

## WHAT IS MY GRADE 8 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 1?

Wit & Wisdom® is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

### Module 1: *The Poetics and Power of Storytelling*

Module 2: *The Great War*

Module 3: *What Is Love?*

Module 4: *Teens as Change Agents*

In Module 1, students will study how we build community, understand ourselves, and explain the world around us using stories and poems. They will read a novel and poetry and ask the question: What is the power of storytelling?

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS

### Novel

- *The Crossover*, Kwame Alexander

### Articles

- “This Is Your Life (and How You Tell It),” Benedict Carey
- “Your Brain on Fiction,” Annie Murphy Paul, *The New York Times*

### Poetry

- “Nikki-Rosa,” Nikki Giovanni
- “Slam, Dunk, & Hook,” Yusef Komunyakaa
- “Sometimes Silence Is the Loudest Kind of Noise,” Bassey Ikpi

### Speech

- “The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

### Music

- “Filthy McNasty,” Horace Silver

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE WORKS OF ART

- *The Block*, Romare Bearden
- *Children’s Games*, Pieter Bruegel the Elder

**OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THESE VIDEOS**

- “Sometimes Silence Is the Loudest Kind of Noise,” Bassey Ikpi
- “Nikki Rosa on Def Jam Poetry,” Nikki Giovanni
- “Slam, Dunk, & Hook,” Yusef Komunyakaa
- “The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- “The Human Soul Distilled,” Reading Rockets

**OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS**

- What shapes Josh Bell’s sense of himself and his world?
- How does form shape a story’s meaning?
- What is the role of expression in storytelling?
- How do stories help us make sense of ourselves and the world?
- What does it mean to be a storyteller?

**QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME**

As your Grade 8 student reads, ask:

- What do you notice and wonder?

**BOOKS TO READ AT HOME**

- *Spoon River Anthology*, Edgar Lee Masters
- *Here in Harlem: Poems in Many Voices*, Walter Dean Myers
- *I Am Phoenix: Poems for Two Voices*, Paul Fleischman
- *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*, Naomi Shihab Nye
- *The Red Pencil*, Andrea Davis Pinkney
- *One Crazy Summer*, Rita Williams-Garcia
- *Inside Out and Back Again*, Thanhha Lai
- *Brown Girl Dreaming*, Jacqueline Woodson
- *Witness*, Karen Hesse
- *A Long Walk to Water*, Linda Sue Park

**IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING THE POWER OF STORYTELLING**

You can talk about storytelling at any time, anywhere. Ask:

- What’s your favorite family story? Why?
- Tell me a story you remember from your childhood.

Share a story with your eighth grader about your childhood.

## WHAT IS MY GRADE 8 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 2?

Wit & Wisdom® is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: *The Poetics and Power of Storytelling*

### Module 2: *The Great War*

Module 3: *What Is Love?*

Module 4: *Teens as Change Agents*

In Module 2, students will study how writers and artists tell the story of World War I.

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS

### Novel

- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Erich Maria Remarque (translator A.W. Wheen)

### Poetry

- “Dulce et Decorum Est,” Wilfred Owen
- “In Flanders Fields,” John McCrae

### Articles

- “The Peace President Goes to War,” Duane Damon
- “The War to End All Wars,” Shari Lyn Zuber
- “The Teenage Soldiers of World War One,” BBC Magazine
- “Fighting From the Trenches,” Kathryn M. Horst
- “The Forgotten Female Shell-Shock Victims of World War I,” Hannah Groch-Begley
- “‘Your Country Needs You’: Why Did So Many Volunteer in 1914?,” Toby Thacker

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE PAINTINGS

- *Gassed*, John Singer Sargent
- *Soldiers Playing Cards*, Fernand Léger

## OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THESE VIDEOS

- Excerpts from *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Lewis Milestone:
  - “The Charge”
  - “Before the Storm”
  - “Forgive me, Comrade”

### OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- Why did countries and individuals join World War I?
- How did the conditions on the front affect soldiers?
- How do texts inspired by World War I illuminate attitudes toward the war?
- What are the psychological effects of war?
- How does *All Quiet on the Western Front* illuminate the effects of World War I?

### QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME

As your Grade 8 student reads, ask:

- What's happening?
- What does a closer look at words reveal about this text's deeper meaning?

### BOOKS TO READ AT HOME

- *War Horse*, Michael Morpurgo
- *Wolf Hollow*, Lauren Wolk
- *Private Peaceful*, Michael Morpurgo
- *Soldier Dog*, Sam Angus
- *World War I: The Cause for War*, Natalie Hyde
- *The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion, and the Fall of Imperial Russia*, Candace Fleming
- *Dazzle Ships: World War I and the Art of Confusion*, Chris Martin
- *The War to End all Wars*, Russell Freedman
- *The Guns of August*, Barbara Tuchman
- *The Yanks Are Coming: The United States in the First World War*, Albert Marrin

### IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING WORLD WAR I

Watch a movie together that tells the story of World War I, such as *Sergeant York*. Ask:

- How did the filmmaker tell the story of World War I?
- How does this film compare to the novel you read in class?
- How does this film compare to the art you examined?

## WHAT IS MY GRADE 8 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 3?

Wit & Wisdom® is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: *The Poetics and Power of Storytelling*

Module 2: *The Great War*

### Module 3: **What Is Love?**

Module 4: *Teens as Change Agents*

In Module 3, students examine a question that has vexed humans—and the world’s most renowned literary authors—for generations: What is love?

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS

### Novel (Literary)

- *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, William Shakespeare

### Short Stories

- “EPICAC,” Kurt Vonnegut

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE ARTICLES

- “What is Love? Five Theories on the Greatest Emotion of All,” Jim Al-Khalili et al.
- “In the Brain, Romantic Love Is Basically an Addiction,” Helen Fisher

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE PAINTINGS

- *Birthday*, Marc Chagall
- *Arnolfini Wedding Portrait*, Jan Van Eyck

## OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- How do the characters in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* understand love?
- What defines the experience of love?
- What makes love complicated?
- Is love real in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*?
- Is love in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* a result of agency or fate?

**QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME**

As your Grade 8 student reads, ask:

- What is the essential meaning, or most important message, in this text?
- What are the themes of this text?

**BOOKS TO READ AT HOME**

- *Who Was William Shakespeare?*, Celeste Mannis
- *The Graphic Novel of Midsummer*, John McDonald
- *Stargirl*, Jerry Spinelli
- *Tuck Everlasting*, Natalie Babbitt
- *Emma*, Jane Austen
- *King of Shadows*, Susan Cooper
- *Shakespeare's Stories for Young Readers*, E. Nesbit

**IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING SHAKESPEARE AND LOVE STORIES**

Ask:

- Why do you think people tell and listen to/watch love stories?
- What can people learn about social or cultural norms from reading or viewing love stories?

## WHAT IS MY GRADE 8 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 4?

Wit & Wisdom® is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

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Module 2: *The Great War*

Module 3: *What Is Love?*

### Module 4: *Teens as Change Agents*

In Module 4, students examine the story of Claudette Colvin's role in the Civil Rights Movement, deepening their knowledge of American history and their understanding of how people, including teens, challenge injustice and create change. Through their reading and independent research, students come to ask: How do people effect social change?

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE BOOKS

### Historical Account (Informational)

- *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*, Phillip Hoose

## OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THIS VIDEO

- "Claudette Colvin: The Original Rosa Parks"

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE ARTICLES

- "Social Media Sparked, Accelerated Egypt's Revolutionary Fire," Sam Gustin
- "Small Change," Malcolm Gladwell

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THIS SCULPTURE

- *Ladder for Booker T. Washington*, Martin Puryear

## OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- What motivated Claudette Colvin?
- What role did Claudette Colvin and others play in the Civil Rights Movement?
- What strategies do people use to effect social change?
- How do teens effect social change?
- What is the story of the year?

**QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME**

As your Grade 8 student reads, ask:

- How does this text build your knowledge of how people can effect social change? Share what you know about how people can respond to injustice in their daily lives and effect social change.

**BOOKS TO READ AT HOME**

- *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, William Kamkwamba
- *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March*, Elspeth Leacock, Susan Buckley, and Lynda Blackmon Lowery
- *A Friend Called Anne*, Jacqueline Van Maarsen
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, Marjane Satrapi
- *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories*, Ellen Levine
- *We Were There, Too!: Young People in U.S. History*, Phillip Hoose
- *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Peterson and the Churchill Club*, Phillip Hoose
- *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics (Young Readers Edition)*, Daniel James Brown
- *We've Got a Job: The 1963 Birmingham Children's March*, Cynthia Levinson
- *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*, Russell Freedman
- *Be a Changemaker: How to Start Something that Matters*, Laurie Ann Thompson
- *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Wartime Sarajevo*, Zlata Filipovic
- *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, Malala Yousafzai
- *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, Anne Frank
- *Ashes of Roses*, MJ Auch
- *Wonder*, R.J. Palacio
- *The Mysterious Benedict Society*, Trenton Lee Stewart
- *Endangered*, Eliot Schrefer
- *Uprising*, Margaret Peterson Haddiz

**IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING TEENS AS CHANGE AGENTS**

Ask:

- What motivates people to create social change?
- How do people define injustice in their specific situation?
- How do different people respond to injustice and effect social change?
- Why are teens important change agents?