

## ***The Giver*** by Lois Lowry (1993)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

### **Summary:**

In his Utopian society Jonas, a 12-year-old boy, is given a special assignment. He is to be the Receiver and acquire from the Giver all of his community's memories. Without memories, the people of the community do not experience pain, fear, or unhappiness. During the sessions with the Giver, however, Jonas realizes the imperfection of his community and the lies that support it. He finds himself making a choice between freedom of thought and individualism or the sameness and predetermined life of the community.

### **Connection to the Curriculum:**

Lois Lowry's depiction of Jonas's community shows the value of differences between people, freedom of choice, and the importance of memories. With the story being told through the eyes of Jonas, the reader discovers and faces (in a simplified form) issues that have historical connections to today's world. Lowry weaves together many of our world societies into one community. Students can examine characterization, point of view, and timely issues such as euthanasia and overpopulation.

### **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

#### Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.7: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

#### Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This futuristic novel deals with the topics of euthanasia, assisted suicide, and the death penalty (all referred to as "release") and the topic of surrogate mothers. It also mentions boys having "stirrings" (sexual feelings) and being required to take a pill to counter them. Lowry creates this extreme society to underscore her theme.

### **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete projects to demonstrate understanding and analysis.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

## ***Gathering Blue*** by Lois Lowry (2000)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

### **Summary:**

In a future world where humanity has regressed to the level of the Middle Ages, a young girl with a handicap has her life spared because of her special gifts as a weaver. She is selected to weave past and future events on a sacred robe and is given a comfortable life in return. Slowly, but clearly, she comes to realize there is a price to pay. With the help of a chosen young man and an unfortunate but optimistic boy, Kira discovers the truth about her world. She makes a crucial decision about her future that will change the course of her life and that of her struggling society.

### **Connection to the Curriculum:**

This novel, a sequel to *The Giver*, contains strong themes about human dignity and survival, as well as the excesses of power and the human spirit. It is rich in material that will encourage students to evaluate, infer, and think critically. It offers opportunities to discuss character, setting, plot, and theme as well as other elements of a novel. Students can practice a variety of reading indicators when studying this novel.

### **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

#### Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

#### Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

In this science fiction tale of a future world that has regressed, the main character, Kira, a young girl with a physical deformity, struggles to uncover the truth about her world. The topics in the text include death, orphans, and spirits.

### **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project to demonstrate understanding and analysis. They will also compare and contrast *Gathering Blue* to the novel *The Giver*.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

# ***The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963*** by Christopher Paul Curtis (1995)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

## **Summary:**

This novel tells the story of the “Weird Watson” family and the humorous events that occur to them in Flint, Michigan, in 1963. After one too many “adventures” by the oldest son, Byron, the parents decide to take a family trip to Birmingham, Alabama, to visit the children’s grandmother and hopefully encourage Byron to change his ways. On their way to Alabama and while in Alabama, the Watson children learn that life is different for African Americans in the South.

## **Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book is a great example of how characters affect the plot of a story. Students will explore how the story would change if the characters reacted differently to events in the plot, in particular the bombing of the church. Students can also explore how the setting of a story (northern United States vs. southern United States in the early 1960’s) impacts the events and reactions of characters in the story. This novel examines how our choices have consequences, not only for ourselves, but others as well.

## **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.7: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The Watson family faces issues such as bullying, violence, and racism. It contains occasional mild cussing and derogatory remarks. The warm and often humorous text carefully examines the realities of the civil rights movement.

## **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project to demonstrate understanding and analysis.

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***Ties that Bind, Ties that Break*** by Lensey Namioka (1999)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

Set in China in 1911, this novel is narrated by playful Ailin, who has watched her two older sisters go through the ancient tradition having their feet bound. Seeing her sisters' pain and knowing she'd never be able to run again, Ailin refuses to follow this torturous tradition. However, her rebellion causes all sorts of problems for her. The family of her intended husband breaks their marriage agreement, and Ailin finds that even her own family members will not support her. She is left with few options in China's society, but she is determined to make a life for herself. Her story is a tribute to all those women whose courage created new options for the generations who came after them.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

When reading this book, students get to experience a totally different culture and time period. They see China in 1911 and identify with the challenges a Chinese girl would face – feet binding, arranged marriages, age-old traditions, etc. The novel provides good insight into historical Chinese culture. Students will be able to compare cultures and traditions and discuss reasons for change. They will also analyze methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

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**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

By showing a girl's life in China in 1911, the novel shows how one girl fights against gender inequality and harmful traditions. Despite these barriers, she makes a life for herself.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

***Nobody Else Has to Know*** by Ingrid Tomez (1999)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

Fifteen-year-old Webber hits and seriously injures a young girl while he is illegally driving with his grandfather. Webber wakes from the accident and has trouble remembering what happened, especially since his grandfather has taken the blame for the accident. But as his memory returns, Webber is torn between accepting his grandfather's cover for the sake of a clean record and confessing the truth. Ultimately, he makes the decision to confess, and the book ends with Webber telling his grandfather of his intention, which will surely have legal consequences for them both.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

The story makes it painfully clear how easily a moral and legal dilemma might arise for anyone in a moment of carelessness or as a result of a spontaneous bad decision. Examining the theme of a novel is a key reading skill, and finding the strength to admit ones mistakes and stand up for what's right is the main message of the novel. Students will discuss these real life issues in a controlled setting and will also analyze methods of characterization and point of view.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

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Speaking and Listening:

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Language:

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The novel addresses Webber's continued grief over the death of his father, deception and guilt, and paralysis from a car accident. It contains mild cussing.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

## ***A Corner of the Universe*** by Ann M. Martin (2002)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

### **Summary:**

Hattie Owens has difficulty making friends her own age but enjoys the company of the tenants in her family's boarding house. Then Hattie finds out she has an uncle Adam whom she didn't even know existed. Adam comes to live with Hattie's grandparents because his school closed, but Hattie's family and neighbors aren't ready to deal with Adam's mental disabilities. Hattie and Adam form a bond, and Hattie ends up caught in the middle of all the family's problems. In one summer, Hattie will find out how small a town can be, how big the world outside is, and how far hearts and minds can go.

### **Connection to the Curriculum:**

A big focus of the book is that Hattie's uncle Adam has some type of mental disability (probably autism spectrum disorder). The book is set in the 1960's, so Adam is widely misunderstood and endures numerous hardships because of his disability. The novel contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view.

### **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

#### Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

#### Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

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**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This novel deals with the topics of self-image, disabilities, and suicide in a sensitive and thought-provoking manner.

### **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

***Touching Spirit Bear*** by Ben Mikaelson (2001)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

After his anger erupts into violence, Cole has to avoid going to prison. He agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island. During this time, he encounters a huge Spirit Bear that changes his life.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

Students can examine the rich characters and Mikaelson's development of those characters. In addition, *Touching Spirit Bear* is an incredible book about preserving through the struggles of growing up in a dysfunctional home and facing the consequences of one's actions. It addresses how to resolve issues that cause negative behaviors. Examining the theme of a novel is a key reading skill, and finding the Spirit Bear (goodness) within you is the main message of the novel.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

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Writing:

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Speaking and Listening:

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**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The main character, Cole, is punished for criminally assaulting another boy. The text also contains references to anger (Cole), alcoholism (Cole's parents), violence (a bear attack), and suicide (thoughts of the victim). Cole does, however, learn many important life-changing lessons.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

***Stolen Children*** by Peg Kehret (2008)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

When Amy agreed to babysit Kendra Edgerton, she had no idea she was stepping into a kidnapping plot. Two men force the girls out of the house and into a cabin in the woods. They create videos of the children to send to the families, in hopes of receiving a large ransom from Kendra's wealthy parents. Amy has to use her wits and imagination to figure out a way to escape. She has one week until their captors decide their fate.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view. The main character in this book has to deal with the loss of her father and shows students the importance of never giving up. The overall message teaches that your choices are what influence the outcome of your life; circumstances do not control you.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

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Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)  
The children in this book face child abduction and threats of gun violence.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

**Abduction** by Peg Kehret (2004)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

When Matt leaves his kindergarten class for a quick trip to the bathroom, he never imagines what will happen next. He suddenly finds himself in a stranger's car going to an unfamiliar place. But is his father, who he has never before met, really a "stranger"? When the school bell rings and Matt is nowhere to be found, his frantic sister, Bonnie, realizes that her little brother is not lost, but missing. Bonnie has to decide whether she is going to leave the disappearance of her brother in the hands of the police or do something about it herself...even if it puts her own life in danger.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view. Through Bonnie's actions, students learn what it means to never give up as well as the positive outcomes of putting others first.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The children in this book face child abduction and threats of gun violence.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

**Code Orange** by Caroline B. Cooney (2005)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

Mitty Blake loved New York City; even after 9/11, he always felt safe. Mitty was a carefree guy who didn't worry about terrorists or blackouts or grades or anything, which is why he was late getting started on his Advanced Bio report. Mitty did feel a little pressure to hand something in—if he didn't, he'd be switched out of Advanced Bio, which would have been unfortunate since Olivia was in Advanced Bio. So he considered it good luck when he found some old medical books in his family's weekend house that focused on something he could write about. When he discovered an old envelope with two scabs in one of the books, the report was no longer about the grade – it was about life and death.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view. The novel also includes references to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack, terrorism, and smallpox.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The character is kidnapped and held as a hostage; he fights with kidnappers in an effort to escape. There is brief contemplation of suicide. VD and STDs are mentioned in a science class discussion of contagious diseases. There are references to bio-terrorism and the possibility of an attack on the United States. Graphic description of small pox symptoms is also present.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

## ***Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie*** by Jordan Sonnenblick (2004)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

### **Summary:**

Steven is a typical eighth-grader. He plays drums in the All-City Jazz Band, he has a crush on a cute girl at school, and he is constantly annoyed by his five year old brother, Jeffrey. Then one day Jeffrey falls, gets a nosebleed that doesn't stop, and is diagnosed with leukemia. Steven's world is turned upside down as he is forced to deal with his brother's illness, his parents' attempts to keep the family in one piece, his homework, playing in the band, and girls.

### **Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book provides students a healthy look into the tough topic of dealing with cancer. It allows them the opportunity to feel involved as Steven deals with his brother's diagnosis of leukemia. They follow Steven as he develops a sense of responsibility and builds healthy relationships that will influence the rest of his life. The students will examine the development of Steven as a character as they read the story through his point of view.

### **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

#### Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

#### Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This novel deals with a family's struggle as they deal with their youngest son's diagnosis and treatment of leukemia. The stages of grief can be seen in the main character as he deals with his brother's illness.

### **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

***Island of the Blue Dolphins*** by Scott O'Dell (1960)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

This is the story of Karana, a 12-year old girl who lived alone on the Island of the Blue Dolphins for years. Year after year, she watched one season pass into another and waited for a ship to take her away. But while she waited, she kept herself alive by building shelter, making weapons, finding food, and fighting her enemies, the wild dogs.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view as they read about Karana and how she survives life on the island.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

There is a battle scene, and the main character must kill in order to survive. Wild dogs and dangerous invaders are a constant threat to Karana. Karana witnesses the death of her father, and her little brother is killed by wild dogs.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

## ***Tangerine*** by Edward Bloor (1997)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

### **Summary:**

Paul Fisher sees the world from behind glasses so thick he looks like a bug-eyed alien. But he's not so blind that he can't see there are some *very* unusual things about his family's new home in Tangerine County, Florida. There's a sinkhole that swallowed the local school, underground fires, and lightning strikes at the same time every day. In addition to the chaos, he must endure harassment from his brother and adjust to life in Tangerine. When he joins the soccer team at his middle school, he begins to discover what lies beneath the surface of his strange new hometown. He also gains the courage to face up to some secrets his family has been keeping from him for far too long.

### **Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains issues such as friendship, family secrets, bullying and assertiveness. The students will have the opportunity to discuss these issues in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view.

### **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

#### Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

#### Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

One character is struck by lightning and another is accidentally murdered. There is some minor language but it is infrequent.

### **Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.

***Zach's Lie*** by Roland Smith (2001)

Approved for use in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts

**Summary:**

Jack Osborne's life changes forever the night men in masks break into his house, threaten Jack and his family, and ransack their home. Jack then discovers the reason these men have come into their lives: his father has been arrested for drug trafficking. Jack, his mother, and his sister are forced to enter the Witness Security Program. Jack becomes "Zach" and moves to Elko, Nevada. There he meets Sam, the strangest school custodian he has ever encountered, and Catalin, a girl who might make Zach's uprooting worth the trouble. As Zach finally begins to piece together a new life, he finds himself in danger again, and this time his action could determine the fates of everyone he cares about.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This book contains multiple real life issues that students will discuss in a controlled setting. The students will analyze the methods of characterization, development of theme, and point of view.

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-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.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

There are a couple brief scenes of violence due to drug traffickers.

**Assessment:**

Students will take a novel test and/or complete a project that will assess comprehension and analysis of the text.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 238-5800 or email your child's ELA teacher.