

## 9th Grade: Unit One

# FOLLOWING THE CROWD

### Unit at a Glance

Grade Level: 9th

Essential Question: How does being in a group affect how we behave?

Length: 5–7 weeks (see [Pacing Guide](#))

Unit Texts: (see [full list of texts](#))

- “Cheboygan Day” by Brittany Allen (Short Story)
- “Conformity” by Charlotte Harrison (Informational)
- “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury (Short Story)
- “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson (Short Story)
- “The Dangers of Tradition” by Bakari Bosa (Informational)
- “The Man in the Well” by Ira Sher (Short Story)
- “It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault” by Shelby Ostergaard (Informational)
- Supplemental Texts Included (English + Spanish)
- Independent Reading and Book Club Options

Focus Skills: (see [Reading and Writing Skill Arcs](#))

Reading:

- Theme development [RL.9-10.2]
- Development of complex characters, character interactions, plot, and theme [RL.9-10.3]
- Impact of an author’s structural choices [RL.9-10.5]
- Development of central idea [RI.9-10.2]
- Author’s development of ideas or claims [RI.9-10.5]

Writing:

- Argument writing [W.9-10.1]
- Expository writing [W.9-10.2]

Language:

- Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation [L.9-10.2.B]
- Grade-appropriate academic vocabulary [L.9-10.6]

Speaking and Listening:

- Refer to evidence from texts to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas [SL.9-10.1.A]

### Unit Overview

In this 360 Unit, students learn how the actions of a group affect the choices of an individual. The unit is anchored around four engaging short stories that illuminate the danger associated with blindly conforming to the actions of a group: “All Summer in a Day,” “The Lottery,” “The Man in the Well” and new CommonLit original “Cheboygan Day.” In each of these short stories, people find themselves making choices that they would most likely not make on their own. Among the characters are people who face the truth of their actions and people who are blind to the dangerous consequences of following the crowd. To help students further engage with the themes in the unit, students read “Conformity,” “It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault,” and “The Dangers of Tradition,” informational texts that explain the psychology behind why people often go along with a crowd even when it goes against their individual beliefs. Students work in collaborative groups during a Related Media Exploration featuring videos and an infographic to support discussion about the ways conformity shows up in everyday life.

By the end of the unit, students should be able to use evidence from the unit’s literary and informational texts to explain people’s tendency to act differently when part of a group. To demonstrate this skill, they write a cross-textual literary analysis essay that examines how the unit’s short stories illustrate the ideas presented in the informational text “It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault.” This unit also includes resources to support teachers in launching an independent reading program or book clubs that run parallel to the core instruction in this unit.

### WHAT’S INCLUDED

- ✓ 7 Reading Lessons
- ✓ A Set of Supplemental Texts
- ✓ Independent Reading and Book Club Resources
- ✓ A Writing Baseline Assessment
- ✓ 5 Writing Lessons
- ✓ 1 Vocabulary Activity Set
- ✓ 1 Vocabulary Quiz
- ✓ 1 Grammar and Usage Activity Set
- ✓ 1 Grammar and Usage Quiz
- ✓ 1 Discussion Skill Lesson
- ✓ 1 Class Discussion
- ✓ 1 Related Media Exploration
- ✓ 1 Cross-Textual Literary Analysis Essay
- ✓ 1 Narrative Prompt
- ✓ A Set of Alternative End-Of-Unit Writing Options

## Skill Focus:

By the time they reach high school, students should be able to analyze the development of a theme in a literary text [RL.8.2], how incidents in a story propel the action [RL.8.3], and how the structure of a text contributes to its meaning and style [RL.8.5]. In this 9th grade 360 Unit, students build on this knowledge as they develop a more sophisticated understanding of these standards. Theme statements and other claims about literature in 9th grade should be more nuanced and express related or conflicting ideas within a text [RL.9-10.2]. In 9th grade, students should be able to articulate how character interactions and changing character motivations develop complex characters [RL.9-10.3]. Students also determine how an author's structural choices, such as the way a story begins or ends along with foreshadowing, develop tension and suspense [RL.9-10.5].

Reading lessons in this unit include scaffolded questions to help students meet grade level reading standards. Independent Practice for reading lessons is aligned to RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, and RL.9-10.5, and includes both multiple choice and short answer responses.

Writing in this first high school unit provides students with direct instruction on foundational writing skills they will continue to use in the units that follow. This unit also includes a writing baseline assessment to help teachers determine their students' specific writing needs. Students review the parts of an exemplar paragraph and receive explicit instruction on writing strong arguments and introduction and conclusion paragraphs. To demonstrate these skills, students write an essay responding to a cross-textual literary analysis prompt. Students also collaboratively plan their Unit 1 Essay and analyze an exemplar student essay to clarify expectations for a full essay structure.

### How does RL.2 shift?

**8th Grade:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and **analyze its development** over the course of the text, including **its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot**; provide an objective summary of the text.



**9th-10th Grade:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and **analyze in detail its development** over the course of the text, including **how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details**; provide an objective summary of the text.

### How does RL.3 shift?

**8th Grade:** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama **propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision**.



**9th-10th Grade:** Analyze how **complex characters** (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) **develop over the course of a text**, interact with other characters, and **advance the plot or develop the theme**.

### How does RL.5 shift?

**8th Grade:** Compare and **contrast the structure of two or more texts** and **analyze how the differing structure** of each text contributes to its meaning and style.



**9th-10th Grade:** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to **structure a text**, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) **create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise**.

## ARC OF READING INSTRUCTION

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4
<b>"Cheboygan Day" by Brittany Allen</b> (Short Story)	<b>"Conformity" by Charlotte Harrison</b> (Informational)	<b>"All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury</b> (Short Story)	<b>"The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson</b> (Short Story)
Students read to analyze how an author uses <b>character interactions</b> to develop a <b>theme</b> . [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3]	Students read to analyze how a <b>central idea</b> is developed over the course of an informational text. [RI.9-10.2]	Students read to analyze how an author uses <b>character interactions</b> to develop a <b>theme</b> . [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3]	Students read to analyze how a story's <b>setting</b> and <b>structure</b> create <b>foreshadowing</b> and affect readers. [RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5]
Reading Lesson 5	Reading Lesson 6	Reading Lesson 7	
<b>"The Dangers of Tradition" by Bakari Bosa</b> (Informational)	<b>"The Man in the Well" by Ira Sher</b> (Short Story)	<b>"It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault" by Shelby Ostergaard</b> (Informational)	
Students read to analyze how a <b>central idea</b> is developed and <b>refined by specific details</b> over the course of an informational text. [RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.5]	Students read to analyze how <b>characters with multiple or conflicting motivations</b> develop over the course of a text and <b>advance the plot</b> . [RL.9-10.3]	Students read to analyze how a <b>central idea</b> is developed over the course of an informational text. [RI.9-10.2]	

**This unit also includes:**

- Optional supplemental texts in English and Spanish that support students in developing reading volume and stamina.
- Independent reading and book club optional to build students' volume and breadth of reading

**Unit Test**

**Coming Soon:** Unit Tests will be available for SY 2022-2023 as part of the CommonLit 360 for Schools package of services. For more information, encourage your administrator to email [360@commonlit.org](mailto:360@commonlit.org).

**ARC OF WRITING INSTRUCTION**

Writing Baseline Assessment (Optional)	Writing Lesson 1:	Writing Lesson 2:	Writing Lesson 3:	Writing Lesson 4:	Writing Lesson 5:
Who is braver: a person who leads a group of people, or someone who decides not to follow along with the behavior of a group?	Exemplar Paragraph	Writing a Strong Argument	Unit 1 Essay: Planning	Writing Introductions	Writing Conclusions

**Prompt (Recommended):** Write an essay that analyzes how the unit short stories illustrate **one or more** of the terms from the article "It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault."

- Deindividuation
- Anonymity
- Diffused responsibility

Use evidence from **at least two** of the unit short stories and Shelby Ostergaard's "It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault." **[W.2]**

**Essay (Optional):** Narrative

**Prompt:** You have read the short story "Cheboygan Day" by Brittany Allen. Select a scene and rewrite it from Adele's perspective. **[W.3]**

**VOCABULARY, DISCUSSION, AND GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION****Vocabulary**

This 360 Unit includes **explicit vocabulary instruction** on 10 academic words. Students complete 5 activities for each set of words. Consistent with research, students encounter these words in context. Word usage is reinforced in reading, writing, and discussion activities **[L.9-10.6]**. [Learn more here.](#)

**Discussion**

In all 360 Units, students discuss the texts they are reading daily. In addition to multiple opportunities for **informal discussion**, there is one **formal whole class discussion** where students discuss whether people should be held accountable for what they do under the influence of a group. Students receive explicit instruction on **how to refer to text evidence to support and exchange of ideas [SL.9-10.1.A]**.

**Grammar Instruction**

This unit includes a short lesson and 6 practice activities on using a **colon to introduce a list or quotation [L.9-10.2.B]**. This skill helps students write with more sophistication and variety.

# Lessons & Materials

Below, you will find all of the materials needed to teach this unit. To better help you understand the choices and flexibility within the unit materials, individual lessons are tagged as Essential, Recommended, or Optional.

A sample Pacing Guide is available [here](#).

## Writing Baseline Assessment

## UNIT PREP RESOURCES



### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Assigning a writing baseline assessment at the beginning of the year is a great way to get to know your class and assess student strengths and weaknesses. This argumentative prompt connects to the major unit themes. It asks students to argue whether or not the leader of a group is braver than a person who refuses to follow the crowd, using evidence from stories, movies, real world events, or experiences from their own lives.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Distribute the Writing Baseline Assessment on paper or through Google Docs. Set aside one class period for students to compose the essay, ideally in a silent testing environment. Students may use blank paper or a digital notebook to plan their essay. Use the Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric to score student essays. Provide direct feedback to students on their essay using the Student Feedback Form. Have students reflect on their writing and set writing goals using the Writing Baseline Assessment Goal-Setting Tool. You may use this tool to kick off 1:1 conferences with students.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Copy: Writing Baseline Assessment](#)
- [Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric and Student Feedback Form](#)
- [Writing Baseline Assessment Goal Setting Tool](#)

## Supplemental Texts

## UNIT PREP RESOURCES



### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Each CommonLit 360 Unit is accompanied by a set of supplemental texts that connect to the unit's themes. Texts can be printed or assigned digitally and include questions and activities.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Review the [Guidance for Supplemental Text Sets](#) for ideas on how to implement supplemental texts across the unit.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Herd Behavior](#) by CommonLit Staff (Informational): *The author explains how and why humans sometimes display the same behavior as a herd of frightened animals. Ask students which stories in the unit contain elements of herd behavior, and how this affects the outcomes.*
- [The Power of 'Like'](#) by Alison Pearce Stevens (Informational): *Neuroscientists explain how "likes" on social media affect teen behavior. Use this text to open a conversation with students about how social media influences them and their friends.*
- [The Effect of Others](#) by Exploratorium (Informational): *Social scientists explain the different types of social influence that affect the way people behave when in a group. Ask students which of these forces they see at work in the stories in this unit and in the world around them.*
- [Why Kids Bully: Because They're Popular](#) by Belinda Luscombe (Informational): *A researcher has discovered that the more popular kids are, the more likely they are to bully others. Ask students if this matches the behavior they see in the stories in this unit and in their own social groups.*
- [Peer Pressure has a Positive Side](#) by Annie Murphy Paul (Informational): *Researchers discuss how the adolescent tendency toward risk-taking in front of peers could lead to academic gains. Discuss with students whether being with friends makes them feel emboldened to take risks and how this could lead to good outcomes.*
- [Milgram Experiment on Obedience](#) by Khan Academy (Informational): *In Stanley Milgram's infamous experiments, people were willing to hurt strangers when ordered to do so by an authority figure. Use this text to open a discussion about obedience in the stories in the unit and in today's society.*

## Independent Reading and Book Club Resources

## UNIT PREP RESOURCES



### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This set of resources supports teachers in launching an independent reading program or book clubs that run parallel to the core instruction in this unit. It includes a list of books that align thematically to *9th Grade Unit 1: Following the Crowd*, discussion questions, reading response questions, as well as ready-made student-facing logs and handouts.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Start by downloading [Best Practices for Independent Reading](#).
- Check out the [9th Grade Unit 1: Following the Crowd Independent Reading Teacher Guide](#) and make a plan for independent reading.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Copy: Independent Reading Materials](#)

## Unit Introduction

## ESSENTIAL



### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Kick off this 360 Unit with an editable slide deck and paired handout. This short slide deck introduces students to the unit's topics and texts through engaging discussion!

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Use the slide deck to facilitate the Unit Introduction handout whole class (20 mins)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)
- [Word Wall](#)

## Vocabulary Activity Set

## ESSENTIAL



### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary activity set helps students master the 10 high-impact academic vocab words they will see in the texts they read. These 5 activities are great for a quick warm-up activity or homework.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Use the Slide Deck to facilitate Vocabulary Activity 1 whole-class (20 min)
- Flexibly assign the remaining activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the Vocabulary Quiz.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Activity Set](#)
- Teacher Answer Key\*
- [Activity 1 Slide Deck](#)
- [Word Wall](#)

\*Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!



## Reading Lesson: “Cheboygan Day” (Short Story)

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this original CommonLit short story, author Brittany Allen uses humor and the setting of a New England high school to reveal a message about conformity. When twins Claude and Adele move from the city to a small coastal town, their new classmates cannot help but spread rumors about the intriguing siblings' past. The narrator's relatable struggle between speaking out to correct the lies and going along with the crowd presents an opportunity for honest student discussion and reflection.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (70 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

*\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.*

## Reading Lesson: “Conformity” (Informational)

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

“Conformity” explores the way people change to fit in with a group and how these choices can affect society. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed over the course of an informational text.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Instruct students to complete the reading and questions in partners (15 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

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## Writing Lesson: Exemplar Paragraph

**ESSENTIAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This writing lesson supports a foundational writing skill: how to write a strong cross-textual paragraph that includes an argument, evidence, and transitions. Students analyze an example of a cross-textual paragraph as they prepare to apply the skill in a written response to a prompt for “Cheboygan Day” and “Conformity.”

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (40 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)
- [Think Aloud Slide Deck \(Optional\)](#)

## Narrative Prompt

**OPTIONAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This engaging and creative narrative prompt can be used as an additional writing assignment in which students rewrite a scene from “Cheboygan Day” from Adele’s perspective.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Have students respond to the narrative prompt using the Narrative Writing Checklist as they write.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Copy](#)

## Reading Lesson: “All Summer in a Day” (Short Story)

**ESSENTIAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

“All Summer in a Day,” a famous Ray Bradbury short story, is about a group of young people living on the planet Venus who experience rain for the first time in seven years. As students read, they analyze how an author uses character interactions to develop a theme.

**NOTE:** Teachers may wish for students to complete the Determining a Theme lesson before completing the Independent Practice short response for “All Summer in a Day.”

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (35 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.



## Reading Skill Lesson: Determining Theme

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This lesson guides students through a protocol for determining theme. It can be applied to one or multiple texts throughout this 360 Unit. In this lesson, students apply the skill by writing about how theme is developed in “All Summer in a Day.”

**NOTE:** Teachers may wish for students to complete this lesson before they complete the Independent Practice short response for “All Summer in a Day.”

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Choose a text students will work with, then follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (20 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Classroom Anchor Chart](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)

## Reading Lesson: “The Lottery” (Short Story)

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” is a famously shocking short story about a town that takes part in a brutal ritual called “the lottery” which results in one townspeople’s death. As students read, they analyze how a story’s setting and structure create foreshadowing and affect readers.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (60 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.





## Reading Lesson: “The Dangers of Tradition” (Informational)

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

“The Dangers of Tradition” explores people’s tendency to believe in the importance of a tradition without questioning its origins. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed and refined by specific details over the course of an informational text.

**NOTE:** Students may need their annotated copies of “The Lottery” for the Independent Practice short response.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Instruct students to complete the reading and questions in partners (20 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

*\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.*

## Writing Lesson: Writing a Strong Argument

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This writing lesson aims to help students write stronger arguments that clearly respond to all parts of a prompt with concise language. Students apply the skill by writing an argument for a cross-textual prompt about “The Lottery” and “The Dangers of Tradition.”

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (20-30 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)

## Vocabulary Quiz

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This vocabulary quiz assesses students’ knowledge of the vocabulary words in the Vocabulary Activity Set.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- To assign this quiz digitally, click “Assign” and schedule the quiz. Set aside 15 minutes for students to complete the vocabulary quiz.
- To have students complete the quiz on paper, access the student copy of the assignment materials and distribute it to students.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Vocabulary Quiz](#)
- Teacher Answer Key\*

*\*Quizzes assigned digitally will be scored automatically. To ensure assessment security, a printable answer key is not available at this time.*

## Grammar and Usage Activities

**OPTIONAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

Grammar is an essential component too often missed. This 360 Unit includes 6 grammar and usage activities that focus on using a colon to introduce a list or quotation. Great for a quick warm-up activity or homework!

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Assign the 6 activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the grammar quiz.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Grammar Activities](#)
- [Teacher Answer Key](#)

## Reading Lesson: “The Man in the Well” (Short Story)

**ESSENTIAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

“The Man in the Well,” a CommonLit Library favorite, is about a group of young people who find a man trapped in a well and take advantage of the situation. As students read, they analyze how characters with multiple or conflicting motivations advance the plot.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (30 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.

## Reading Lesson: “It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault” (Informational)

**ESSENTIAL**


### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

“It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault” explores the idea of “deindividuation,” or the idea that people act differently when they are part of a crowd. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed over the course of an informational text.

**NOTE:** This text is referenced in the unit essay prompt.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

- Introduce the lesson with the slide deck (5 min)
- Lead students through the reading and questions (20 min)
- Have students complete the independent practice (20 min)
- Facilitate the quick partner discussion (5 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Slide Deck](#)
- Teacher Copy\*
- Student Copy\*

\*Student and teacher copies of this reading lesson are downloadable on [commonlit.org](https://commonlit.org) for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the [text page](#) and click “Download PDF” to access these materials.

## Grammar and Usage Quiz

OPTIONAL

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**

This grammar and usage quiz assesses students' knowledge of the unit's grammar skill: using a colon to introduce a list or quotation.

**HOW TO FACILITATE:**

- Assign the grammar quiz to students (10 min)

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**

- [Student Grammar Quiz](#)
- Teacher Answer Key\*

\*Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!

**Related Media Exploration: How does conformity show up in everyday life?**

RECOMMENDED

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**

In this Related Media Exploration, students work with their peers to explore real-world examples of conformity. Students analyze different types of conformity and watch three videos as they consider who is the most influential part of a group: the leader, the first follower, or the crowd.

**HOW TO FACILITATE:**

Lead students through the introductory slides. Release students to complete the remainder of the exploration with partners. (45 min)

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**

- [Slide Deck](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Teacher Copy](#)

## Discussion Lesson

RECOMMENDED

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**

Having the ability to participate actively in an academic discussion is a critical skill for high schoolers. This discussion lesson helps students refer to evidence from texts to support an exchange of ideas. The assignment materials include a handout to teach the discussion skill whole-class, a handout to help students prepare for discussion and take notes, and teacher resources to help you facilitate whole-class or small group discussions.

Students discuss their answers to the following question: Should people be held accountable for what they do under the influence of a group?

**HOW TO FACILITATE:**

- Lead students through the Discussion Skill Lesson (15 min)
- Have students prepare for discussion using the Discussion Prep handout (15 min)
- Launch discussion and have students take notes during discussion (30 min)

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**

- [Discussion Skill Lesson Student Copy](#)
- [Discussion Skill Lesson Teacher Copy](#)
- [Discussion Preparation Student Copy](#)
- [Discussion Protocols](#)
- [Student Voice Tracker](#)

## Writing Lesson: Unit 1 Essay Planning

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

The key to a strong essay involves having a clear understanding of the prompt and knowing how to effectively plan an essay. This multi-part writing lesson helps students practice transferable brainstorming and planning skills as they prepare for their unit essay.

Students will:

- Break down and review key terms from the prompt
- Find evidence from unit texts
- Discuss cross-textual connections between unit texts
- Draft their thesis statement
- Examine an exemplar essay



### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (50 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)

## Writing Lesson: Unit 1 Essay

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

*This end of unit activity requires that students respond to the following writing prompt:*

Write an essay that analyzes how the unit short stories illustrate one or more of the terms from the article "It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault."

- Deindividuation
- Anonymity
- Diffused responsibility



Use evidence from at least two of the unit short stories and Shelby Ostergaard's "It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault."

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Have students use their resources to draft their essay.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Student Essay Prompt](#)
- [Exemplar Essay](#)
- [Essay Rubric](#)



## Writing Lesson: Writing Introductions

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this multi-part writing lesson, students learn to use the upside-down triangle method for writing strong introductions.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (30 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Classroom Anchor Chart](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)

## Writing Lesson: Writing Conclusions

**ESSENTIAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

In this multi-part writing lesson, students learn the triangle strategy to help them write a conclusion that supports their thesis.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice. (25 min)

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)
- [Classroom Anchor Chart](#)
- [Student Reference Sheet](#)

## Alternative End of Unit Writing Options

**OPTIONAL**

### ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:

This unit includes three additional end of unit writing task options. Teachers may consider using these as extension activities or as a replacement to the recommended prompt.

### HOW TO FACILITATE:

Consider which prompt best meets your students' needs and assign that prompt in place of or in addition to the recommended unit prompt.

### ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:

- [Teacher Copy](#)
- [Student Copy](#)





## Training & Support Resources

CommonLit 360 is rich with resources for teachers and administrators. In addition to this PDF Unit Guide, here are just a few additional tools available to teams for free:

- ↳ Document: [Curriculum Framework, An Overview](#)
- ↳ Document: [Themes & Topics Overview](#)
- ↳ Live Webinar: [Getting Started with CommonLit 360](#)
- ↳ Instructional support videos available on each unit's [Support and Resources page](#)

Ready to roll out CommonLit 360 in your school or district? [Read about the affordable professional development](#) we offer for schools and districts through our CommonLit for Schools packages.

## Pacing Guide

With appropriate pacing, Grade 9, Unit 1 should take roughly 5-7 weeks of instructional time. This assumes **90 minutes** of daily instruction. With this assumption, many of the reading lessons can last up to 2 days/class periods and should be spaced accordingly. Supplemental reading, vocabulary activities, and grammar activities can often be assigned as homework. Teachers should expect to revise pacing as needed.

### WEEK 1

<b>Mon.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit Introduction</li> <li>Vocabulary Activity Set: Activity 1 &amp; Slide Deck</li> </ul>
<b>Tues.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Cheboygan Day" Slide Deck</li> <li>"Cheboygan Day" - Day 1</li> </ul>
<b>Wed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Activity Set: Activity 2</li> <li>"Cheboygan Day" - Day 2</li> <li>"Cheboygan Day" Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Activity Set: Activity 3</li> <li>"Conformity" Slide Deck</li> <li>"Conformity"</li> <li>"Conformity" Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Fri.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing Lesson: Exemplar Paragraph</li> </ul> <p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>Completion of previous activities</li> <li>Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>

## WEEK 2

<b>Mon.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Activity Set: Activity 4</li> <li>Narrative Prompt <b>OPTIONAL</b></li> </ul>
<b>Tues.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"All Summer in a Day" Slide Deck</li> <li>"All Summer in a Day"</li> <li>Reading Skill Lesson: Determining Theme</li> <li>"All Summer in a Day" - Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Wed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Activity Set: Activity 5</li> <li>"The Lottery" Slide Deck</li> <li>"The Lottery" - Day 1</li> </ul>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Quiz</li> <li>"The Lottery" - Day 2</li> <li>"The Lottery" - Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Fri.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>Completion of previous activities</li> <li>Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>

## WEEK 3

<b>Mon.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar and Usage Activities: Parts 1-3 <b>OPTIONAL</b></li> <li>"The Dangers of Tradition" Slide Deck</li> <li>"The Dangers of Tradition"</li> <li>"The Dangers of Tradition" - Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Tues.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar and Usage Activities: Parts 4-5 <b>OPTIONAL</b></li> <li>Writing Lesson: Writing a Strong Argument</li> </ul>
<b>Wed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"The Man in the Well" Slide Deck</li> <li>"The Man in the Well"</li> <li>"The Man in the Well" - Independent Practice</li> </ul>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar and Usage Activities: Part 6 <b>OPTIONAL</b></li> <li>"It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault" Slide Deck</li> <li>"It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault"</li> <li>"It's No One's Fault When It's Everyone's Fault" - Independent Practice</li> </ul>

<b>Fri.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar and Usage Quiz <b>OPTIONAL</b></li> <li>• Related Media Exploration: Everyday Conformity <b>RECOMMENDED</b></li> </ul> <p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>• Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>• Completion of previous activities</li> <li>• Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>
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## WEEK 4

<b>Mon.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Skill Lesson <b>RECOMMENDED</b></li> <li>• Class Discussion <b>RECOMMENDED</b></li> </ul>
<b>Tues.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Lesson: Unit 1 Essay Planning</li> </ul>
<b>Wed.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Lesson: Writing Introductions</li> <li>• Unit 1 Essay: Drafting - Day 1</li> </ul>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Lesson: Writing Conclusions</li> <li>• Unit 1 Essay: Drafting - Day 2</li> </ul>
<b>Fri.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>• Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>• Completion of previous activities</li> <li>• Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>

## WEEK 5

<b>Mon.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>• Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>• Completion of previous activities</li> <li>• Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>
<b>Tues.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li> <li>• Supplemental text set reading</li> <li>• Completion of previous activities</li> <li>• Teacher-created activities</li> </ul>

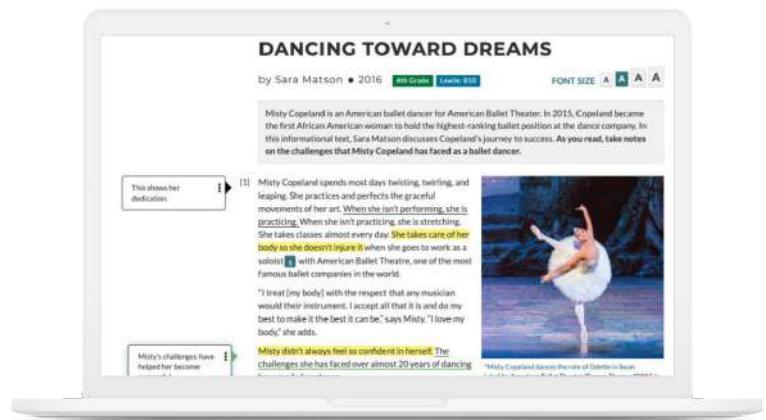


<b>Wed.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li><li>• Supplemental text set reading</li><li>• Completion of previous activities</li><li>• Teacher-created activities</li></ul>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li><li>• Supplemental text set reading</li><li>• Completion of previous activities</li><li>• Teacher-created activities</li></ul>
<b>Fri.</b>	<p>Flex time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</li><li>• Supplemental text set reading</li><li>• Completion of previous activities</li><li>• Teacher-created activities</li></ul>



# CommonLit 360: Digital Experience

One of the reasons CommonLit 360 is so unique is that it is accessible through a free, state-of-the-art digital platform. Reading, writing, and vocabulary lessons and assessments within a CommonLit 360 unit can be assigned to students through CommonLit.org. During and after the lesson, teachers can view formative assessment data through a real-time lesson dashboard to easily track completion and progress. All of these digital features are free for teachers and students, just like the rest of CommonLit. To learn more about the digital experience, [sign up for an upcoming CommonLit 360 webinar](#) or email [help@commonlit.org](mailto:help@commonlit.org).



## Appendix I: Text Selection & Text Complexity

When selecting texts for this unit, CommonLit considers both quantitative and qualitative measures of text complexity.

### UNIT TEXTS

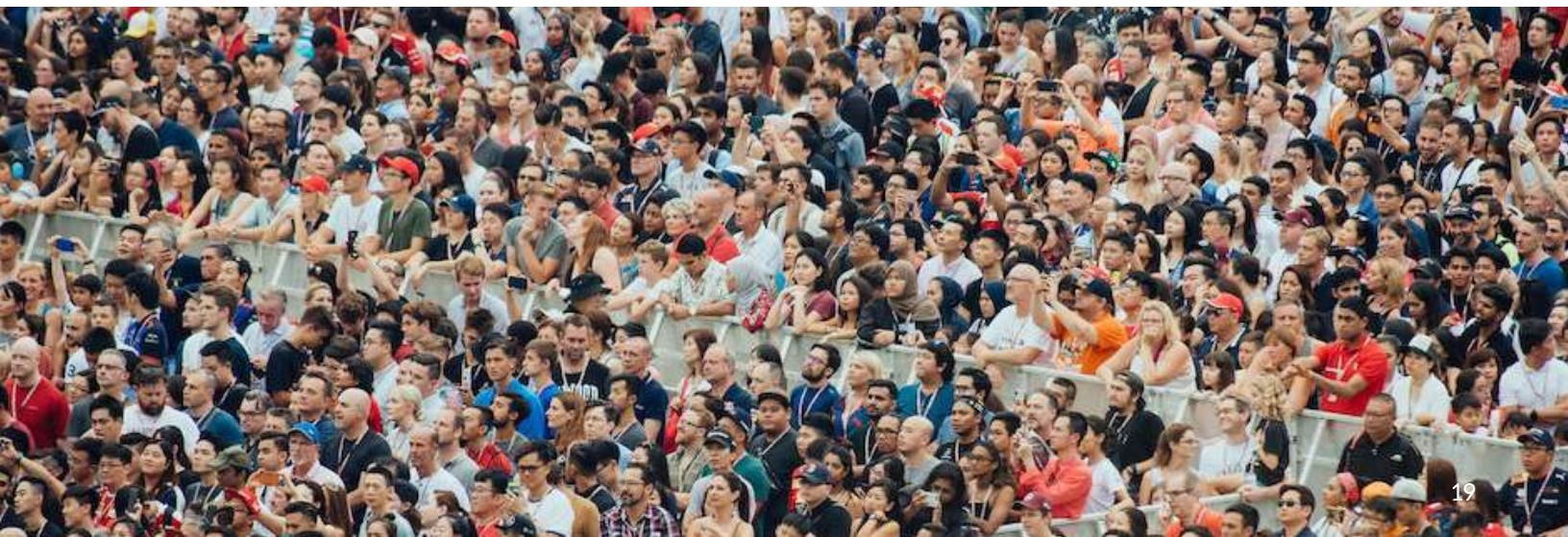
Title by Author	Lexile	Description
<a href="#">“Cheboygan Day”</a> by Brittany Allen (Short Story)		In this original CommonLit short story, author Brittany Allen uses humor and the setting of a New England high school to reveal a message about conformity. When twins Claude and Adele move from the city to a small coastal town, their new classmates cannot help but spread rumors about the intriguing siblings’ past. The narrator’s relatable struggle between speaking out to correct the lies and going along with the crowd presents an opportunity for honest student discussion and reflection.
<a href="#">“Conformity”</a> by Charlotte Harrison (Informational)	1150L	“Conformity” explores the way people change to fit in with a group and how these choices can affect society. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed over the course of a text.
<a href="#">“All Summer in a Day”</a> by Ray Bradbury (Short Story)	780L	“All Summer in a Day,” a famous Ray Bradbury short story, is about a group of young people living on the planet Venus who experience rain for the first time in seven years. As students read, they analyze how an author uses character interactions to develop a theme.
<a href="#">“The Lottery”</a> by Shirley Jackson (Short Story)	1030L	Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” is a famously shocking short story about a town that takes part in a brutal ritual called “the lottery” which results in one townspeople’s death. As students read, they analyze how a story’s setting and structure create foreshadowing and affect readers.
<a href="#">“The Dangers of Tradition”</a> by Bakari Bosa (Informational)	1070L	“The Dangers of Tradition” explores people’s tendency to believe in the importance of a tradition without questioning its origins. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed and refined by specific details over the course of a text.



<a href="#"><u>“The Man in the Well”</u></a> by Ira Sher <i>(Short Story)</i>	870L	<p>“The Man in the Well,” a CommonLit Library favorite, is about a group of young people who find a man trapped in a well and take advantage of the situation. As students read, they analyze how characters with multiple or conflicting motivations advance the plot.</p>
<a href="#"><u>“It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault”</u></a> by Shelby Ostergarrd <i>(Informational)</i>	1080L	<p>“It’s No One’s Fault When It’s Everyone’s Fault” explores the idea of “deindividuation,” or the idea that people act differently when they are part of a crowd. As students read, they trace how a central idea is developed over the course of a text.</p>

## SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (ENGLISH)

Title by Author	Lexile	Description
<a href="#"><u>“Herd Behavior”</u></a> by CommonLit Staff <i>(Informational)</i>	1310L	The author explains how and why humans sometimes display the same behavior as a herd of frightened animals. Ask students which stories in the unit contain elements of herd behavior, and how this affects the outcomes.
<a href="#"><u>“The Power of ‘Like’”</u></a> by Alison Pearce Stevens <i>(Informational)</i>	950L	Neuroscientists explain how “likes” on social media affect teen behavior. Use this text to open a conversation with students about how social media influences them and their friends.
<a href="#"><u>“The Effect of Others”</u></a> by Exploratorium <i>(Informational)</i>	1060L	Social scientists explain the different types of social influence that affect the way people behave when in a group. Ask students which of these forces they see at work in the stories in this unit and in the world around them.
<a href="#"><u>“Why Kids Bully: Because They’re Popular”</u></a> by Belinda Luscombe <i>(Informational)</i>	1160L	A researcher has discovered that the more popular kids are, the more likely they are to bully others. Ask students if this matches the behavior they see in the stories in this unit and in their own social groups.
<a href="#"><u>“Peer Pressure has a Positive Side”</u></a> by Annie Murphy Paul <i>(Informational Text)</i>	1050L	Researchers discuss how the adolescent tendency toward risk-taking in front of peers could lead to academic gains. Discuss with students whether being with friends makes them feel emboldened to take risks and how this could lead to good outcomes.
<a href="#"><u>“Milgram Experiment on Obedience”</u></a> by Khan Academy <i>(Informational)</i>	1320L	In Stanley Milgram’s infamous experiments, people were willing to hurt strangers when ordered to do so by an authority figure. Use this text to open a discussion about obedience in the stories in the unit and in today’s society.



## SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (SPANISH)

Title by Author	Lexile	Description
<a href="#"><u>"Comportamiento gregario"</u></a> por CommonLit Staff (Informational)	1170L	The author explains how and why humans sometimes display the same behavior as a herd of frightened animals. Ask students which stories in the unit contain elements of herd behavior, and how this affects the outcomes.
<a href="#"><u>"El poder de 'me gusta'"</u></a> por Alison Pearce Stevens (Informational)	920L	Neuroscientists explain how "likes" on social media affect teen behavior. Use this text to open a conversation with students about how social media influences them and their friends.
<a href="#"><u>"La influencia de los demás"</u></a> por Exploratorium (Informational)	1030L	Social scientists explain the different types of social influence that affect the way people behave when in a group. Ask students which of these forces they see at work in the stories in this unit and in the world around them.
<a href="#"><u>"¿Por qué los niños acosan? Porque son populares"</u></a> por Belinda Luscombe (Informational)	1160L	A researcher has discovered that the more popular kids are, the more likely they are to bully others. Ask students if this matches the behavior they see in the stories in this unit and in their own social groups.
<a href="#"><u>"La presión entre pares tiene un lado positivo"</u></a> por Annie Murphy Paul (Informational)	1290L	Researchers discuss how the adolescent tendency toward risk-taking in front of peers could lead to academic gains. Discuss with students whether being with friends makes them feel emboldened to take risks and how this could lead to good outcomes.
<a href="#"><u>"El experimento de Milgram sobre la obediencia"</u></a> por Khan Academy (Informational)	1220L	In Stanley Milgram's infamous experiments, people were willing to hurt strangers when ordered to do so by an authority figure. Use this text to open a discussion about obedience in the stories in the unit and in today's society.

