UNIT BLUEPRINT – Interpreting Literature and Nonfiction

**BIG Ideas (“enduring understandings”)**

**CENTRAL IDEA:** Writers make choices about the words, techniques, and examples they use to communicate ideas.

**GENRE-SPECIFIC IDEAS:**

1. Poets create poems that communicate a theme.
2. Writers construct biographies, and histories that communicate ideas.
3. A nonfiction writer explains important ideas about a topic.
4. Writers construct stories that communicate a theme.

**Essential Questions (BIG Questions)**

**COMPREHENSIVE QUESTION:**
What kinds of choices do writers make?

**GENRE-BASED QUESTIONS:**

1. How do readers interpret a poem?
2. How do readers identify the important ideas in nonfiction?
3. How do readers learn when they read nonfiction texts?
4. How do readers figure out the theme of a story?

**Common Core Anchor Reading Standards:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Read closely</strong> to <strong>determine</strong> what the text says <strong>explicitly</strong> and to <strong>make logical inferences</strong> from it; cite <strong>specific textual evidence</strong> when writing or speaking to <strong>support conclusions drawn from the text</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Determine central ideas or themes</strong> of a text and <strong>analyze</strong> their development; <strong>summarize</strong> the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Analyze</strong> how and why <strong>individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact</strong> over the course of a text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRAFT AND STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Interpret</strong> words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and <strong>analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Analyze the structure</strong> of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger parts of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Assess how point of view or purpose shapes</strong> the content and style of a text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Integrated NWEA-Aligned Skills:** Identify, Analyze, Infer…author’s techniques; story sequence; story structure; metaphor, simile; character traits; theme; main idea;

**Assessments**

**Daily/Weekly:**

> Construct glossary of literary terms.
> Complete text analyses, including graphic organizers and short responses, with evidence.
> Construct literary (poems and narratives) and nonfiction responses—with evidence/examples from the passages interpreted each week.

**Comprehensive Task Assessment Tasks:**

* Constructed Response: (CCSSR9). **Analyze** how two or more **texts address similar themes or topics** --compare the **approaches** the authors take.
  
  Answer with evidence.
  
  ▪ **What is the theme they both communicate?**
  ▪ **How do you figure that out?**
  ▪ **How are the two alike? How is each different?**
  ▪ **What techniques did each writer use?**


Center for Urban Education © 2012  http://teacher.depaul.edu
## Learning Activity Examples

### Poetry
- Picture the **important words** in the poem—words that give the reader an image.
- Analyze a poem, **restate the meanings of important lines**.
- Make **metaphor or simile** chart: word in column 1; picture in column 2.
- List **examples of techniques** the poet used. Explain how they helped communicate the theme.
- **Write a poem** that communicates the same **theme**.

### Nonfiction
- Use **nonfiction features** to identify important ideas and information. Then make a “learner’s guide”—how do you learn when you read nonfiction?
- **Clarify structure** of a text: Outline passage, identifying **important ideas** and supporting information. Identify central idea. **Summarize** the passage, stating central idea.
- **Analyze Cause-Effect**: Make timeline of important events in a **nonfiction narrative**—biography or history. Explain an important **choice, causes** and the **effects** of that choice.
- **Integrate information**: Identify **relevant information** from two different articles to respond to a **constructed response prompt**.
- **Compare and contrast** ideas and content of two different texts on same topic.

### Fiction—Elements of Fiction—Author’s Choices
- **Sequence**—make timeline of events in a story—identifying important actions. Identify **causes and effects** of an event.
- Complete "map" a story, **characters** and **setting**: **problem** and **solution**.
- Write concise **summary**. Decide which event(s) are most important and how the writer uses them to communicate the **theme**.
- **Infer the theme** of the story and **support analysis with evidence** based on the author's choices. (NWEA uses main idea and also theme in different questions.)
- **Compare and contrast** two stories with same theme.
- **Plan a story** to communicate a theme (or main idea—NWEA term).

### Fiction—Character Development
*Also can apply to biography analysis.*

- Complete **character analysis** chart: how author communicates the **traits** and **feelings** of characters in the story—**actions, dialogue, reactions** of characters.
- Add **dialogue** to a story—what might the characters have said at different points?
- **Dramatize** a story, **selecting events important to the character’s development** and adding dialogue that communicates how the central character develops.
- **Analyze how the author uses the character’s development to support the theme of the story**.
- **Synthesis**: Write the next part of the story—tell what the character does next.