

# ***7<sup>th</sup> Grade English Curriculum Development***

## ***Self-Discovery***



**Overall Rationale:** In sixth grade, students explored their role as a part of a community, surveying what is “out there.” Seventh grade students will embark on a journey of self-discovery by focusing inward, starting their journey with who they are now and culminating the year with a unit in which students think about and describe who they want to become. This self-examination occurs through exploration of characters (both real and fictitious) and the way authors reveal those characters’ traits, the impact of setting, and the events that occur in works of literature, poetry, music, drama, and nonfiction text.

### ***Unit 1: Who am I?***

#### **Essential Questions:**

- What shapes how we view ourselves and others?
- How do we understand who people are?
- How do people reveal their identity?
- What are the different components of a person’s identity?

#### **Enduring Understanding:**

- Individuals are complex and reveal themselves in many different ways.
- Individual identity is important.

#### **Rationale:**

In this unit, students will focus on the concept of identity, both their own and the exploration of the ways in which authors develop characters’ identities. Students will read short stories, novels, poems, and informational texts defining a sense of self. Collaboration with science concepts of nature vs. nurture. (key concepts: character, character development, direct characterization, indirect characterization ).

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - *It’s All Greek to Me* (mythology unit by Sheryllyn Wall, Heather Martin and Jody Osler)
  - <https://thisibelieve.org/store/product/middle-school-curriculum/>
  - Holt *Elements of Literature* Collection 2: Characters: Living Many Lives
  - “Yeh-Shen” (Chinese version of Cinderella)

- Who Am I/ Essay Writing from Scholastic.com  
<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/who-am-i-0>
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - personal narrative
  - Write an origin myth about the origin of the student or the origin of something in the student's life.
  - Create an annotated map of a student's home (possible collaboration with math) detailing significant events in the student's life that have occurred in each of the rooms to create a mind map from which to develop writing ideas.
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Face on the Milk Carton* - Cooney
  - *Airhead series* - Cabot
  - *Mila 2.0* - Driza
  - *Does my Head Look Big in This?* - Abdel-Fattah
  - *Zane and the Hurricane* - Philbrick
  - *Page by Paige* - Gullede
  - *So B It* - Weeks
  - *Better Nate Than Ever* - Federle
  - *45 pounds (more or less)* - Barson
  - *The Running Dream* - Van Draanen
  - *Imprisoned* - Sandler
  - *OCD, the Dude and Me* - Vaughn
  - *Flygirl* - Smith
  - *Hidden Talents* - Lubar

**SOLs (based on Q1 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- e) **Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**
- f) **Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.**

**7.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry.**

- a) **Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme, and conflict.**
- b) **Compare and contrast various forms and genres of fictional text.**
- c) **Identify conventional elements and characteristics of a variety of genres.**

- f) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- h) Identify the main idea.**
- i) Summarize text relating supporting details.**
- l) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.**
- h) Identify the main idea.**
- i) Summarize text identifying supporting details.**
- l) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.

7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

- d) Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.
- e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.

*\*If teaching themed units out of order, adjust standards based on the appropriate quarter's scope and sequence\**

*\*Word parts (roots, affixes) and writing standards should be explicitly taught all year and assessed in a variety of ways \**

## ***Unit 2: Belonging***

### **Essential Questions:**

- Where do I fit into the world?
- How do you find where you belong?
- What are advantages of fitting in or standing out?
- What defines a group?

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Humans have a need to belong.
- Everyone has a place or group in which he or she belongs

**Rationale:** Once students have had the time to reflect on who they are, now they will explore where they belong in relation to others. Students will examine their “membership” in groups in their own lives. They will view themselves and others as both “insiders” and “outsiders.” Through exploration of themselves and other characters through literature, nonfiction, and poetry, students will come to understand that our need to belong can influence our behaviors.

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - “I’m Nobody” Emily Dickinson
  - *The Outsiders* S.E. Hinton
  - *Wrinker* Jerry Spinelli
  - “Ain’t I a Woman?” S. Truth
  - Identity and Belonging  
<http://www.vcestudyguides.com/guides/context/identity-and-belonging>
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - Debate
  - Identity and Belonging Writing Prompts  
<http://www.vcestudyguides.com/guides/context/identity-and-belonging/identity-and-belonging-prompts>
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Strays like us* - Peck
  - *Why Does the Coqui Sing?* - Polikoff
  - *One for the Murphys* - Hunt
  - *Tangerine* - Bloor
  - *Drama* - Telgemeier
  - *Bat 6* - Wolff

- *Hope Was Here* - Bauer
- *Woman in the Wall* - Kindl
- *Stargirl* – Spinelli

**SOLs (based on Q1 and Q2 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.**
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.**
- e) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**
- f) Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

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- a) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme, and conflict.**
- b) Compare and contrast various forms and genres of fictional text.**
- c) Identify conventional elements and characteristics of a variety of genres.**
- f) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- h) Identify the main idea.**
- i) Summarize text relating supporting details.**
- j) Identify cause and effect relationships.**
- k) Organize and synthesize information for use in written formats.**
- l) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.**
- c) Identify an author’s organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases.**
- d) Draw conclusions and make inferences on explicit and implied information.**
- e) Differentiate between fact and opinion.
- h) Identify the main idea.**
- i) Summarize text identifying supporting details.**

**j) Identify cause and effect relationships.**

l) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.

7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

a) Use a variety of graphic organizers, including sentence diagrams, to analyze and improve sentence formation and paragraph structure.

b) Choose appropriate adjectives and adverbs to enhance writing.

c) Use pronoun-antecedent agreement to include indefinite pronouns.

d) Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.

e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.

f) Demonstrate understanding of sentence formation by identifying the eight parts of speech and their functions in sentences.

g) Use quotation marks with dialogue.

h) Use correct spelling for commonly used words.

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*\*Word parts (roots, affixes) and writing standards should be explicitly taught all year and assessed in a variety of ways \**

## ***Unit 3: Struggle***

### **Essential Questions:**

- How can you tell which side is “right” in a conflict?
- How does struggle shape who we are?
- What can we learn from conflict and adversity?

### **Enduring Understanding:**

- Conflict is necessary for growth and change.
- Conflict can be internal and external.
- Conflict rarely has...

**Rationale:** This unit focuses on identifying various types of internal and external conflicts presented in literary and informational texts. Students will examine the universal themes of conflict and struggle that are part of the human condition. (key concepts: internal and external conflict, plot)

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - Holt *Elements of Literature* Collection 1: Facing Danger
  - Langston Hughes and the Harlem Renaissance Unit by Dorothy Fraker, Mary Kenely, Anna Spencer-Powell, and Lindsay Perkins
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - create “walk a mile in my shoes” 1st person poetry based on the struggles of an individual or group (research, biography, poetry)
  - persuasive essay
  - “alternative endings”
  - debate
  - Socratic Seminar
  - Current Events-based writing
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Mockingbird* - Erskine
  - *Out of My Mind* - Draper
  - *Raft* - Bodeen
  - *Pinned* - Flake
  - *Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass* - Medina
  - *Life As We Knew It* - Pfeffer
  - *Forest of Hands and Teeth* - Ryan
  - *far, far away* - McNeal
  - *Orchards* - Thompson
  - *Now is the time for running* - Michael Williams
  - *Courage Has No Color* - Stone

- *Countdown* - Wiles
- *Ask Me No Questions* - Budhos

- *Graveyard Book* - Gaiman
- *Where the Streets Had a Name* - Abdel-Fattah

**SOLs (based on Q2 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.
- e) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.

**7.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry.**

- j) Identify cause and effect relationships.
- k) Organize and synthesize information for use in written formats.

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- c) Identify an author's organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases.**
- d) Draw conclusions and make inferences on explicit and implied information.**
- e) Differentiate between fact and opinion.**
- j) Identify cause and effect relationships.**

**7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.**

- a) Use a variety of graphic organizers, including sentence diagrams, to analyze and improve sentence formation and paragraph structure.
- b) Choose appropriate adjectives and adverbs to enhance writing.
- c) Use pronoun-antecedent agreement to include indefinite pronouns.
- d) Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.
- e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.
- f) Demonstrate understanding of sentence formation by identifying the eight parts of speech and their functions in sentences.
- g) Use quotation marks with dialogue.
- h) Use correct spelling for commonly used words.



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*\*Word parts (roots, affixes) and writing standards should be explicitly taught all year and assessed in a variety of ways \**

## ***Unit 4: Rebellion***

### **Essential Questions:**

- What happens when I question my identity?
- How do individuals express their unwillingness to conform?
- What happens when someone expects us to be someone we're not?

### **Enduring Understanding:**

- The way we react to struggle or conflict helps define who we are.
- Rebellion is sometimes necessary to define and maintain who we are.

**Rationale:** This unit focuses on the rejection of societal and cultural norms and values - a concept which is something 7th grade students are beginning to think about as they try to reconcile others' expectations with who they want to be. Students will read literary and informational texts, poetry, drama, and conduct research in this unit.

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - Banned Books Literature Circle Unit by 7th Grade ELA, Swanson
  - *Fahrenheit 451* Ray Bradbury
  - *Students on Strike* John A. Stokes
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - Select two (or three) characters from at least two of the short stories read during this unit. Write a persuasive essay about these characters, convincing your reader that the choices they made were—or were not—appropriate ones.
  - Current Events-based writing
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Divergent* - Roth
  - *Hunger Games* - Collins
  - *Legend* - Lu
  - *Delirium* - Oliver
  - *Matched* - Condie
  - *Giver* - Lowry
  - *Boxers and Saints* - Yang
  - *Cinder* - Meyer
  - *Claudette Colvin* - Hoose
  - *Surviving the Applewhites* - Tolan
  - *Forge* - Anderson

**SOLs (based on Q2 and Q3 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.**
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.**
- c) Identify and analyze figurative language.**
- d) Identify connotations.**
- e) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**

**7.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry.**

- a) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme, and conflict.**
- d) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme and conflict.**
- e) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**
- g) Make inferences and draw conclusions based on the text.**
- j) Identify cause and effect relationships.**
- k) Organize and synthesize information for use in written formats.**

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- c) Identify an author's organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases.**
- d) Draw conclusions and make inferences on explicit and implied information.**
- e) Differentiate between fact and opinion.**
- f) Identify the source, viewpoint, and purpose of texts.**
- g) Describe how word choice and language structure convey an author's viewpoint.**
- j) Identify cause and effect relationships.**
- k) Organize and synthesize information for use in written formats.**

**7.7 The student will write in a variety of forms with an emphasis on exposition, narration, and persuasion.**

- a) Identify intended audience.**
- b) Use a variety of prewriting strategies including graphic organizers to generate and organize ideas.**

- c) Organize writing structure to fit mode or topic.
- d) Establish a central idea and organization
- e) Compose a topic sentence or thesis statement.
- f) Write multiparagraph compositions with unity elaborating the central idea.
- g) Select vocabulary and information to enhance the central idea, tone, and voice.
- h) Expand and embed ideas by using modifiers, standard coordination, and subordination in complete sentences.
- i) Use clauses and phrases for sentence variety.
- j) Revise sentences for clarity of content including specific vocabulary and information.
- k) Use computer technology to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing.

7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

- a) Use a variety of graphic organizers, including sentence diagrams, to analyze and improve sentence formation and paragraph structure.
- b) Choose appropriate adjectives and adverbs to enhance writing.
- c) Use pronoun-antecedent agreement to include indefinite pronouns.
- d) Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.
- e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.
- f) Demonstrate understanding of sentence formation by identifying the eight parts of speech and their functions in sentences.
- g) Use quotation marks with dialogue.
- h) Use correct spelling for commonly used words.

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## ***Unit 5: Relationships***

### **Essential Questions:**

- Why do human bonds bring both pleasure and pain?
- How are we transformed or shaped by our relationships with others?
- How does our sense of self affect our relationships?
- What factors influence our relationships with others?

### **Enduring Understanding:**

- Empathy is important to building strong relationships.
- Understanding yourself can help you understand others.
- Relationships can positively or negatively affect your identity.

**Rationale:** In this unit, students will examine relationships - human relationships, character relationships, spiritual relationships, and emotional relationships. They will focus on the ways in which people interact with one another in various levels of relationships as well as the way authors portray relationships to communicate with their audience (intertextual character dynamics, theme, allegory)

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - Empowerment Unit (also appropriate for Unit 6)
  - Holt *Elements of Literature* Collection 3: Living in the Heart
  - “After Twenty Years” O’Henry
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - Persuasive writing
  - Write a personal memoir from the point of view of a major character
  - People-Inspired/Relationship Writing Prompts  
<http://www.writingforward.com/writing-prompts/writing-prompts/people-inspired-writing-prompts>
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Eleanor & Park* - Rowell
  - *Crossover* - Alexander
  - *Counting by 7’s* - Sloan
  - *Dollbones* - Holly Black
  - *P.S. Be Eleven* - Williams-Garcia
  - *Navigating Early* - Vanderpool
  - *Okay for Now* - Schmidt
  - *Wild Things* - Carmichael

- *Lions of Little Rock* - Levine
- *Wanderer* - Creech
- *Squashed* - Bauer
- *Al Capone Does My Shirts* – Choldenko

**SOLs (based on Q3 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- c) Identify and analyze figurative language.**
- d) Identify connotations.**

**7.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry.**

- a) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme, and conflict.**
- d) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme and conflict.**
- e) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**
- g) Make inferences and draw conclusions based on the text.**

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- f) Identify the source, viewpoint, and purpose of texts.**
- g) Describe how word choice and language structure convey an author's viewpoint.**
- k) Organize and synthesize information for use in written formats.**

**7.7 The student will write in a variety of forms with an emphasis on exposition, narration, and persuasion.**

- a) Identify intended audience.
- b) Use a variety of prewriting strategies including graphic organizers to generate and organize ideas.
- c) Organize writing structure to fit mode or topic.
- d) Establish a central idea and organization
- e) Compose a topic sentence or thesis statement.
- f) Write multiparagraph compositions with unity elaborating the central idea.
- g) Select vocabulary and information to enhance the central idea, tone, and voice.
- h) Expand and embed ideas by using modifiers, standard coordination, and subordination in complete sentences.
- i) Use clauses and phrases for sentence variety.

- j) Revise sentences for clarity of content including specific vocabulary and information.
- k) Use computer technology to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing.

7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

- a) Use a variety of graphic organizers, including sentence diagrams, to analyze and improve sentence formation and paragraph structure.
- b) Choose appropriate adjectives and adverbs to enhance writing.
- c) Use pronoun-antecedent agreement to include indefinite pronouns.
- d) Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses.
- e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.
- f) Demonstrate understanding of sentence formation by identifying the eight parts of speech and their functions in sentences.
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## ***Unit 6: Decisions***

### **Essential Questions:**

- Who do I want to be?
- What factors impact our decision-making?
- What is an informed decision?
- What should I consider when making a difficult decision?

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Life is an endless sequence of decisions.
- Decisions have far-reaching consequences.

**Rationale:** After spending the year exploring the ways our experiences shape our choices and actions, students will think about who they want to become. This unit will include a study of the many decisions people (both real and fictional) make and the impact decisions can have for years to come. This will prepare them to explore their role as a global citizen in eighth grade.

- Potential unit plans and resources that would fit in this theme could include:
  - Empowerment Unit (if not used in Unit 6)
  - “Bargain” A.B. Guthrie
- Potential writing assignments to fit this theme could include:
  - Monologue or speech
- Potential reading selections:
  - *Skinny* - Cooner
  - *Defining Dulcie* - Acampora
  - *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* - Staples
  - *Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making* - Valente
  - *Boundless* - Oppel
  - *Rock and the River* - Magoon
  - *Trapped* - Northrop
  - *Gone* - Grant
  - *Miles from Ordinary* - Williams
  - *Absolute Value of Mike* - Schmidt
  - *Hate List* - Brown
  - *Catherine, Called Birdy* - Cushman

### **SOLs (based on Q4 scope and sequence) Introduced and Explicitly Taught**

**7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.**

- Identify word origins and derivations.**
- Use roots, cognates, affixes, synonyms, and antonyms to expand vocabulary.**
- Identify and analyze figurative language.**
- Identify connotations.**
- Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.**



- f) Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

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- a) Describe the elements of narrative structure including setting, character development, plot structure, theme, and conflict.
- b) Compare and contrast various forms and genres of fictional text.
- c) Identify conventional elements and characteristics of a variety of genres.
- d) Describe the impact of word choice, imagery, and literary devices including figurative language.
- e) Make, confirm, and revise predictions.
- f) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- g) Make inferences and draw conclusions based on the text.
- h) Identify the main idea.
- i) Summarize text relating supporting details.
- j) Identify the author's organizational pattern.
- k) Identify cause and effect relationships.
- l) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process

**7.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.**

- a) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.
- b) Use text structures to aid comprehension.
- c) Identify an author's organizational pattern using textual clues, such as transitional words and phrases.
- d) Draw conclusions and make inferences on explicit and implied information.
- e) Differentiate between fact and opinion.
- f) Identify the source, viewpoint, and purpose of texts.
- g) Describe how word choice and language structure convey an author's viewpoint.
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- h) Expand and embed ideas by using modifiers, standard coordination, and subordination in complete sentences.

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- j) Revise sentences for clarity of content including specific vocabulary and information.
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