

6th Grade Elements of Fiction & Short Stories

A Six Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Plot diagram, elements of plot, setting analysis, videos to teach with

Week 2

Snapshot: Elements of characterization, conflict analysis, text evidence

Week 3

Snapshot: Theme vs. topic, short story analysis, making inferences, using text evidence

Week 4

Snapshot: Mood, tone, foreshadow, suspense, flashback, symbolism

Week 5

Snapshot: Elements of fiction writing project: plot, setting, characters, etc. (This is a two-week writing project that would make an awesome final assessment! That's how most people use it!)

Week 6

Snapshot: Elements of fiction writing project: dialogue, conflict, theme, etc. (This is where students finish the writing project. It does make for a good alternative assessment to close out the unit.)



7th Grade Reading & Writing with Fiction / Short Stories

Week 1

Snapshot: This week, students review the elements of fiction and short story in the form of a combined reading & writing unit. Mini-lessons will focus on setting, plot, irony, etc. as students engage in a short story and all the supporting activities.

Week 2

Snapshot: Elements of fiction and short stories, such as characterization (static / dynamic, direct / indirect) are the focus of lessons and activities this week. Students will look at what drives character motivations, and how different types of conflicts add new dynamics to plot and story outcome.

Week 3

Snapshot: Literary devices— mood, tone, flashback, foreshadow, symbolism (These devices are the basis for this week’s activities). Students will end the week with writing a literary analysis paragraph about the story they read, using text evidence and one of the literary devices studied this week.

Week 4

Snapshot: This week’s short story is a sci-fi / futuristic one called “The Chaser.” Students will use this story all throughout the week to draw thematic connections across genres (myth & song relations). In addition, this story will also serve as a means through which to review other elements of fiction & literary devices (characterization, foreshadowing, etc.).

Test Week

Snapshot: We made it to the end! You have two options for a review, two options for a test, and then some lighter, creative writing activities for the last couple of days of this week. Those activities are pretty much student-directed so your class can work and you can get those tests graded!



8th Grade Reading and Writing with Short Stories

Week 1

Snapshot: Students will practice and review standard elements of short stories. This week, students will read one short story and complete engaging mini-lesson activities centered around the plot, characterization, and conflicts in that short story. Students will also complete small group and independent creative writing assignments related to the short story.

Week 2

Snapshot: This week has students reviewing all kinds of elements of literature and literary devices through Gwendolyn Brook's short story "Home." Activities include plot, theme, mood, figurative language, various opportunities for using text evidence effectively, and, of course, writing activities!

Week 3

Snapshot: Lessons and activities this week are centered around W.W. Jacobs' famously creepy short story, "The Monkey's Paw." This is a fan favorite to teach in October, but it's relevant and engaging any time of year! Students will read the short story and review elements of fiction via a mini-lesson (tone, mood, foreshadow, symbolism). To interact with the text in different ways, students will work through using text evidence to make logical inferences, annotating for literary devices, making connections to similar topics in other (very brief) companion texts, and writing responses that help them explore their own thoughts about the story's theme.

Week 4

Snapshot: Students will read Walter Dean Myer's short story, "The Treasure of Lemon Brown." Literary devices this week include irony, metaphors, imagery, and symbolism.

