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Introduction

Goals

The main goal of this book is to help students develop skills outlined in the Common Core Standards by clarifying what the standards are asking for and by giving teachers specific activities they can use to address the standards.

Organization

The book is mostly organized by the categories into which Common Core places its standards. The first three chapters are “Key Ideas and Details,” “Craft and Structure,” and “Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.” Because “Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity” is addressed every time students read, it does not have its own chapter. Also, because it is common for many writing categories to overlap on a paper, the fourth chapter covers all the writing standards and is divided into the three main paper types: argumentative, informative, and narrative.

Activities open with an introductory page that includes every standard covered by the activities, directions, estimated lesson length, and additional teaching ideas. At the back of the book are selected answers for the reading activities.

Tracking Common Core Standards

On page 3, there is a chart that can help you track which Common Core Standards you have addressed and with which activities.

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is not required for social studies teachers, which is why there is no WHST.6-8.3. However, this form of writing was included in this book (W.6-8.3) because numerous social studies teachers also teach language arts, for the many educators who find creative writing a valuable way to explore history, and because other required writing standards can be covered with narrative writing.

Common Core Standards

If a teacher covers the six reading activities and three papers outlined in this book, he or she will have addressed every 6–8 History/Social Studies Common Core Standard at least once. Although it is not expected that teachers cover every standard in each unit of study, this gives teachers a great way to see examples of every standard and have numerous assignments to choose from.

Common Core Standards

READING

Key Ideas and Details

RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

» *Summarize primary or secondary sources.*

RH.6-8.3

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

» *Summarize the steps of a process or historical event.*

Craft and Structure

RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

» *Use context to decipher the meanings of difficult words.*

RH.6-8.5

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

» *Determine how the author has ordered the information.*

RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

» *Interpret a reading with a visual.*

RH.6-8.8

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

RH.6-8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RH.6-8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6–8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

WHST.6-8.1

Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.

» *Argumentative writing.*

WHST.6-8.2

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

» *Informative writing.*

W.6-8.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

» *Creative writing. (This is not required for social studies teachers.)*

Production and Distribution of Writing

WHST.6-8.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization,

and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

» *Write for a specific audience.*

WHST.6-8.5

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

» *Use writing process.*

WHST.6-8.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

» *Publish writing for an audience.*

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

WHST.6-8.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

» *Research to answer a question.*

WHST.6-8.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

» *Use multiple credible sources when researching and summarize findings in own words.*

WHST.6-8.9

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

» *Support essays with information or quotes from texts.*

Range of Writing

WHST.6-8.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

ACTIVITY 1

CHAPTER
Key Ideas and Details

DURATION
1 class period

Dorothea Dix—Mental Health Reformer

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

RH.6-8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

DIRECTIONS

- The class reads the introductory paragraph (in italics) to “Memorial” together, summarizing it in the right margin. Repeat for the first paragraph of “Memorial.”
- With a partner, students read the second paragraph of “Memorial” and summarize it in the right margin. Students share their margin summaries with the class. Repeat for the third paragraph.
- Students read and summarize the rest of “Memorial” independently. (Consider *Williamsburg, Burlington, Lincoln, Pepperell, Brookfield, and Granville* one paragraph.) The students share their margin summaries with the class.
- Students independently answer “Dorothea Dix Questions.”

IMPORTANT/DIFFICULT VOCABULARY

There are many ways to review vocabulary. Below are some words you may choose to create a review activity with.

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| ▪ Advocate | ▪ Composing features | ▪ Pauper |
| ▪ Almshouse | ▪ Degradation | ▪ Perishable |
| ▪ Benediction | ▪ Implore | ▪ Succor |
| ▪ Commonwealth | ▪ Judicious | ▪ Want of skill |

"MEMORIAL" ^{1/2}

In the early 1800s, very few people with mental health disorders received proper care. From 1840 to 1841 Dorothea Dix toured Massachusetts, investigating how the mentally ill were treated. She recorded what she witnessed in her famous report, "Memorial," and presented her findings to the Massachusetts state legislature. Eventually a law was passed that expanded the state's mental hospital, but Dix had only just begun. For the next forty years she tirelessly lobbied all over the country, and even abroad, for better care for the mentally ill. Dix is credited with spurring the reform of mental health facilities all over the country, Canada, and Europe. Below are quotes from "Memorial."

I come to present the strong claims of suffering humanity. I come to place before the Legislature of Massachusetts the condition of the miserable, the desolate, the outcast. I come as the advocate of helpless, forgotten, insane and idiotic men and women; of beings sunk to a condition from which the most unconcerned would start with real horror. . . .

I must confine myself to few examples, but am ready to furnish other and more complete details, if required. If my pictures are displeasing, coarse, and severe, my subjects, it must be recollected, offer no tranquil, refined, or composing features. The condition of human beings, reduced to the extremest states of degradation and misery, cannot be exhibited in softened language, or adorn a polished page.

I proceed, gentlemen, briefly to call your attention to the *present* state of insane persons confined within this Commonwealth, in *cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens! Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed* into obedience!

As I state cold, severe *facts*, I feel obliged to refer to persons, and definitely to indicate localities. But it is upon my subject, not upon localities or individuals, I desire to fix attention; and I would speak as kindly as possible of all wardens, keepers, and other responsible officers, believing that most of these have erred not through hardness of heart and willful cruelty, so much as want of skill and knowledge, and want of consideration. Familiarity with suffering, it is said, blunts the sensibilities, and where neglect once finds a footing other injuries are multiplied. . . .

It is the Commonwealth, not its integral parts, that is accountable for most of the abuses which have lately, and do still exist. I repeat it, it is defective legislation which perpetuates and multiplies these abuses. In illustration of my subject, I offer the following extracts from my Note-book and Journal:—

Springfield. In the jail, one lunatic woman, furiously mad, a state pauper, improperly situated, both in regard to the prisoners, the keepers, and herself. It is a case of extreme self-forgetfulness and oblivion to all the decencies of life; to describe which, would be to repeat only the grossest scenes. She is much worse since leaving Worcester. In the almshouse of the same town is a woman apparently only needing judicious care, and some well-chosen employment, to make it unnecessary to confine her in solitude, in a dreary unfurnished room. Her appeals for



Dorothea Dix

Image source: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

employment and companionship are most touching, but the mistress replied “she had no time to attend to her.”

Northampton. In the jail, quite lately, was a young man violently mad, who had not, as I was informed at the prison, come under medical care, and not been returned from any hospital. In the almshouse, the cases of insanity are now unmarked by abuse, and afford evidence of judicious care by the keepers.

Williamsburg. The almshouse has several insane, not under suitable treatment. No apparent intentional abuse. . . .

Burlington. A woman, declared to be very insane; decent room and bed; but not allowed to rise oftener, the mistress said, “than every other day: it is too much trouble.” . . .

Lincoln. A woman in a cage. . . .

Pepperell. One often doubly chained, hand and foot; another violent; several peaceable now.

Brookfield. One man caged, comfortable.

Granville. One often closely confined; now losing the use of his limbs from want of exercise. . . .

Could we in fancy place ourselves in the situation of some of these poor wretches, bereft of reason, deserted of friends, hopeless, troubles without, and more dreary troubles within, overwhelming the wreck of the mind as “a wide breaking in of the waters,”—how should we, as the terrible illusion was cast off, not only offer the thank-offering of prayer, that so mighty a destruction had not overwhelmed our mental nature, but as an offering more acceptable devote ourselves to alleviate that state from which we are so mercifully spared? . . .

Men of Massachusetts, I beg, I implore, I demand pity and protection for these of my suffering, outraged sex. . . . Here you will put away the cold, calculating spirit of selfishness and self-seeking; lay off the armor of local strife and political opposition; here and now, for once, forgetful of the earthly and perishable, come up to these halls and consecrate them with one heart and one mind to works of righteousness and just judgment. Become the benefactors of your race, the just guardians of the solemn rights you hold in trust. Raise up the fallen, succor the desolate, restore the outcast, defend the helpless, and for your eternal and great reward, receive the benediction, “Well done, good and faithful servants, become rulers over many things!”

Source: Dix, Dorothea. *Memorial to the Legislature of Massachusetts*, 1843. Boston, 1904. <https://archive.org/details/memorialtolegisl00dixd>.

SOJOURNER TRUTH PERSPECTIVE PIECE

Overall

Sojourner Truth lived a remarkable life. Born into slavery, she escaped and became a well-known women's rights activist. You will be assigned one scene from her life to write about from her perspective. Your paper should be one to two pages long.

Scenes

- At the auction where she was sold away from her family
- Deciding to escape from slavery even though she would be freed in a year
- Finding out she won her lawsuit against Mr. Dumont
- Delivering her "Ain't I a Woman" speech
- On her death bed, looking back on her life

Requirements/Things to Keep in Mind

- Write in first person (use "I").
- Focus on the senses: What does she see, hear, smell, feel, and/or smell?
- Engage the reader by using vivid word choice and a strong voice.
- Hook the reader from the beginning. Some options include opening with action, dialogue, or a highly descriptive scene.
- Have an interesting ending. Some options include a cliffhanger, a statement that leaves the reader thinking, or a full circle (connects to the first sentence).
- Go into her head; tell the readers what Sojourner Truth is thinking.
- Include accurate historical details, but do use artistic license to fill in details.

Rubric

	Exceeding	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Writing	Writes an extremely engaging first-person story by using vivid word choice, sensory details, a strong voice, and extensive details about the scene.	Writes an engaging first-person story that includes sufficient details about the scene.	Story has accurate details, but is not engaging because of ordinary word choice, a lack of sensory details, and/or a weak voice. <i>or</i> Writes an engaging first-person story that does not include enough details about the scene.	Story is not in first person. <i>or</i> Story includes few/no details about the scene.
Conventions	No convention errors. <i>or</i> Uses high-level conventions with few to no errors.	Convention errors in one area.. <i>or</i> A single error in a few areas.	Convention errors in two or more areas.	Too short to assess conventions. <i>or</i> Major issues with conventions.