

Lower Township Elementary Schools
Cape May, NJ
Grade Level: Fifth Grade (5) / Content Area: Reading, Writing

Month	Reading Unit	Writing Unit
September- October 15	Unit 1- Maintaining an Independent Reading Life (Curricular Calendar)	Unit 1- Narrative Craft (Spiral 1)
October 18	Unit 2- Tackling Complexity: Moving Up Levels of Nonfiction (Spiral 2)	Unit 2- The Lens of History/ Information Writing (Spiral 2)
November		
December		Holiday Writing Activities
January	Unit 3- Fantasy Book Clubs (Spiral 4)	Unit 3- Literary Essay: Opening Texts and Seeing More (Additional Spiral)
February	Unit 4- Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues (Spiral 3)	Unit 4- Research-Based Argument Essay/Persuasive (Spiral 4)
March		
April	Test Prep- NJSLA	Test Prep- NJSLA
May/June	Unit 5- Interpretation Book Clubs: Analyzing Themes (Spiral 1)	Unit 5- Graphic Novels (Curricular Calendar)

[Reading and Writing Mentor Texts \(Click Here\)](#)

5th Grade Reading Unit 1

Maintaining an Independent Reading Life

The one truly consistent finding in reading research is that reading a lot matters. Reading widely, voraciously, and independently is the primary action that can spark meaningful and lifelong learning. The biggest work, the work that unites and underlies everything you will do as a teacher of reading in this upcoming year, is to help all your students become avid, powerful readers. In this unit, students will take ownership of their own reading lives. They will acquire a deep understanding of themselves as readers and create a community that revolves around shared books.

Reading	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I create an active learning community that exposes students to a variety of texts and enables them to develop rich personal reading lives? • Create authentic learning tasks to promote engagement and a lifelong love of reading? • How do we build the skills and strategies of experienced, upper-elementary readers? 	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who am I as a reader, and how am I unique among other readers? • What skills and strategies can I use to make myself a better reader? • How will we work together as a community of readers? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting reading goals and reflecting on progress • Using expert strategies to develop meaning • Choosing just-right books • Establishing routines and tracking systems • Using thinking strategies to analyze a text • Synthesizing ideas across complex texts • Working hard when books get hard • Modeling interpretation / enjoyment of books through read-aloud • Working effectively with a partner(s) to talk about books • Reflecting on reading goals

5th Grade Writing Unit 1

Narrative Craft

This unit is designed for students who have worked for years on personal narrative, fiction, and essay writing. It is an advanced, significant unit of study. Beginning the year with memoir means beginning the year with ambition and rigor, urging students from the get-go to draw on all they know about narrative writing, interpretation, and meaning making. This unit will require reflection, synthesis, and critical thinking. In an effort to help students write stories that have significance and are shaped like true stories, not chronicles, you'll start Bend I by teaching new strategies for generating a personal narrative, as well as reminding them of strategies they already know (i.e., writing about the first or last time we learned something or a turning point of some kind). In Bend II, students will choose a seed idea to develop into a full piece of writing, focusing deliberately on how craft and revision improve communication between author and reader. In Bend III, students will begin anew with a second personal narrative. In this bend, they will closely read and analyze mentor texts. They will develop their skills at analyzing and annotating mentor texts and emulating the craft moves of a published author.

Writing	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors maintain and regulate their volume and stamina throughout the writing process. • Authors share their life stories to not only reveal something enduring about the writer, but to make connections with common human experiences. 	
<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p>Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do authors write about their personal experiences? • How do authors decide what stories from their life are worth sharing? • How do authors think about their lives in thematic ways? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors not only use their notebooks to write stories, but to collect, plan, and organize their ideas. • Authors make thematic connections between the important moments in their lives. • Authors plan and rehearse their stories multiple times before putting pen to paper. • Authors maintain a balance between planning/drafting and revising/editing.

5th Grade Reading Unit 2

Tackling Text Complexity: Moving Up Levels of Nonfiction

The nonfiction texts your fifth graders are reading are complex; they raise important challenges. These texts tend not to contain supportive headings and subheadings, nor the pop-out sentences that highlight main ideas in earlier-level passages. These complexities are often glossed over because of the engaging visuals and catchy fonts that make the texts appear deceptively simple. This unit sets out to directly address these challenges. Across the unit, your students will study ways in which their texts are becoming more complex, and they will realize that the reading strategies they used to rely on are insufficient for these new challenges. At the same time, this unit supports students in building independent nonfiction reading lives outside of school. You will help students see that readers turn to complex nonfiction because those texts give them access to the knowledge they seek and open doors of opportunity. Across Bend I, you'll help students inquire into the ways complex nonfiction gets hard, and you'll support them in developing skills and strategies to tackle those difficulties. In Bend II, you'll invite students to take on independent inquiry projects studying a topic they most want to learn about. Your teaching will support students in transferring everything they've learned about making meaning from complex texts to texts on their inquiry topic. You will extend this work, helping students to synthesize across texts and critically analyze author's craft.

Reading	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine importance and synthesize information in expository nonfiction ● Read from various nonfiction text structures ● Read contrasting texts to determine new complexities within them ● Apply knowledge about nonfiction reading to inquiry 	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<p><i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why is it important to pay attention to the content and structure of complex nonfiction? ● How do nonfiction readers synthesize text to build inferential theories? ● Why do experts engage in research? ● How do researchers use partners' feedback to help improve their work product? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will understand that... ● Readers read to gather information about a topic. ● Readers synthesize information and determine importance as they read. ● Readers notice/analyze multiple text structures within a text. ● Readers build theories about what the text is telling and suggesting.

5th Grade Writing Unit 2

The Lens of History: Research Reports

This unit focuses on supporting students' writing of informational texts. In this unit, students will be writing within a content area--in this case, social studies, with a focus on Native Americans. This unit is comprised of two bends. In the first bend, students will be writing flash drafts of research reports and then revising those drafts with specific lenses. The second bend has students writing more focused research reports on a more specific topic than in the first bend, Students will be engaged in research during this unit, as well as keeping track of and citing relevant sources.

Writing	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify possible structures for researching and constructing informational text ● Revise research reports for content, structure, and craft ● Draft with highly relevant and carefully selected 	
<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p>Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why is it important to pay attention to the content and structure of complex nonfiction? ● How do nonfiction readers synthesize text to build inferential theories? ● Why do experts engage in research? ● How do researchers use partners' feedback to help improve their work product? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writers learn a variety of strategies for researching a topic ● Writers a volume of notes that capture the important points of the topic but also generate thoughts and reactions to the topic ● Researchers examine the many sides of a topic. ● Researchers rank their theories, and develop the most relevant or intriguing topics into essays

5th Grade Reading Unit 3

Fantasy Book Clubs: The Magic of Themes and Symbols

This unit aims to capture students’ passion for fantasy reading as a means of increasing their facility with complex texts and interpretation. Students will need to pay close attention as they read, assuming that details do matter. They will be reading across novels, noticing patterns, archetypes, and themes. To prepare for this unit of study, you will need to gather multiple sets of books for every reading level in your class, learning progressions to boost the level of talk within groups, and mentor texts (typed text, movies, graphic novels) to show the many ways in which fantasy authors can choose to publish based on their intended purpose.

Reading	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will read complex texts developing skills of synthesis and interpretation. • Students will notice patterns across texts. 	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<p><i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies and goals will help me to make sense of the multiple plot lines, layered characters, and complex themes in fantasy? • How can I use all I have learned about how authors develop themes to study the way authors approach common themes in fantasy? (approximately one week) • How can I deepen my thoughts about fantasy stories by thinking about the choices the authors have made—especially thinking about symbolism, allusion and craft? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using strategies and creating goals will help them to make sense of complex texts. • Fantasy readers envision the story in their mind, creating the world the author is trying to portray. • Fantasy readers develop thematic understandings of texts, know that it is much more than dwarfs and elves. • There are many fantasy archetypes, quest structures, and thematic patterns.

5th Grade Writing Unit 3

Literary Essay: Opening Texts and Seeing More

This unit is a how-to guide to literary essay writing. You'll teach kids to draw upon what they already know about good essay writing, to think analytically about texts, and to craft claims that can be supported with evidence across texts. Most importantly, students will realize that the ability to read critically, generate ideas, and then support their ideas with evidence will serve them well throughout their lives: a door of opportunity to college and career ambitions. In Bend I, you'll help students craft literary essays around a shared digital text. You'll help students strengthen their skills in close reading, developing thesis statements, identifying evidence that fits a claim, and crafting angled mini-stories. Students will draft a literary essay to support a claim about a character or theme. Then, in Bend II, students will write a new literary essay, this time off of a text they select. They will analyze strategies essayists draw on to develop interpretations and craft thesis statements, study new ways authors can support their claims (i.e., analysis of author's craft), and construct strong introductions and conclusions. Finally, in Bend III, you'll help students transfer everything they've learned about writing literary essays to help them write varied opinion texts on a range of topics.

Writing	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Essayists write to grow ideas about a text. ● Essayists support their thesis statements with a variety of evidence. ● Essayists draft and revise thesis statements that capture the themes of a story and that forecast ways their essays will support their theses. ● Essayists transfer and apply their essay writing to respond to prompts and real-world situations. 	
<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p>Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does an essayist interact with a text to develop a sophisticated essay? ● What is the role of the introduction and conclusion in a literary essay? ● How does an essayist learn to improve her/his writing craft? ● Why might an essayist study multiple texts on the same topic? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writers grow ideas that are central to the story (grounded in close reading), with text evidence, and reflection to support the claim. ● Essayists mindfully and deliberately organize their writing to communicate their intended message to an audience. ● Essay writers read, reread, and rethink a text in increasingly sophisticated ways.

5th Grade Reading Unit 4

Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues

This unit supports students in reading more complex, challenging nonfiction with greater agency and independence. It aims to support fifth-graders in becoming more active and critical citizens who ponder complex social issues, strive to have an informed viewpoint, to communicate it clearly, and to engage with opinions that might conflict with their own. The unit begins with a one-day intensive “boot camp” on analyzing arguments. Students work in research groups to study a debatable issue, first learning about both sides of the issue, then choosing a position to research in greater depth, and finally debating the issue and reflecting on their learning to develop new questions and insights. Next, you’ll help your students raise the level of their research to develop deeper questions and ideas and engage in more complicated conversations. Students will read more difficult texts with a critical eye, considering perspective and craft while evaluating arguments. A debate highlights students’ growth and knowledge, and builds momentum for the final part of the unit. Later, students select a new issue to study. They’ll think about patterns and connections across issues they have studied, considering larger issues of power. By the end of this unit, students will have learned how to compare the ideas and perspectives of many authors and how to formulate their own evidence-based, ethical positions on issues.

Reading	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draw on all they have learned about how to read complex nonfiction in order to research and make arguments about provocative, debatable issues. ● How do I investigate an issue? ● How do I raise the level of research to consider craft, perspective, and evaluate arguments? ● How do I research a new issue with agency, independence, and the lens of power and advocacy? 	
<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p>Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why is it important to read critically? ● How does one become an informed citizen? ● Why is it important to engage with viewpoints that are different/more nuanced than our own? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● working in research groups will help to investigate important, pressing, and sometimes controversial issues ● research can be used to make decisions about how they will live their life ● by doing this work they will become confident and critical readers of complicated nonfiction

5th Grade Writing Unit 4

The Research-Based Argument Essay

A focus for this unit is that in this ever-changing world of immediate communication, readers and writers need to be more than passive receptacles and echoers of the line of the day. Writers need to develop an original thought, frame it, and lead it to revising and editing--the classic skills required to produce a research essay. In this unit, you'll teach children the writing skills of a researcher and an essayist. Students will form informed opinions from within their reading and research on a topic and craft these opinions into an argument essay. Students will stake a claim, provide logically ordered reasons in its defense, and also dismantle possible counterclaims. You will want to tap into reading workshop time for children to read and research topics that will provide the information for the argument essay.

Writing	
Big Ideas <i>Course Objectives</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	<i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible structures of a research-based argument essay • Construct sophisticated opinions about text(s) • Support opinions with highly relevant and carefully selected examples/evidence • Synthesize opinions and text evidence to engage in analytical thinking/interpretation 	Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writers learn a variety of strategies for researching a topic • Writers a volume of notes that capture the important points of the topic but also generate thoughts and reactions to the topic • Researchers examine the many sides of a topic. • Research essayists rank their theories, and develop the most relevant or intriguing topics into essays

5th Grade Reading Unit 5

Interpretation Book Clubs: Analyzing Themes

This unit asks a lot of students and gives a lot to them as well. The learning curve between fourth and fifth grade is an especially steep one, and work that fifth graders are asked to do is work that many of us didn't do until high school (if then)! The fact that students will convene in clubs within a week or two of the start of fifth grade is emblematic of the tone and the message that characterizes this unit. You'll set students up to participate by telling them that the most important thing they need to learn is to be in charge of their own learning. In the second and third bends, you will suggest to students that just as writing makes a person more awake to his or her life, so, too, writing makes a reader more awake to his or her text. Readers who write can see more in a text; they notice more and they make more sense of what they see. These bends quickly turn to the work of interpretation, teaching students how to read with interpretive lenses (close reading). Finally, you will teach students to read analytically, noticing the way different authors develop the same theme differently. You'll also help them do some important compare and contrast work on several texts that develop a similar theme.

Reading	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study characters to synthesize, infer, and interpret information ● Create effective book clubs to elevate levels of reading, thinking, and conversation ● Read at-level books to develop the skills to write well about reading 	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<p><i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do readers get to know characters at a deeper level? ● How do readers grow ideas about characters? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Readers build theories and gather evidence about characters. ● Readers use inferences to build interpretations about texts. ● Readers read across books, looking at similarities and differences in characters, and grow bigger theories about them.

5th Grade Writing Unit 5

Graphic Novels: Narrative Writing in Pictures and Words

This unit is designed to give students an opportunity to put their narrative craft skills to use in an entirely new medium, one kids are known to cheer for, or if you want a new approach to supporting students in writing with plot, pacing, craft, and elaboration.

Writing	
<p>Big Ideas Course Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Craft and Elaboration ● Pacing ● Plot 	
<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p>Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can I use words and pictures to craft writing that makes it irresistible for the reader to turn the page? ● How can I craft a comic with clear story arc? ● What narrative techniques can I learn by studying the craft of mentor comic writers? ● How can I craft comics that teach information while also making it irresistible for the reader to turn the page? 	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graphic writers use doodling to help generate ideas ● Graphic writers pay attention to the number and placement of panels on a page ● Graphic writers use the skills of elaboration and craft (i.e., how choices around panel size and placement can slow down or speed up different parts of a story) ● Graphic writers can organize information across panels and pages