Narrative Overview

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Stories:

(global big idea)

Stories help us make connections

(content specific big idea) **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Introduction

The purpose of this unit is to demonstrate the importance and prevalence of stories in students’ everyday lives. Students will learn about what is considered a story, and how stories are important; they connect people, they teach us about our past, and ourselves. By the end of the unit, students will be able to see the stories playing out in their own lives, as well as view their life as their story, with them as the author.

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Essential Questions

Students will be asked the following essential questions throughout the unit, enabling them to focus on the enduring idea through reflecting on their experiences and making personal connections to the enduring idea.

* Why are stories important?
* What ways can stories be told?
* How do stories teach us?
* What is the importance of your story?

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Key Concepts

The following five key concepts will be explored within the unit.

* Stories can be told in many ways
* Stories can connect people
* Stories can make connections by inspiring us
* Stories are a life experience, and we are the author of our own life.

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Rationale

In our world, people are drawn together and apart by stories, a fact which often goes unrecognized. Friendships and connections are made because we are drawn to people we can relate to, which entails having a similar story. The story of our collective life experiences is what allows different and various people to relate to each other, as well as defining who we are. If people recognized more just how much our lives are a series of interconnected stories, then they would be more open with one another, and help to promote better understanding between them.

I think that realizing the value of your story, and others, is particularly important to middle school students because they are at a time of great change in their lives. They are just beginning to find themselves, and settle into who they are, so story becomes a key part of that. Not only is a persons story a key part of who they are, but it becomes how we relate to others. People with similar stories are people we can connect to, while people with wholly new stories broaden our horizons.

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STATE STANDARDS

1. PA Standards
   1. **Arts & Humanities:** **9.1.8**: Arts and Humanities: Production, Performance, and Exhibition of Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Art
      1. **9.3.8.A:** Know and use the critical process of the examination of works in the arts and humanities.
      2. **9.4.8.D:** Describe to what purpose philosophical ideas generated by artists can be conveyed through works in the arts and humanities
      3. **9.1.8.C:** Identify and use comprehensive vocabulary within each of the arts forms.
      4. **9.1.8.E:** Communicate a unifying theme or point of view through the production of works in the arts
      5. **9.1.8.E:** Communicate a unifying theme or point of view through the production of works in the arts.
      6. **9.1.8.H:** Demonstrate and maintain materials, equipment and tools safely at work and performance spaces.
         1. Explain issues of cleanliness related to the arts.
         2. Demonstrate methods for storing materials in the arts.
   2. PA standards for other disciplines:
      1. **E06.B-K.1.1.2:** Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through relevant details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
      2. **1.5.7**: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening: Quality of Writing
         1. **1.5.7.F:** Use grade appropriate **conventions of language** when writing and editing.
            1. Spell common, frequently used words correctly.
            2. Use capital letters correctly
            3. Punctuate correctly.
            4. Use correct grammar and sentence formation.
      3. 1.4.7: Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening: Types of Writing: GRADE 7
         1. **1.4.7.B:** Write multi-paragraph informational pieces (e.g., letters, descriptions, reports, instructions, essays, articles, interviews)
            1. Use relevant graphics (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, tables, illustrations, photographs).
2. Interdisciplinary connections: The main interdisciplinary connection in this unit is of course with language arts. The big idea of the unit is story, which is a large part of language arts, so considering things like plot and sequence of events ties in nicely with that. Additionally, there is a lot of journaling involved with thoughtful reflections and responses, so students are also getting lots of writing.

**Assessment**

**Pre-assessment**

Students will be pre-assessed through various methods. Most often through brainstorming and think sheets, even journal entries, but there will also be the occasional pre-assessment through thumbs up/thumbs down, as well as the human line graph.

**Formative assessment**

Formative assessment is addressed throughout the unit by in progress gallery walks, as well as plenty of sketching and journaling.

**Summative assessment**

Summative assessment throughout the unit will be in the form of final journal reflections paired with gallery walks and critiques. Student’s final projects will be graded as summative assessment as well as their responses during the critique or gallery walk and their reflective journal responses.

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lesson plan overviews

**Lesson 1**

*Story Boxes*

In this lesson, students will explore how symbols can both help them express their own story, and how they can connect to other’s stories. They will do so by examining a series of artists and artworks to discuss how symbolism can be used, and then using that symbolism to create a box of their own, that tells their own story. Students will bring in 5 objects that represent themselves to display with the box in a “personal museum” that will help us learn about our peers by finding connections through these personal museums.

**Lesson 2**

*Hero Inspiration*

The second lesson in the unit broadens students focus from connecting with their immediate others to connecting to the people that they look up to, their heroes. The students will create either a comic (with words OR sound effects), a flipbook, or a picture book. We will look at layout and plot, as well as pen and ink techniques and

**Lesson 3**

*Quilted collage*

Students will learn about sharing their story with the world through this pen pal project. Students will learn about another non-traditional storytelling method… Quilts. Students will examine the idea of story quilts and how they can use the medium to capture that story and preserve it for the world.

conclusion

Students should walk away from this unit with a keener understanding of the power and importance of stories, both in the world and in their own lives. They should be able to see connections between stories, and take responsibility for their own story. Students should be able to look around them and be able to view their experiences as part of their story, with themselves as the writer. Students should also be very well equipped to connect to individuals and the world much more through the various ways they learned how to share their stories.

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