

## Eighth Grade Unit 1

### Theme Overview:

“Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer” was selected for an eight-week interdisciplinary study of individualism and nonconformity. Students will read, write, and reflect on various authors known for their unique life perspectives. The focus is widened to include a study of leaders from various fields. Students will compare and contrast mere nonconformity with authentic leadership.

### Driving Questions:

- In what ways did Poe and other authors march to the beat of a different drummer? Did their paths lead to success or failure?
- Describe how certain fictional characters march to the beat of a different drummer.
- Are individuals born to a life of leadership, or do the circumstances of their lives lead them to become leaders?
- What role has nonconformity and leadership played in the field of politics? In science?
- How does the American government structure support or thwart an individual's desire to march to his/her own drummer?
- How does the geography of the United States influence scientific, ecological, and technological breakthroughs?

### New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards specific to this unit:

#### Language Arts Teachers:

Next to certain novels in this guide are notations about the geographical location of the settings. It is appropriate and meaningful to address the geographical location on maps. For students, this will provide reinforcement for similar topics in social studies.

#### Social Studies Standards

\*Note that geography is embedded across all grade levels and units. It should be addressed within the topic of study rather than in isolation. The geography standards are highlighted, but mapping the location of any standard when appropriate enhances learning for students. \*

6.1.8.A.1.b. Determine the influence of Native American governments on the creation of the United States Constitution and development of American democracy.

6.1.8.A.1.d. Determine the influence of British, Spanish and French colonial systems on present day government.

6.1.8.D.1.d. Explain how the dissemination of American ideals and values due to new printing technologies contributed to the development of an American heritage.

6.1.8.A.3.a. Explain how and why early government structures developed and their influence on American politics and institutions.

6.1.8.A.3.b. Explain why the Declaration of Independence was written and the effect it has had on American history.

6.1.8.A.3.d. Determine the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation from different perspectives.

6.1.8.B.3.b. Explain how the Land Ordinance of 1785 supported America's belief in public education.

6.1.8.D.4.e. Explain the role of the American citizen in the democratic process.

6.1.8.A.5.a. Relate the function of each branch of government to protecting individual rights and promoting the common good.

6.1.8.A.5.b. Analyze the structure, organization and powers of government at the local, state and national level to determine how individual rights are protected and public issues resolved.

6.1.8.D.5.b. Explain how the election process works at the federal, state and local level and the role of the American citizen in this process.

6.1.8.D.5.c. Justify how and why the election process represents the majority and minority voice.

## Science

5.7.8A2 Recognize that every object exerts a gravitational force on every other object, and that the force depends on how much mass the objects have and how far apart they are.

5.7.8B2 Describe the nature of various forms of energy, including heat, light, sound, chemical, mechanical, and electrical and trace energy transformations from one form to another.

5.7.8B3 Describe how heat can be conducted through materials or transferred across space by radiation and know that if the material is a fluid, convection currents may aid the transfer of heat.

5.7.8B4 Show that light is reflected, refracted, or absorbed when it interacts with matter and that colors may appear as a result of this interaction.

5.8.8D1 Utilize data gathered from emerging technologies (e.g., geographic information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS) to create representations and describe processes of change on the Earth's surface.

5.8.8D2 Explain how technology designed to investigate features of the Earth's surface impacts how scientists study the Earth.

## Materials:

**Possible core and/or authentic readings:** (geographical location noted *when appropriate*)

*Watership Down* by Richard Adam (C) -- England

*Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll (C) -- England

*Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (A+) -- island

"Flowers for Algernon" by Daniel Keyes (A)

*Anthem* by Ayn Rand (A)

*The Pigman* by Paul Zindel (E)

*Nothing but the Truth* by Avi (E)

*The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (A)

Social Studies textbook – *Civics: Civics: Responsibilities and Citizenship*: “What is Civics?” P.2-17, “Roots of American Democracy” P. 26-44 “The Constitution” P.52-92, “ Voting and Elections” P. 166-183, “The National Government” P. 208-297

### **Guided Reading:**

ILA Anthology (Prentice Hall): “The Secret” P. 122-126, “Harriet Tubman: Guide to Freedom” P. 132-139, “Columbus” P.144, “Emancipation from Lincoln: A Photobiography” P. 262-265, “O Captain! My Captain!” P. 266-267, “Raymond’s Run” P.292-299, “Paul Revere’s Ride” P. 306-310, “Barbara Frietchie” P. 311-313, “Elizabeth Blackwell” P.314-316, “Young Jefferson Gets Some Advice from Ben Franklin” P. 321-322, “Always to Remember: The Vision of Maya Ying Lin” P. 326-331, “Tell- Tale Heart,” P.542 – 547.

“The Raven,” “The Black Cat,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” “Annabel Lee,” “The Fall of the House of Usher,” and “The Bells.” University of Virginia has many of these stories and poems online in the form of E-texts.

*Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy (C)

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*Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli (A)

*A Separate Peace* by John Knowles (A+)

*A Man Who Was Poe* by Avi (E)

*The Looking Glass Wars* by Frank Beddor (C)

Social Studies Textbook-*Civics*

### **Independent Reading/Research:**

Leveled Readers

### **Teacher Resources:**

#### **Audio-Visual:**

Various Poe story dramatizations (department videos).

*You-tube* music video of an Allan Parsons Project song based on “The Cask of Amontillado”

A & E Biography: Edgar Allan Poe

“Who Killed the Electric Car?” documentary (DVD from Netflix)

### **Suggested Student Activities:**

#### **Theme Introduction activities:**

Begin with this quote:

"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

----- Henry David Thoreau, Walden, Conclusion, 1854

Ask students to think about what the quote is saying. Then, have students discuss what the quote means to them. Have they ever known someone who hears a different drummer? How about YOU? Do you “do your own thing” or are you happier “going along with the crowd”?

After the whole class discussion, students should write a response to what it means to march to the beat of a different drummer.

OR

Begin with this quote:

“If I were to sum it all up, I’d say a good leader has to have a purpose that is larger than she is and the balanced personality and skills to put that purpose into action”.

Sandra Larson

Ask students to discuss the meaning of the quote, and list some of the many qualities that make for a great leader.

### **Core Text activities:**

1. Listen to daily read alouds.
2. Select key vocabulary and clarify word meanings.
3. Make predictions and interpret ideas through discussions and journal entries.
4. Critique and appraise decisions made by the characters, citing specific examples from the text.
5. Make inferences using textual information and providing supporting evidence.

**Short Term Projects that could result in a long term PBL** five paragraph persuasive essay and/or advertising campaign selling the idea of an alternate car choice to the American people “Who Killed the Electric Car?”

1. Watch a documentary with the aforementioned title.
2. Then, students will choose one type of car that could take the place of the gas-driven kind popularly used today and research its advantages and its drawbacks.

### **Short Term Projects that could result in a long term PBL of a multimedia presentation**

1. Students will research Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences
2. Show the meaning of intelligence and explain the theory of Multiple Intelligence through: **Visual**. For example PowerPoint, web page, scrap book, e.t.c. **Dramatization**. For example students could create a series of frozen scenes while one group member explains them; Take on the persona of different intelligences, and give their presentation that way.
3. Analyze two types of intelligence.
4. Create an intellectual Self Portrait. - Self-portraiture, speaking, and autobiographical writing. An Intellectual Self Portrait should: Show or reflect student’s personality; Identify pieces of evidence that show who they are as a people and/or learners. (Multiple Intelligences)

It should answer some or all of these questions:

- What are the distinctive things that make you "you"?
- How do you want people to see you?
- How do you express your many different sides?
- How can, or do, you reinvent yourself for various purposes or times in your life?
- How are you changing from day to day or year to year?
- Who do you want to become?

## **Short-term projects leading to a long-term PBL Research paper**

1. Make a list of qualities that make for a great leader. Give examples of these qualities in general, in school, and in politics.
2. Research four leaders from different disciplines and choose one. (The person you choose must be a clear leader in his or her field.)
3. Cite all works used (MLA Style)
4. Write an introductory paragraph on the leader of your choice.
5. Write a research paper exploring why you chose this person as a leader, this person's leadership experiences, and how they have influenced your concept of what leadership is, and your role as a leader. (Who is this person? Why is this person of value to you and/or the world? Clearly state why the leadership is important to you and how you hope to use this experience in the future).

## **Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of a Power Point presentation**

### **Nature of a genius:**

1. Students will explore the creativity of any individual who changed the face of the 20th and/or 21st century. (The student's goal is to understand the nature of a genius by researching this individual).
2. They will write a brief who's who about their chosen genius.
3. Through their research, students should find a quote that best introduces the individual and show how this individual marched to the beat of a different drummer?

### **Other Possible long-term projects:**

1. Create patent application for invention
2. Positive and negative effect on a society of a particular invention
3. Create an invention and write a scenario that solves a future question or problem.

## **Assessments**

Informal daily observations

Writing conferences

Anecdotal notes (Guided Reading and Guided Writing)

Rubrics:

- Writing rubric
- Speaking rubric
- Oral presentation-dramatization
- Open-ended scoring rubric
- Final project