or the next step in the plot, and describe how these changes propel the narrative from beginning to middle to end. Ask students to explain why an event had to happen, or why a character behaved in a certain way, in order for the narrative to progress.*

Craft and Structure

RI.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

RI.9-10.5. Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter). *Compare the language of Lincoln’s phrasing and word selections in the Gettysburg Address to an important scene in Doyle’s story (set in 1898, published in 1903) and Poe’s mystery (published in 1843). Permit students to select the scenes for themselves, and orally support their selection of these portions of the plot as important to the narrative.*

RI.9-10.6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Read and discuss the following newspaper articles, using them to respond to the above three standards.

Consider: Does the article express fact and/or opinion? Cite examples of this. List words or phrases that can be considered figurative or connotative speech. List any technical word or words discovered in the article; determine the meaning.

JUST THE FACTS? ARTICLES ON THE DEATHS OF TWO AUTHORS: POE

Edgar Allan Poe, 1809 – 1849

Edgar Allan Poe, the writer and poet who authored *The Raven* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, died October 7, 1849. He was 40.

Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts on January 19, 1809. The son of itinerant actors, he was orphaned at age three. He and his two siblings were sent to live with their uncle and aunt, John and Fanny Allan in Richmond, Virginia.

The Allans lived briefly in England, returning to America in 1820. Poe enrolled in the University of Virginia in 1826, but was forced to leave when his gambling uncle ran out of funds to pay for his nephew's education.

Poe was an aspiring writer who published his first book in 1827 called *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. He didn't use his own name. The publication wasn't well received. Poe entered the army in 1827. Apparently a good soldier, he rose to the rank of sergeant major before he was discharged in 1829.

In 1829, Poe was successful in getting an appointment to West Point. But his stay there was also short lived. While he was in school, his aunt, Fanny Allan, died. His uncle remarried, and he and Poe's relationship soured. A defiant Poe intentionally broke West Point regulations that forced his dismissal a year after he entered.

Poe continued to write poems, this time using his real name. Meanwhile, he had moved to Baltimore, Maryland to live with his aunt, Maria Clemm, and his cousin Virginia.

In 1832, Poe won a \$50 prize for his story, *Found in a Bottle*, that was published in the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor*. In 1835 Poe moved with his aunt and cousin to Richmond where he worked for the *Southern Literary Messenger*. A year later he married his thirteen-year-old cousin, Virginia.

Poe's problem with alcohol abuse led to his eventual firing at the *Messenger* where his editorial writing had been a circulation booster for the paper. He then moved first to New York and then Philadelphia to pursue his writing career.

Some of his best works were penned during the period from 1839 to 1844, including *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Masque of the Red Death*, *Pit and Pendulum*, *The Tell Tale Heart* and *The Raven*.

Poe worked for several publications during this time, and even started his own publication, but financial problems and his continued alcoholism brought these ventures to an end.

Meantime, his wife Virginia died of tuberculosis in 1847. Her death devastated Poe. He continued to drink heavily, and although he seemed on the rebound in 1849, he died mysteriously in Baltimore on October 7, 1849.

- From the National Obituary Archive

Edgar Allan Poe reburied in Baltimore -

BALTIMORE — Edgar Allan Poe, author and poet of much renown, was laid to rest at Westminster Hall on Sunday inside a simple redwood coffin, after a grand theatrical and oratorical send-off to usher him, as he once wrote, "into the region of shadows."

The true Poe remained buried beneath a monument on the church's grounds, near where his body was placed hastily in a family plot soon after his death on Oct. 7, 1849.

But Sunday, the spirit of Poe's death was revived so he could receive the eulogy that eluded him in the days following his demise.

Billed as a proper reburial of Poe, the funeral was part of a series of events commemorating the bicentennial of Poe's birth in 1809, celebrations that have attracted several thousand people, said Poe House curator Jeff Jerome. Hundreds watched Sunday as a horse-drawn undertaker's carriage delivered Poe's casket.

Though already a distinguished writer at the time of his death, Poe died unexpectedly and largely destitute, and his funeral is said to have been attended by only a handful. Sunday, though, he seemed to get his due.

"I think (he) would have been bemused by it, shocked by it," actor Michael Langford said. "But I think it was what he deserved."

- October 12, 2009 by Robert Little, Tribune Newspapers

JUST THE FACTS? ARTICLES ON THE DEATHS OF TWO AUTHORS: DOYLE

July 8, 1930

OBITUARY***Conan Doyle Dead From Heart Attack**

Wireless to The New York Times

LONDON, July 7.--Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes and a noted spiritist, died today at his home, Windlesham, in Crowborough, Sussex. He was 71 years old.

Sir Arthur had been ill from heart trouble for two months, but was making good progress against the malady until last Saturday, when a return of the heart attacks prostrated him.

At his bedside when he died were Lady Doyle, his two sons and one daughter. Sir Arthur's illness was attributed to his work in Scandinavia last October, when he gave a series of lectures on spiritism.

Although Sir Arthur had been in failing health for some time, that did not deter him from his work. Up to the end his enthusiasm for psychic investigation was unflagging. Only last March he caused a sensation by resigning from the Society for Psychical Research, of which he had been a leading member for thirty-six years. His letter of resignation was written from his sickbed.

Told of Spirit Talks

Sir Arthur claimed to have had conversations with the spirits of many great men, including Cecil Rhodes, Earl Haig, Joseph Conrad and others. Adrian Conan Doyle, the novelist's son, said today the whole family believed Sir Arthur would continue to keep in touch with them.

"I know perfectly well I am going to have conversations with my father," he said.

In his later years Sir Arthur often expressed a wish that he should be remembered for his psychic work rather than for his novels. When he celebrated his seventy-first birthday on May 22 he confessed he was tired of hearing about his celebrated character, Sherlock Holmes.

"Holmes is dead," he said. "I have done with him." Ten of Sir Arthur's sixty books are about spiritism.

For years Lady Doyle was his constant companion, accompanying him on all his travels. It was to her the dying novelist spoke his last words.

"You are wonderful," he said with a smile.

He died peacefully. Lady Doyle had nursed him through his illness to the end.

*This is a partial copy of the obituary as printed in The New York Times, 1930.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle___**England****Full name** Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle**Born** May 22, 1859, Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scotland**Died** July 7, 1930, Crowborough, Sussex (aged 71 years 46 days)**Major teams** Marylebone Cricket Club**Batting style** Right-hand bat**Bowling style** Right-arm slow**Education** Stonyhurst; Edinburgh University**Wisden obituary**

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, MD (Edin), the well-known author, born at Edinburgh on May 22, 1859, died at Crowborough, Sussex, on July 7, aged 71. Although never a famous cricketer, he could hit hard and bowl slows with a puzzling flight. For MCC v Cambridgeshire at Lord's, in 1899, he took seven wickets for 61 runs, and on the same ground two years later carried out his bat for 32 against Leicestershire, who had Woodcock, Geeson and King to bowl for them. In the *Times* of October 27, 1915, he was the author of an article on *The Greatest of Cricketers - An Appreciation of Dr Grace*. (It is said that Shacklock, the former Nottinghamshire player, inspired him with the Christian name of his famous character, Sherlock Holmes, and that of the latter's brother Mycroft was suggested by the Derbyshire cricketers.

- Wisden Cricketers' Almanack

GRADES 9 – 10, continued

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.9-10.7. Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

On the Internet, seek other obituary accounts of the life and death of Poe or Doyle, or both. Note the original sources of these obituaries, and cite the similarities and differences in the articles. In each, what facts of the author’s life are emphasized? What influence would these choices in writing have on the reader’s opinion of the dead author?

RI.9-10.8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

Go back to the folktale of Brer Rabbit and Brer Lion. Reread Lion’s statements regarding the weather. Put each detail in this portion of the story into an “if...then” statement. In books and on Internet sites about the weather, study natural evidence of a pending wind storm or hurricane. Was Brer Lion’s reasoning valid? What influenced his initial belief that a terrible storm was coming?

RI.9-10.9. Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington’s Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”), including how they address related themes and concepts.

Students can re-enact these speeches and letters, presenting them as works in the oral tradition. Whether they read or memorize these works, the act of presenting them as spoken-word literature will bring out the nuances of the language used in each, and help them to make connections between the effectively used tools of the written word and the naturally effective tools of storytelling: vocal expression, facial expression, and body language.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.9-10.10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. See RL.9-10.10.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Writing Standards:****Text Type and Purposes**

W.9-10.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.9-10.a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.9-10.b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.

W.9-10.c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

W.9-10.d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.9-10.e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

In an essay, students evaluate which format—spoken word or written word—was a more effective presentation of story, and argue for their points of view in both verbal and written presentations. Students analyze each story, determining the most interesting presentation, and supporting their claims according to the stated standards.

W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.9-10.a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.9-10.b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.

W.9-10.c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

W.9-10.d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

W.9-10.e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.9-10.f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

In Poe’s “The Gold Bug”, the cryptogram is a simple substitution cipher:

53‡‡‡305))6*;4826)4‡.)4‡);806*;48†8
 ¶160))85;1‡(;‡*8†83(88)5*†;46(;88*96
 ‡;8)‡(;485);5*†2:*‡(;4956*2(5*—4)8
 ¶18*;4069285);)6†8)4‡‡;1(‡9;48081;8:8‡
 1;48†85;4)485†528806*81(‡9;48;(88;4
 (‡‡34;48)4‡;161;:188;‡‡;

Its solution depends on recognizing the frequency with which certain symbols are used, the fact that there are no spaces between words, and the careful, logical substitution of letters for symbols. Here is a listing of the letters of the alphabet, arranged from most frequently to least frequently used:

E T A O I N S R H L D C U M F P G W Y B V K X J Q Z

Here is the translation of the cryptogram:

A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat
 forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by north
 main branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death's-head
 a bee line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued

Uh...simple??? It is much, much easier to “solve” this cipher if students read “The Gold Bug” first!

Put away the story. Divide students into teams. Each team works toward solving the cipher. As they work, each team develops a graph of the most frequently used symbols, and a chart of letter substitutions for these symbols. Team members notate the steps they take to solve the cryptogram. Work in this way for two or three periods of time, then, whether or not teams have completed their work, present the solution.

Students then analyze the steps they need to take to get to this solution. Individually, students write informative, explanatory essays about their experience and the solution to Poe’s puzzle, in response to this Poe quotation:

“Human ingenuity cannot concoct a cipher which human ingenuity cannot resolve.”

If the cryptogram is too difficult, use ideas found in Mysterious Messages: A History of Codes and Ciphers, by Gary Blackwood. Students can also create their own cryptography.

Poe's "The Gold Bug", the cryptogram is a simple substitution cipher:

53†††305))6*;4826)4†.)4†);806*;48†8
 ¶60))85;1†(;:†*8†83(88)5*†;46(;88*96
 ?;8)†(;485);5*†2:*†(;4956*2(5*—4)8
 ¶8*;4069285);)6†8)4††;1(†9;48081;8:8†
 1;48†85;4)485†528806*81(†9;48;(88;4
 (†?34;48)4†;161;:188;†?;

Create a graph showing the frequency with which each symbol is used in the cryptogram. Use this information to solve the puzzle. To help you, here is a listing of the letters of the alphabet, arranged from most frequently to least frequently used:

E T A O I N S R H L D C U M F P G W Y B V K X J Q Z

SOLUTION:

GRADES 9 – 10, continued

W.9-10.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Students plan and create:

- *a fictional story in which one character tricks another in order to achieve a positive goal, or one character solves a code or puzzle in order to gain some kind of treasure.*
- *a prequel to “The Gold Bug”, in which the pirate Captain Kidd brings his treasure to Sullivan’s Island. This will require some research on the pirate’s life and adventures, and the island Poe selected as the setting for his story.*

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.9-10.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10 on page 54.)

W.9-10.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Revise, edit, and rewrite the work from W.9-10.3. Add details from Internet and book research. Publish the work as a booklet, with digital illustrations or as a digital story.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.9-10.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W.9-10.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.9-10.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.9-10.a. Apply *grades 9–10 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).

W.9-10.b. Apply *grades 9–10 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).

At the beginning of the year, students create a group list of questions for research projects. These questions must pertain in some way to curricular reading selections. Students each select a question, and create a project based on the topic of that question. Each project must include a comparison of the literature that prompted the question with another work of literature, or a delineation and evaluation of the reasoning of the author (literary nonfiction).

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Range of Writing**

W.9-10.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

As mentioned later, for L.9-10.6: At the end of each week, students will collect, in individual writing folders, words and phrases that have been submitted by members of the class for further study. For extra credit, students may research their selections from these words, and acquire a notebook-section of words that they have studied independently. In this same notebook, students can keep their own writing, so that each student has a unique collection of possibilities for future creative and nonfiction writing (the notebook needs at least three sections: words and phrases research; fiction topics and ideas; nonfiction topics and ideas). In each grading period, a student may create, revise, edit, and submit a larger written work from the ideas and information in her or his folder, for extra credit and/or for a class publication.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Speaking and Listening:****Comprehension and Collaboration**

SL.9-10.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL.9-10.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

SL.9-10.1b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

This process can be a part of all classroom decisions (within reason) on questions and plans for group projects and presentations. A final group project for the year can be conducted as a result of this work. See Jane Stenson’s “A SPOKEN WORD EVENT” at SL.8.5.

SL.9-10.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

SL.9-10.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

Invite two speakers from your local organization of Toastmasters to model the skills needed for SL.9-10.1c. and SL.9-10.1d. as they discuss and debate some aspect of “the universal dream” (see the dream bracelet manufactured for, and read the story of, Wakami USA at www.wakamiusa.com):

“...that all communities have houses with windows...that from all windows a garden is seen...in the gardens there is a ball...the ball belongs to boys and girls that go to school...all schools have PTA’s and parents who work...all those who work may reach markets, and that markets multiply the houses with windows...that in these new windows, birds and trees are multiplied so the sky may be blue and the sun bright for everyone.”

Then invite a storyteller to present a story or program that deals with some aspect of this universal dream.

Encourage students to listen carefully, determine language styles and skills used, and take notes during each presentation. Students respond to these presentations by first discussing the universal dream, utilizing effective listening and speaking skills, then summarizing their perspectives on the topic, justifying their viewpoints, and connecting the concepts of the universal dream to situations within their own neighborhoods and community.

For students’ consideration: How would the attainment of the universal dream compare to the search for treasure in “The Gold Bug”? At a personal level, what is “treasure”?

SL.9-10.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

Read “Our Story” on the wakamiusa.com website, and learn how Wakami USA came to be. Watch its video presentations. Research its origins and original location and founders, and look for information on the population and resources of its original country (Guatemala). Look for newspaper articles regarding the socio-political circumstances of the country. In open discussion, compare them to life in the students’ community, state, and/or country.

SL.9-10.3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

See SL.9-10.1c/SL.9-10.1d Using the notes they have taken on each oral presentation, students may evaluate the speaker’s point of view, reasoning, etc.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**

SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

See SL.9-10.1c and SL.9-10.1d.

SL.9-10.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Create digital presentations, dramatic spoken-word presentations, and visual art in any medium relating to the topic of the universal dream. Present these presentations as a grade-level project for a family-night or PTA/PTO night.

SL.9-10.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9–10 Language standards 1 and 3 here for specific expectations.)

Throughout this set of suggested activities, students have discussed, evaluated, argued, collaborated, and presented in diverse formats, with an emphasis on the use of “American Business English” or Standard English.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Language:****Conventions of Standard English**

L.9-10.1. Demonstrate command of conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.9-10.1a. Use parallel structure.

L.9-10.1b. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

L.9-10.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.9-10.2a. Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

L.9-10.2b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.

L.9-10.2c. Spell correctly.

Every aspect of this collection of activities can be presented both orally and in written-word format. Small-group conversations and individual writing sessions can often facilitate responses in a comfortable and supportive learning environment

Go to the “The Gold Bug” word list. Instead of assigning the whole list to the class, assign a word or two to teams of three students who will:

- *first discuss the word, and agree upon a definition;*
- *present their analysis and created definition of the word, gathering input from their peers;*
- *research the word and use it, as individual authors, in a short story, an essay, a verse, a nonfiction narrative...whatever kind of writing you need them to do...using the conventions of Standard English (American Business English).*

Knowledge of Language

L.9-10.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.9-10.3a Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., *MLA Handbook*, *Turabian’s Manual for Writers*) appropriate for the discipline and writing type.

Invite a storyteller to share a story of his or her own choosing, then select and read from a work suggested in RI.9-10.10. Permit students to interview the storyteller about these selections, and about his or her work. Students then write: a newspaper article from the interview; a review of the storytelling and reading; an essay on storytelling and printed narrative; a blurb for an imagined book title that somehow pertains to the storyteller’s spoken or read narrative, and, a tweet about storytelling or writing.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.9-10.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 9–10 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.9-10.4a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.9-10.4b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., *analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy*).

L.9-10.4c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or its etymology.

L.9-10.4d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Use the word-list challenge for “The Gold Bug” at RL.9-10.4 and the corresponding activity at L.9-10.2.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued

L.9-10.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.9-10.5a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.

L.9-10.5b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

L.9-10.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

***To introduce the concept and share a comparison of the misguided, and often disrespectful, attempts by someone of one culture to write or speak in the cultural dialect of another culture, copy a section of each of the stories, and permit students to “translate” these sections into:*

- *First, the manner of speech they might share in conversation with their peers.*
- *Next, the language I refer to as “American Business English” (“Standard English”, or “formal English”, the language that is used for job interviews, college essays, and in the airport control towers around the world, thus making it an international language)*

Discuss the importance of knowing that written language rarely has the power of universal communication that the spoken word carries, unless we rely on the generic international language that we can call American Business English or Standard English. Its grammar, usage, and punctuation are an essential language for communication around the world. After developing personal translations of the language in each story section, students will revise their translations according to the conventions of Standard English. NOTE: our use of language with our families, among our peers, and for our teachers and potential employers makes us all, at the least, “bilingual”.

If students are mature enough to keep the context of the language in mind, this is the time when the works of Joel Chandler Harris, who published collections of stories taken from African American storytellers as tales of Uncle Remus. There was no Uncle Remus, but his persona is similar to that of Jupiter, another point for discussion—when is loyalty to others a disloyalty to our selves? What is the difference between being a friend and being submissive to the lifestyle and choices of another? In the generation of peer pressure anxieties, such discussions are useful tools for self-growth and self-appreciation.

Invite storytellers to the classroom, and always give your students opportunities to converse with the tellers after they’ve told. After the storyteller’s visit, encourage students to orally share any questions they may have for the storyteller, then write these questions, using the conventions of Standard English, to be submitted via email to the teller. I don’t know of any storyteller who would not reply.

At the end of each week, collect in a folder words and phrases that students submit for further study. For extra credit, students may research these words, and acquire a notebook-section of words that they have studied independently. In this same notebook, students can keep their own writing, so that each student has a unique collection of possibilities for future creative and nonfiction writing (the notebook needs at least three sections: words and phrases research; fiction topics and ideas; nonfiction topics and ideas).

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**History/Social Studies:****Key Ideas and Details**

RH.9-10.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

RH.9-10.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

RH.9-10.3. Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

Create timelines for “The Gold Bug” and “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”; after citing the importance of events along each timeline, and using the backward timeline of “This happened because...”, determine whether events were absolutely necessary for later events to occur.

Craft and Structure

RH.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

Research the era in which each author lived, and the politics, economics, and socio-cultural aspects of that era. Reread the stories if needed, searching for proofs of the era and its impact on the characterizations of each story’s protagonist and antagonists.

Reread the Introduction to Julius Lester’s The Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit. Select two of the folktales he has adapted in this book. Compare the nuances of the language used with the Poe’s more formal English and attempts at African American dialect, and Doyle’s formal, “British” English writing. Which form of the English language seems easiest to understand? Which seems closest to the spoken word? Which descriptive phrases or scenes are difficult to visualize or understand? Permit students to make their own selections and rewrite these portions of the stories in contemporary Standard English.

RH.9-10.5. Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

Listen to actor Gregory Peck depicting Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg address in the television movie “The Blue and the Gray” (1982, CBS). Analyze the structure and phrasing of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address (1863). Graph its development of emotion and meaning by rewriting it on a very long sheet of paper, as if it were a path of hills and valley; the low points or slower pacing in Peck’s speaking manner are the valley, and the emotional or presentational key points are the peaks of the hills.

RH.9-10.6. Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Cryptography is important in both “The Gold Bug” and “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”. How does the author of each work explain the meaning and use of cryptographs (or hieroglyphs)? Tell students to put the explanation into her or his own words, and to write a sentence using the cryptography from one of the two stories. Are there details missing from one of the author’s explanations? If there are, what details seemed to be more important than the explanation of the cryptography?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RH.9-10.7. Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

RH.9-10.8. Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims.

RH.9-10.9. Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

See W.9-10.2 and RH.9-10.6.

GRADES 9 – 10, continued**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

RH.9-10.10. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. *See RL.9-10.10.*

Additional Teachers' Resources:

- A free handbook for "The Gold Bug" by Edgar Allan Poe, from the National Park Service - <http://www.nps.gov/edal/forteachers/upload/teacherhandbook.pdf>
- Images of the scarab beetle from the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art - http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/10.130.910_27.3.206
- Wakami USA at www.wakamiusa.com

Lynette (Lyn) Ford is a fourth-generation Affrilachian storyteller and teaching artist for the Ohio Arts Alliance for Education and the Kennedy Center's Ohio State-Based Collaborative Initiative. In 2012, Lyn was one of thirty teaching artists from across the country who completed the first National Seminar for Teaching Artists at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Lyn's work is included in several storytelling-in-education publications, including The Storytelling Classroom, Literacy Development in the Storytelling Classroom, and Storytelling and QAR Strategies (Phyllis Hostmeyer and Marilyn Adele Kinsella. Libraries Unlimited, 2011). Lyn's book, Affrilachian Tales: Folktales from the African-American Appalachian Tradition (Parkhurst Brothers, Inc., 2012) has won the Anne Izard Storytellers' Choice Award and the Storytelling World Resource Award. Contact Lyn Ford at friedtales2@gmail.com.

GRADES 11 - 12**Contributed by Andrea Permenter**

Reading—Literature: The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Key Ideas and Details

RL. 11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Ask one group of students to retell a portion of the text to another group of students. Have the second group of students, after listening to the retelling, find passages in the text that support the retelling. Have this second group retell the same or another portion of the text to the first group. Have the first group make inferences based on the retelling. Have a volunteer student retell a section of the text to the entire class. Call on students to identify where the text leaves plot points open-ended and to tell a story that resolves the uncertainties.

RL. 11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

Have students work in pairs to identify two or more themes of the text at hand. Then have the first partner retell the story in his or her own words. When the student finishes, have his or her partner identify moments of the retelling in which the theme is developed. Have students switch roles and repeat the exercise to gain more perspective on the same theme. Additionally or alternatively, conduct the following storytelling project—an invaluable way for students to personalize and internalize themes and plot elements of any given story.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 and 12:
***THE GREAT GATSBY* GENRE SKITS**

English 11 and 12

The Great Gatsby

Retelling of Chapter 7

Genre Skits

Directions: In your groups, you will be interpreting, rewriting, and performing Chapter 7 of *The Great Gatsby* from the standpoint of a specific genre in order to deepen your understanding of the plot elements and themes. Each group will select a genre and rewrite the chapter according to your understanding of the criteria of that specific genre. In other words, in your retelling, create a modern interpretation of this chapter while mirroring a specific modern-day genre.

Musts: Each group must create a list of criteria for the selected genre in order to understand the boundaries for performance, each performance must include the main events of the chapter, and each performance must include at least five lines or phrases of the actual text.

Genre Choices: Commercial, Talk Show, Sit-com, Soap Opera, Reality Show, Documentary, Cartoon, Game Show, Children’s Program, Opera, News Show, Horror, Action, etc.

***Note to Instructors:** Have students meet and decide (use a first-come, first-served basis) on which genre they would like to use. Give students between one and two full class periods in order to complete their retellings and performance rehearsals of the chapter within the boundaries of their specific genres. Encourage students to incorporate any costume, prop, or scenery elements into their performances. Create a rubric for grading as you see fit in terms of what aspects (e.g., the written part, the performance part, integration of lines from the text, prop/costume elements, overall creativity) you would like to emphasize.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Ask each student to write a journal entry delineating the setting of a story, the key plot points, and the first detail used to describe each character. Next, ask students to pair-share what they came up with at this literal level and move toward analysis by having the pairs discuss why the author chose to address these story elements in the way he or she did. Finally, ask each pair of students to develop a creative and/or personal narrative utilizing the same techniques as the given author.

Craft and Structure

RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

Read one of William Shakespeare’s sonnets aloud several times, asking for volunteer student readers as well. After modeling the following with the first two or three lines, have students paraphrase the sonnet line by line to ensure comprehension. Call on several different students to read their paraphrases aloud, emphasizing the ways in which a story is told by the sonnet. Then ask students to go back into the original text, pulling out several examples of specific word choices and unique or surprising imagery. Ask students to share their findings with the class, connecting the word choices and images to the way in which they enhance the story being told.

RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Choose any novel or story, perhaps John Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men in particular. After an initial complete reading of it, reread the first several pages of the first chapter and the first several pages of the final chapter, providing an example of “completion and return,” to use film terminology. Hold a class discussion about the effect of this use of completion and return, emphasizing the way in which it highlights the novel’s timeless, universal theme of loneliness and the American Dream. Have students then craft and share personal stories that begin and end in the same way with regard to an element of story, whether it be plot, setting, mood, tone, or theme.

RL.11-12.6. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Choose any work by Mike Royko or Mark Twain (among others, of course). Read the work aloud as well as silently, multiple times. Ask students to paraphrase a literal interpretation of the story being told. Then ask them to paraphrase a figurative (i.e. intended meaning) interpretation of the story being told. Have them synthesize these two paraphrases to gain understanding of how apprehension of the real meaning of the text depends upon careful detection of the author’s point of view and tone.

RL.11-12.7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

After studying Shakespeare’s Hamlet, choose the famous “To be or not to be” soliloquy and show the scene from the Lawrence Olivier production, the Mel Gibson production, and the Ethan Hawke production. Encourage students to make careful notes as to how each production features certain choices as to how this aspect of Hamlet’s story is told. Lead a discussion in which these choices are analyzed and synthesized against the written word. What is left out? What is added? What are the lighting and setting choices? What are the effects of these choices on the story? As a follow-up activity or for homework, ask students to write a personal anecdote, perhaps a story they’ve heard about themselves from their childhood. Ask them to devise at least two different “film” versions of the anecdote that would emphasize different aspects of their story, just as in Hamlet.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued**RL.11-12.8. N/A**

RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Have students study the novels Of Mice and Men and The Great Gatsby from the overlapping thematic standpoint of the American Dream. Have a portion of the students in class retell each story in a set time frame, such as in 6 to 8 minute oral storytelling recitations. Ask the other portion of students to synthesize the thematic links between the two novels and retell (again, in 6 to 8 minute oral storytelling recitations) both stories together as one, in which the characters and settings and plot-points overlap and coincide.

RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

In addition to reading stories, dramas, and poems, students will greatly benefit from listening to stories, dramas, and poems delivered and performed by professional storytellers. When reading is complemented by storytelling performances of the text—or part of the text—at hand, long-term integration of the material is more likely.

Reading—Informational Text: The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Key Ideas and Details

RI.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Ask one group of students to retell a portion of the text to another group of students. Have the second group of students, after listening to the retelling, find passages in the text that support the retelling. Have this second group retell the same or another portion of the text to the first group. Have the first group make inferences based on the retelling. Have a volunteer student retell a section of the text to the entire class. Call on students to identify where the text leaves plot points open-ended and to tell a story that resolves the uncertainties.

RI.11-12.2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

Have students work in pairs to identify two or more themes of the text at hand. Then have the first partner retell the story in his or her own words. When the student finishes, have his or her partner identify moments of the retelling in which the theme is developed. Have students switch roles and repeat the exercise to gain more perspective on the same theme.

RI.11-12.3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Bringing in a Native American storyteller to the classroom to perform a cultural story will open up a particular set of complexities, as the Native American worldview is that of a circle rather than that of a straight line. Students have to truly listen in order for the meaning to be made. Rich discussions emerge from the characters, themes, and plot developments in the story orally presented.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued**Craft and Structure**

RI.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

Invite a professional storyteller into the classroom to tell a series of his or her personal and/or adapted stories. As they listen, students will jot down words and phrases that jump out at them during the performance. Invite students to open up a discussion with the storyteller of why he or she chose the particular words and phrases noticed.

RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes the point clear, convincing, and engaging.

Invite a professional storyteller into the classroom to tell a series of his or her personal and/or adapted stories. After they listen to each story, students will jot down an outline—from memory—of the sequence of events in the story, paying particular attention to the way in which the storyteller has structured these events within the story. Have students share their findings and discuss in what ways the structure of the story enhances the moral of that story.

RI.11-12.6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

*Read excerpts from a work such as Ben Franklin’s *Autobiography*, Thomas Jefferson’s “The Declaration of Independence,” Thomas Paine’s “The Crisis, No. 1,” Black Hawk’s “For More Than a Hundred Winters Our Nation Was a Powerful, Happy, and United People,” and Abraham Lincoln’s “The Gettysburg Address.” Discuss the ways in which storytelling elements emerge from these texts in terms of effective rhetoric, style, and persuasiveness.*

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Invite a bilingual storyteller into the classroom to perform stories and poetry about the importance of speaking two languages. Listen to his or her stories and poems, study the text of these stories and poems, and ultimately create artwork that reflects the message of the storyteller’s work.

RI.11-12.8. Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses).

Choose 6 seminal U.S. texts to complement the literary time period being studied. Divide the students into 6 groups who are then responsible for becoming expert storytellers of one of the 6 texts. Provide ample time for students in each group to read their assigned text aloud multiple times. Advise them to become so familiar with the text that they comfortable to ultimately perform it as a story in front of the class. Provide study questions to each group and instruct students to create an outline of the text. After performing the work in front of the class, each group will present its list of key points from the outline and also synthesize the text’s influence.

RI.11-12.9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Using the four works named above, divide the students into four large groups. Each group member receives a particular task of analysis regarding the themes, purposes, and rhetorical features, divided and distributed at the teacher’s discretion. Provide ample time for students in each group to read their assigned text aloud multiple times. Advise them to become so familiar with the text that they comfortable to ultimately perform it as a story in front of the class. On presentation day, students from each group will perform the text as a story. After this entry into the text, other students from the group will comment on the themes, purposes, and rhetorical features embedded in the work.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Storytellers are experts at bringing to life a wide range of literary nonfiction. After a visit from a storyteller of this caliber, students should be invited to retell the story in a variety of mediums, such as through music, art, drama, and poetry. Transferring the text into a variety of different genres cements the content in terms of comprehension and makes long-term retention more probable.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

Writing: The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Text Types and Purposes

W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

W.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

W.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

After a storyteller’s performance, students will write a traditional five-paragraph essay in which they analyze and evaluate one aspect of the storyteller’s piece.

W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.

W.11-12.2c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

W.11-12.2d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

W.11-12.2e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

W.11-12.2f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows form and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of that topic).

After a storyteller's performance on which students should be advised to take notes and obtain direct quotes, students will write a traditional five-paragraph essay in which they analyze and evaluate a topic-driven aspect of the storyteller's piece.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 AND 12: ANALYTICAL ESSAY**English 11 & English 12****Storytelling Studies****Essay Assignment**

Directions: Choose one of the following two topics pertaining to our guest storyteller’s performance on which to write a formal, focused, five paragraph essay.

Be sure to include several sentences of background information that lead to a strong thesis statement at the close of your introductory paragraph. Begin each body paragraph with a transitional word or phrase and a strong topic sentence. Then provide at least three specific examples and one important quotation from the storyteller’s performance to support that topic sentence. Be sure to restate your thesis, without sounding repetitive, at the start of your concluding paragraph. Also, don’t forget to include an original, creative title for your essay.

Use this sheet to organize your thoughts and do some brainstorming and outlining, and then write a draft of your response on a separate sheet of paper. The first and final copies to be turned in must be typed and double spaced, as we will do some peer editing on your first draft. Follow the attached checklist when proofreading to ensure a final product of which you can be proud.

Topic Choices:

- 1) What three specific ideas has the storyteller contributed to the general knowledge of his or her listeners? As you brainstorm, you may want to begin by thinking about what he or she taught you. Do not merely summarize what he or she has contributed; make interpretations and analyze.

- 2) What are three specific ways in which the storyteller delivers his or her message? In other words, what rhetorical devices has he or she used throughout the performance? Be sure to identify the message and three ways it is delivered in your thesis.

Due Date: A first draft of your essay, typed and double spaced, is due _____ at the beginning of class. You will peer edit and conference with me about it in order to make improvements. The final draft, to be turned in with the first draft and with the peer edit sheet, is due _____.

English 11 and English 12**Storytelling Studies Essay****Peer Coaching Checklist**

Writer _____

Readers _____

Checklist. Write “yes” or “no” after each item**Format:**

- 1) Heading complete, in upper left, double spaced.
- 2) Title is clever, centered, not underlined, not in all caps, not in quotes, not bold, etc.
- 3) Double-spaced throughout, 12 point font, Times/Times New Roman.
- 4) Neat appearance, adequate margins, appropriate spacing, stapled upper left.
- 5) Indentations to indicate new paragraphs; no extra spacing between paragraphs.
- 6) Meets length requirement; appropriate number of paragraphs & sentences.
- 7) Appropriate tense used throughout (present tense when writing about literature).
- 8) Written in the 3rd person (no “I”, “me”, “we”, “you” statements).
- 9) Spelling is correct.
- 10) Punctuation and grammar are correct.

Content:

- 1) Introduction begins with an interesting, attention-getting sentence.
- 2) The introduction includes a mention of the title(s) and author(s) to be referenced.
- 3) The introduction includes a strong, specific thesis statement.
- 4) Each paragraph after the introduction begins with a transitional device.
- 5) Each body paragraph begins with a strong topic sentence.
- 6) All of the details and examples in each body paragraph support/match the topic sentence with an emphasis on analysis rather than on summary.
- 7) One quote per body paragraph is included, incorporated, and cited.
- 8) The entire paper remains focused on the thesis statement.
- 9) The paper flows naturally from sentence to sentence; sentences are varied and mature.
- 10) Conclusion matches the focus of the paper and the introduction but is not repetitive.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.11-12.3a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

W.11-12.3b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

W.11-12.3c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).

W.11-12.3d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

W.11-12.3e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

After a storyteller's visit, presentation, and workshop of Joseph Campbell's and/or Mary Henderson's myth model, assign students a narrative essay assignment that puts them at the center of their own personal myth based on a real-life experience.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 AND 12: NARRATIVE ESSAY A**English 11 & English 12****Storytelling Studies****Essay Assignment**

Directions: Based on our work with our guest storyteller, you will write a five paragraph narrative essay in the first person (using “I” and “me” statements) on a part of your life that exemplifies your own journey as a hero in your own myth. In your introduction, you will indicate what your particular “Call to Adventure” was, and you will then select three other steps from the hero handout (relisted for you below) to focus on in your three body paragraphs. Each topic sentence in each body paragraph must specify the step you have selected. Your conclusion will mention the “Final Victory” to your personal myth. Be sure to use descriptive details, figurative language, and sensory imagery throughout your narrative.

Steps on the Hero’s Journey:

- 1) The Call to Adventure (introduction)**
- 2) Threshold Guardians
- 3) The Wise and Helpful Guide & The Magic Talisman
- 4) Refusal of the Call
- 5) Passing the First Threshold
- 6) Hero Partners
- 7) Mystical Insight
- 8) The Labyrinth and The Rescue of the Princess
- 9) Losing the Guide
- 10) Hero Deeds & Dragon Slayers
- 11) The Dark Road of Trials
- 12) The Hunt
- 13) Into the Belly of the Beast
- 14) The Mystical Marriage
- 15) The Sacred Grove
- 16) Sacrifice & Betrayal
- 17) The Hero’s Return
- 18) Resurrection
- 19) Monster Combat
- 20) The Resurgence of Evil
- 21) The Enchanted Forest and Helpful Animals
- 22) Descent into the Underworld
- 23) Atonement with the Father
- 24) Unmasking
- 25) Final Victory (conclusion)**

Possible Topics:

- An event that helped to form your identity and how you relate to others
- A time when expressing yourself to someone (parents, friends) was difficult
- A time when you became distracted from doing something important
- A task or goal you accomplished with difficulty but ultimate success
- A frightening experience you had to go through
- An unusual predicament in which you became stuck
- A place that holds magic, mystery, and memories for you

Due Dates:

First Draft, to be peer edited using the Peer Edit Checklist, typed, due _____.

Final Draft, to be turned into me with the First Draft and the Peer Edit Checklist, typed, due _____.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 AND 12: NARRATIVE ESSAY B**English 11 and English 12****Storytelling Studies Narrative Essay****Peer Coaching Checklist**

Writer _____

Readers _____

_____**Checklist. Write “yes” or “no” after each item****Format:**

- 1) Heading complete, in upper left, double spaced.
- 2) Title is clever, centered, not underlined, not in all caps, not in quotes, not bold, etc.
- 3) Double-spaced throughout, 12 point font, Times/Times New Roman.
- 4) Neat appearance, adequate margins, appropriate spacing, stapled upper left.
- 5) Indentations to indicate new paragraphs; no extra spacing between paragraphs.
- 6) Meets length requirement; appropriate number of paragraphs & sentences.
- 7) Appropriate tense used throughout (present tense when writing about literature).
- 8) Written in the 1st person (“I” and “me” statements allowed, but no “you” statements).
- 9) Spelling is correct.
- 10) Punctuation and grammar are correct.

Content:

- 1) Introduction begins with an interesting, attention-getting sentence.
- 2) The introduction includes a mention of the Call to Adventure.
- 3) The introduction includes a strong, specific thesis statement.
- 4) Each paragraph after the introduction begins with a transitional device.
- 5) Each body paragraph begins with a strong, specific topic sentence that mentions a step on the hero’s journey.
- 6) All of the details and examples in each body paragraph support/match the topic sentence with an emphasis on rhetorical devices, sensory imagery, and figurative language.
- 7) The entire paper remains focused on the thesis statement.
- 8) The paper flows naturally from sentence to sentence; sentences are varied and mature.
- 9) Conclusion mentions the Final Victory.
- 10) Conclusion matches the focus of the paper and the introduction but is not repetitive or abrupt.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

Storytellers are experts at creating written work that is audience-appropriate in terms of development, organization and style. Bringing in a professional storyteller to model his or her process of developing a new story through the writing process will rejuvenate the writing curriculum in any classroom.

W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Many storytellers are published authors as well. Bringing in a professional, published storyteller to speak of the number of drafts that go into a final product and what it is like working with an editor is inspirational and instructive to students who tend to think that “hot off the press” is the way to write.

W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Many storytellers maintain webpages, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and personal blogs, receiving and responding to hundreds of posts centered on their writings. Inviting a professional storyteller who can speak to the demands and to the importance of these methods of maintaining connections to people globally is a wonderful way to direct students--most of whom are already engaged in some capacity in these media—and their writing in a more productive, academically-based manner.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Invite a professional storyteller into the classroom to speak to the importance of research when developing a new story. Ask the storyteller to model ways in which he or she conducts these research projects in order to further his or her career.

W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

Assign a research project in which students must find information on a variety of contemporary storytellers as if they were planning to hire one to perform for the student body of the school. The instructor may choose to provide an initial list of storytellers, or he or she may wish to let students generate their own lists as a first step in the process. The ultimate goal would be to write a persuasive, five paragraph, research-based essay arguing for three different storytellers to come to the school as part of a storytelling festival at year’s end or any appropriate time in the school calendar.

W.11-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11-12.9a. Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).

W.11-12.9b. Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses]”).

Assign a research project in which students must find information on a variety of contemporary storytellers as if they were planning to hire one to perform for the student body of the school. The instructor may choose to provide an initial list of storytellers, or he or she may wish to let students generate their own lists as a first step in the process. The

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

ultimate goal would be to write a persuasive, five paragraph, research-based essay arguing for three different storytellers to come to the school as part of a storytelling festival at year's end or any appropriate time in the school calendar. Require that each body paragraph include a minimum of two direct quotations, complete with correct in-text citations, from multiple sources listed on a separate Works Cited page.

Range of Writing

W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.

Invite a storyteller to the classroom to speak of the importance of the practice of writing. From daily journal entries to longer, research-based projects and stories, this practice is integral to the work of a storyteller and to a student.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

Speaking & Listening: The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL.11-12.1a .Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

SL.11-12.1b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

SL.11-12.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

After having read the novel The Awakening, divide students into 6 diverse groups, based on previous knowledge of students and their work habits, etc., for the following project. Before assigning it, bring in a professional storyteller to illuminate the importance of the use of motifs in story. Ask the storyteller to perform material rich in motifs, and have him or her lead discussions of how the motifs bring out the theme(s) of the stories.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 AND 12: GROUP MOTIFS**English 11 and English 12**

Permenter

The Awakening

Group Motif Storytelling Project

Name _____

Objective: The idea behind this project is to deepen your exploration of the themes of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* through a careful study, in-depth analysis, and story-based presentation of one of its many motifs. Again, a motif is a recurring structure, contrast, or literary device that helps to develop and inform the text's major themes.

Instructions: Your group has been assigned one of the following motifs: birds, children, the sea, music, the lady in black and the two lovers, houses. On a large piece of posterboard, your group is to represent your given motif in an attractive, visually appealing, informative manner worthy of a storytelling presentation. In addition to including the name of your motif in a prominent place on your posterboard, there are 5 main elements to this project:

- Quotes/Passages: You must include on your posterboard, legibly, at least 5 significant passages in which your motif appears. Be sure to cite chapter and page numbers.
- Visuals: You must include on your posterboard at least 3 pictures of your motif. These images may come from magazines, computer graphics, or your own original art.
- Chart/Graph: You must also include some sort of statistical representation of your motif, such as a bar graph indicating where and when your motif appears in the novel.
- Group Essay: Finally, you must include original text. In other words, each group member must contribute at least a paragraph of analysis connecting your motif to the larger themes of the novel. You may want to consider dividing the book into sections for this part of the project so as to avoid repetition of the same appearances of the motif.

Group Presentation: Ultimately, your group will present your completed project by telling a story that includes the process of your work together, your decisions, your elements on the posterboard, the plot elements your project addresses in the novel, and the way in which your motif illuminates the theme.

A STORYTELLING PROJECT FOR GRADES 11 AND 12: GROUP MOTIFS, Grading

Grading: This project is worth a total of 50 points. You will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

All 5 quotes are included and are wisely selected

5 6 7 8 9 10

All 3 visuals are included and are nicely presented

5 6 7 8 9 10

A chart or graph is included and clearly explained

5 6 7 8 9 10

All members contributed analytical, original text

5 6 7 8 9 10

Project is neat, creative, informative, and clever

5 6 7 8 9 10

Group members worked together in a productive manner

5 6 7 8 9 10

Group members held preliminary conversations in order to address the topic at hand

5 6 7 8 9 10

Group members determined what additional research was needed and completed it

5 6 7 8 9 10

Group members came to discussions prepared

5 6 7 8 9 10

Group presentations of motif projects contained elements of storytelling

5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

Total: /100

Grade:

Due Date:

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Listen to a recorded storytelling performance. Jot down ways in which the storyteller addresses societal issues, raises awareness, and calls for action. Hold a discussion evaluating the credibility of the teller after taking notes, doing some research on the issues raised, and listening to the recording a second time.

SL.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

After conducting a review of the terms “point of view,” “reasoning,” “evidence,” “rhetoric,” “emphasis,” “word choice,” and “tone,” ask a storyteller to perform a story in his or her repertoire that calls for specific action in terms of a societal issue or cause. The next day, ask students to journal about the storyteller’s performance, directing them to focus on the teller’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. Then hold a class discussion as to how effectively the teller conveyed his or her stance, premises, and links among ideas through word choice, points of emphasis, and tone.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Invite a storyteller to your classroom and have students listen to his or her performance. Ask him or her to conduct a workshop with students in which they develop their own stories to perform to one another, with particular emphasis on choosing a particular perspective to convey, supporting it with a clear line of reasoning, and providing a clear and organized presentation of the final product.

SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g. textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

After having developed a personal story with the aid of a professional storyteller’s workshop, students should add between two and three digital media elements in order to augment their stories. Once these new versions of the stories are presented, hold a class discussion inviting students to compare and contrast the versions. Ask them thought-provoking questions that have them consider whether the media adds or detracts from any given story. By example, students will learn when digital media enhances an oral presentation and when it removes an element of mystery or imagination inherent in the story itself.

SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Professional storytellers are experts at adapting their performances to their varied audiences and age groups. Invite a storyteller to perform a story or a set of stories to the class at their age level and to then perform the same story or set of stories to the class as if the students were of a different audience, e.g. preschoolers, college professors, etc. Ask students to note the ways in which the storyteller modifies his or her speech, syntax, and diction.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

The CCS anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Language:

Conventions of Standard English

L.11-12.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.11-12.1a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

L.11-12.1b. Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner’s Modern American Usage*) as needed.

Read and study a variety of stories. Discuss the variety of ways in which grammar and usage are incorporated into the story. For example, study one section of the novel Of Mice and Men. Examine the narration and its structure as compared to the dialogue and its structure in terms of grammatical conventions. Use reference materials to ascertain the more complex structures of the narrative sections and the words of slang in the dialogue sections. Direct a discussion in which students are able to utilize command of the conventions of standard English as they explain Steinbeck’s usage.

L.11-12.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.11-12.2a. Observe hyphenation conventions.

L.11-12.2b. Spell correctly.

Study stories that make exquisite use of the hyphen. The opening and closing pages of The Great Gatsby offer up excellent examples of the hyphen’s use. Ask students to discuss the effect of its use on the cadence of the storytelling nature of these pages and to mirror it in their own story that you might assign as an enhancement project to the study of the text. Utilize a rubric that emphasizes proper use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Knowledge of Language

L.11-12.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.11-12.3a. Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., *Tufte’s Artful Sentences*) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.

Assign the novel The Catcher in the Rye. Have students select a favorite one to two page section and rehearse it for an oral interpretation storytelling of it. After their performance, students should be prepared to discuss the way in which Salinger’s syntax achieves a certain effect in terms of meaning, style, and characterization.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.11-12.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 11-12 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.11-12.4a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.11-12.4b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., *conceive, conception, conceivable*).

L.11-12.4c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

L.11-12.4d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

GRADES 11 – 12, continued

Invite a storyteller to come into the classroom bringing copies of his or her published works. Ask students to read and annotate the stories specifically for words with which they are not entirely familiar. Have them write down their educated guess as to the words' definitions based on context, and then have them use dictionaries and/or internet search engines to confirm or deny their own definitions. Bring their work to a whole class discussion with the storyteller to discuss word choice and function in terms of the overall story.

L.11-12.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.11-12.5a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

L.11-12.5b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

Ask students to listen closely to a storyteller's presentation, instructing them to jot down and take notes on any figures of speech or striking word choices they notice while listening. Divide students into groups after the storyteller's performance. Ask students to share the figures of speech and striking word choices they noticed with their group members and to make a master compilation. Open up the groupwork to a full class discussion to which each group contributes their observations of the storyteller's purpose in using certain figures of speech and particular words.

L.11-12.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Invite a storyteller to come into the classroom bringing copies of his or her published works and website information. Ask students to read and annotate the stories and website specifically for words with which they are not entirely familiar. Have them write down their educated guess as to the words' definitions based on context, and then have them use dictionaries and/or internet search engines to confirm or deny their own definitions. Bring their work to a whole class discussion with the storyteller to discuss word choice and function in terms of the overall story.

History/Social Studies interface:

Key Ideas and Details

RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Have students listen to a storyteller's performance of one of his or her nonfiction stories, jotting down key phrases that the storyteller speaks. After the storyteller's performance, ask students to come up with a strong topic sentence that identifies the theme of the story as a whole and names the main technique the storyteller uses to convey that theme. Then have the students support their topic sentences with at least three examples and two direct quotes from the storyteller's performance, integrating and citing the quote properly. Finally, ask the students to close the paragraph with a strong concluding line.

RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationship among the key details and ideas.

Ask students to write a short research paper on one aspect of the history of storytelling as a career in our country. Require that they take notes on notecards from a variety of primary and secondary sources before they synthesize the information into a clear thesis with supporting paragraphs that incorporate both summary of key information and analysis of the sources utilized.

RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Have students read a variety of creation myths from a variety of cultural traditions, not the least of which should be Native American. In coordination with a history teacher, assign an essay in which students compare and contrast historical developments among the cultural traditions studied with the myths that accompany their heritage.

GRADES 11 – 12, continued**Craft and Structure**

RH.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist No. 10*).

Invite a professional storyteller into the classroom to tell a series of his or her personal and/or adapted stories. As they listen, students will jot down words and phrases that jump out at them during the performance. Invite students to open up a discussion with the storyteller of why he or she chose the particular words and phrases noticed.

RH.11-12.5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

Invite a professional storyteller into the classroom to tell a series of his or her personal and/or adapted stories. After they listen to each story, students will jot down an outline—from memory—of the sequence of events in the story, paying particular attention to the way in which the storyteller has structured these events within the story. Have students share their findings and discuss in what ways the structure of the story enhances the moral of that story.

RH.11-12.6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Choose a historical event such as the Trail of Tears. Invite at least two Native American professional storytellers to perform stories pertaining to the Trail of Tears. As students listen to the performances, they should take notes on each teller's point of view, claims, reasoning, and evidence. Small group discussions should then follow, in which students share their findings with one another. After further discussion in a large group with the storytellers' leadership, students should synthesize the findings into a response paper that evaluates the two points of view of the Trail of Tears utilizing a strong thesis statement and clear body paragraphs delineating the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address questions or solve a problem.

Invite a bilingual storyteller into the classroom to perform stories and poetry about the importance of speaking two languages. Listen to his or her stories and poems, study the text of these stories and poems, and ultimately create artwork that reflects the message of the storyteller's work.

RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

Invite a bilingual storyteller into the classroom to perform stories and poetry about the importance of speaking two languages. Listen to his or her stories and poems, study the text of these stories and poems, conduct research about the importance of speaking two languages and the upsurge of dual-language immersion schools, and ultimately corroborate the message of the storyteller's work.

RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Have students conduct research on the history of one or more storytelling festivals held either nationally or internationally. Utilizing at least 5 different types of sources, including academic journals, media sources from the festivals themselves, and internet databases, students should take notes and synthesize their information in order to produce a brief essay outlining the history of their chosen storytelling festival.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RH.11-12.10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

In addition to reading history/social studies texts, students will greatly benefit from listening to elements of these texts delivered and performed by professional storytellers. When reading is complemented by storytelling performances of the text—or part of the text—at hand, long-term integration of the material is more likely. Storytellers are experts at bringing to life a wide range of nonfiction. After a visit from a storyteller of this caliber, students should be invited to

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retell the text in a variety of mediums, such as through music, art, drama, and poetry. Transferring the text into a variety of different genres cements the content in terms of comprehension and makes long-term retention of the facts at hand more probable.

Science and Technology Interface:

Key Ideas and Details

RST.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account.

Invite a storyteller to work with students to convert the content of science and technical texts into a story. Transferring the text into the genre of fact-based storytelling cements the content in terms of comprehension and makes long-term retention of the facts at hand more probable.

RST.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

Have students work in pairs to identify the central ideas of the text at hand. Then have the first partner retell the text in his or her own words. When the student finishes, have his or her partner identify moments of the retelling in which the conclusions of the text are developed. Have students switch roles and repeat the exercise to gain more perspective on the same conclusions.

RST.11-12.3. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks; analyze the specific results based on explanations in the text.

After the complex multistep procedure has been carried out, have lab partners take turns telling the story of what happened. Once they have told the story, ask them to analyze the results. Storytelling helps solidify the experience and make long-term retention of the material more likely.

Craft and Structure

RST.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to *grades 11-12 texts and topics*.

Have students make a list of domain-specific words required for a particular scientific or technical context. Then, ask students to craft a fictional story in which the characters and/or narrative sections of the story correctly utilize the words students have listed. Share the stories in order to reinforce the original science/technical lesson.

RST.11-12.5. Analyze how the text structures information or ideas into categories or hierarchies, demonstrating understanding of the information or ideas.

After completion of the reading assignment, have students work in groups given specific sections of the text to outline into its categories or hierarchies. Each group should then come up with a story that touches on each of the categories or hierarchies uncovered in their initial analysis of the text. The story should be aimed at a younger audience, as when students are invited to simplify a complicated text, they tend to garner a stronger understanding of its complexities.

RST.11-12.6. Analyze the author’s purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, identifying important issues that remain unresolved.

Discuss the ways in which storytelling elements emerge from these texts in terms of effective explanation, description of a procedure, or discussion of an experiment. In other words, are there any anecdotes provided? What is the effect of these anecdotes in clarifying the procedure or experiment?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RST.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Divide the class into however many groups as you have different types of sources of information, assigning each group to the study of the material through one of those sources. Have groups prepare a story to tell the class about what using their source was like, what they learned, and how they learned it.

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RST.11-12.8. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.

Divide students into four groups: one to focus on hypotheses of the text, one to focus on data, one to focus on analysis, and one to focus on conclusions. After several days of working together and conducting additional research on their aspect of the text, students should be able to clearly explain through a storyboard method what they have learned.

RST.11-12.9. Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

After different groups present information on their particular (teacher-designated) source, students will synthesize the presentations into a cohesive story in which the main character explores the topic at hand through the range of sources. Having students retell their own and their classmates' experiences with the material through a fictional character will crystallize the information at hand.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RST.11-12.10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 11-12 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

In addition to reading science/technical texts, students will greatly benefit from listening to elements of these texts delivered and performed by professional storytellers. When reading is complemented by storytelling performances of the text—or part of the text—at hand, long-term integration of the material is more likely. Storytellers are experts at bringing to life a wide range of nonfiction. After a visit from a storyteller of this caliber, students should be invited to retell the text in a variety of mediums, such as through music, art, drama, and poetry. Transferring the text into a variety of different genres cements the content in terms of comprehension and makes long-term retention of the facts at hand more probable.

Writing interface:

Text Types and Purposes

WHST.11-12.1. Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.

WHST.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

WHST.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

WHST.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

WHST.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

WHST.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

Have students conduct research on three different professional storytellers by visiting their websites and taking notes. Assign a multi-paragraph essay in which students begin with an introduction that features background information on the art of storytelling leading to a thesis that names the three storytellers the student has selected. Instruct students to begin each body paragraph with a strong topic sentence that names the storyteller the student will discuss in that paragraph. Then have students bring the paper to a close with a strong conclusion that links the art of storytelling and these three specific storytellers together.

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WHST.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

WHST.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

WHST.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

WHST.11-12.2c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

WHST.11-12.2d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.

WHST.11-12.2e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Assign a discipline-specific essay or research paper. Invite a published storyteller into the classroom when the students bring their first drafts. Storytellers are exceedingly experienced with the writing process and many are skilled at conducting workshops to help individuals improve their written work and to polish it for presentation or publication.

(See note; not applicable as a separate requirement)

Production and Distribution of Writing

WHST.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.

Invite a storyteller into the classroom to model a performance that is appropriate to his or her mission and audience base. Ask the storyteller to discuss the process of writing the piece performed for these purposes. Then assign students the task of producing written work that they will then perform for the class so they keep strongly in mind their reason for sharing the story as well as who their audience is.

WHST.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

With a visiting storyteller's guidance, work in groups in a peer-edit or workshop setting in order to polish whatever discipline-specific written assignment is at hand.

WHST.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

In conjunction with a storyteller's ongoing guidance on this discipline-specific written assignment, have students finalize their work through multiple drafts, peer-edits, and workshops. When the work is finalized, utilize a publishing program in order to create a class collection of the writings completed.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

WHST.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

After students complete a research project on a discipline-specific assignment, divide students into groups and have students tell the story of their research project experience. The telling student should include what question he or she attempted to answer through the research, how he or she had to narrow or broaden the topic, and how he or she synthesized multiple sources. After each student shares his or her story, the listening students should ask specific

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questions that arose during the story so as to challenge the telling student to demonstrate even deeper understanding of his or her subject and process.

WHST.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

A visit from a professional, published storyteller can impress upon students the importance of and sheer necessity of doing careful, thorough research from a variety of sources that need to be evaluated for strengths and limitations. Storytellers, in developing their work, do painstaking research to ensure that they have personalized their story in the face of how it may have been done before, particularly if it's a traditional tale. Storytellers can certainly speak to the challenges of avoiding plagiarism, knowing what is and what is not in the lexicon, and how to cite their varied sources.

WHST.11-12.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

For a homework assignment, ask students to convert the material at hand into a story with a theme, a plot arch, characters, and dialogue. When this task is completed, conduct a Socratic Seminar in which several volunteers read their stories to the rest of the students. To earn discussion points in class for that day, the non-reading students must draw evidence from the original text to support the interpretation of it shared in story form by the volunteer students. This is a truly fun, creative, story-based way to cement the details of the original text in students' minds.

Range of Writing

WHST.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Storytellers excel at the varied practices of the skill of writing. A visit from a storyteller who can speak to his or her daily habit of writing will augment the goal of helping students see the importance of the process--in any discipline.

Note

Students' narrative skills continue to grow in these grades. The Standards require that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts. In history/social studies, students must be able to incorporate narrative accounts into their analyses of individuals or events of historical import. In science and technical subjects, students must be able to write precise enough descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they use in their investigations or technical work that others can replicate them and (possibly) reach the same results.

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Resources:

- FIGURES, FACTS AND FABLES: TELLING TALES IN SCIENCE AND MATH. Barbara Lipke. Heinemann, NH, 1996.
- LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THE STORYTELLING CLASSROOM. Sherry Norfolk, Jane Stenson, and Diane Williams, editors. Libraries Unlimited, 2009.
- SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE STORYTELLING CLASSROOM. Jane Stenson and Sherry Norfolk, editors. Parkhurst Bros. Publishing, 2012.
- STORY PROOF: THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE STARTLING POWER OF STORY. Kendall Haven. Libraries Unlimited, 2007.
- THE STORYTELLING CLASSROOM: APPLICATIONS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM. Sherry Norfolk, Jane Stenson, and Diane Williams, editors. Libraries Unlimited, 2006.
- STORYTELLING AND QAR STRATEGIES. Phyllis Hostmeyer and Marilyn Adele Kinsella, editors. Libraries Unlimited, 2011.
- STORYTELLING IN EMERGENT LITERACY: FOSTERING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES. Brand Susan Trostle and Jeanne M. Donato. Delmar Thomson Learning, 2001.
- SUPER SIMPLE STORYTELLING: A CAN-DO GUIDE FOR EVERY CLASSROOM EVERY DAY. Kendall Haven. Teacher Idea Press, 2000.
- WRITING AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: FROM EXPERIENCE TO STORY TO PROSE. Donald Davis. August House Publishers, Inc., 2000.

- www.aesopfables.com (656+ fables, indexed in table format, with morals listed)
- www.longlongtimeago.com (selected tales and story concepts from folktales to contemporary stories, including fables, science fiction, fantasy, historical stories, literary sources, and more)
- www.storybee.org (listen to professional tellers for all ages, from across the country, for FREE!)
- <http://www.tales2go.com/> (award-winning kids' mobile audio service; downloadable and useful to elementary-school educators, media specialists, and parents)
- www.timsheppard.co.uk/story/ (information for storytelling beginners, storytelling experts, and all those who are interested in stories and storytelling)
- <http://docsouth.unc.edu/> (Documenting the American South: original slave narratives and other important documentation of southern culture in American history)
- www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/african_american_resources.html (guides, reading lists, classroom activities, and other resources)
- www.storynet.org (the web site of the National Storytelling Network; links to storytelling web sites and storytellers, information on the NSN Conference and NSN Festival, and details of other events and storytelling topics of interest)
- www.nabsinc.org (site of the National Association of Black Storytellers; information on annual conference and festival, newsletters, and more)
- www.storyteller.net (storytellers' directory, articles, events, links, resources, and other information)
- <http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/> (info on the iMovie application)

Education SIGs of the National Storytelling Network

“**The National Storytelling Network** is dedicated to advancing the art of storytelling – as a performing art, a process of cultural transformation, and more. NSN is a member-driven organization, with a Board of Directors from seven regions across America. We offer direct services, publications and educational opportunities to individuals, local storytelling guilds and regional associations. These services are designed to promote storytelling everywhere – in entertainment venues, in classrooms, organizations, medical fields, families, and wherever else storytelling can make a contribution to quality of life.”

– from the web site of the National Storytelling Network at www.storynet.org

NSN sponsors both Special Interest Groups and Discussion Groups within its membership. As stated at the NSN web site:

A **Special Interest Group (SIG)** is a formal group created by National Storytelling Network (NSN) members joining together within the structure of NSN for a common purpose. Look at it as a way to place a structure on the networking process. SIG members pay additional dues to support the SIG and receive designated services from NSN staff.

A **Discussion Group**, more informal than a SIG and charging no dues, assists NSN members in contacting other members who share a common storytelling interest.

For information on developing a SIG or Discussion Group contact the National Storytelling Network.

NSN includes two education SIGs among its services to members:

Youth, Educators and Storytellers Alliance (YES!)

Jane Stenson, Co-Chairperson

stenson.stories@gmail.com

Lyn Ford, Co-Chairperson

friedtales@aol.com

SHE – Storytelling in Higher Education

Bonnie Adams, Chairperson

badams@ashland.edu

YES! and SHE are working on their new web sites, building toward providing Internet resources that are both informative and entertaining. **Become a member of NSN and one of the education SIGS, and look for updates via:**

The National Storytelling Network at www.storynet.org

YES Alliance at www.yesalliance.org

SHE at www.she-sig.org

Look for updates on SHE’s website at the NSN website listed above.

Thank you to NSN!

This publication was compiled by Lyn Ford

from submissions created and generously donated by Lyn Ford, Sherry Norfolk, Jane Stenson, and Andrea Permenter.

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