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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 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.6.1–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.6.3–W.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
2 class periods

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Medieval Europe

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

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.

SL.7.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

DIRECTIONS

- For the first *Canterbury Tales* excerpt on “Middle English,” the class completes the two steps together.
- For the second *Canterbury Tales* excerpt on “Middle English,” students complete the two steps with a neighbor. The teacher reads the fully modernized excerpt (located in the answer key) to the class. The class discusses how similar their changed versions were to what the teacher read and shares their summaries.
- For the third *Canterbury Tales* excerpt on “Middle English,” students complete the two steps independently. The teacher reads the fully modernized excerpt to the class. The class discusses how similar their changed versions were to what the teacher read and shares their summaries.
- The class reads the description of the first four people on “Learning about Medieval Europe through Chaucer” (the knight, the prioress, the friar, and the merchant) together, filling in the chart as they go.
- Students read the rest of the descriptions on “Learning about Medieval Europe through Chaucer” with a neighbor, filling in the chart as they go. Students share what they wrote with the class.
- Students independently answer the questions.

EXTENSIONS

- Have students turn a paragraph of modern English into Middle English.
- Explore the history of English (how it developed, how it progressed, how dominant it is today, etc.)
- Learn more about the practice of selling indulgences by reading excerpts about the pardoner character in the *The Canterbury Tales*.

MAGNA CARTA QUESTIONS

1. What is the Magna Carta?
2. Why were the nobles so angry with King John?
3. What events led to King John signing the Magna Carta?
4. What did King John do shortly after signing the Magna Carta?
5. Summarize in your own words the following reaction to the Magna Carta from a Scottish newspaper: "A strange new order began in England; Whoever heard of such a thing? For the body longed to govern the head, And the people wished to rule the king."
6. What people or nations have been influenced by the Magna Carta?
7. On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (most ever), how important do you think the Magna Carta is? Write a paragraph explaining why, making sure to use at least two quotations or facts as support.

CHAPTER 4

Writing Standards

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

Feudalism Pros and Cons

WHST.6-8.1
WHST.6-8.4
WHST.6-8.5
WHST.6-8.7
WHST.6-8.8
WHST.6-8.9
WHST.6-8.10

INFORMATIVE WRITING

The Hundred Years' War

WHST.6-8.2
WHST.6-8.7
WHST.6-8.8
WHST.6-8.9
WHST.6-8.10

NARRATIVE WRITING

Medieval Time-Travel Story

W.6.3–W.8.3
WHST.6-8.5
WHST.6-8.9
WHST.6-8.10

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

CHAPTER
Writing Standards

DURATION
4–6 class periods

Feudalism Pros and Cons

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

WHST.6-8.1

Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.

WHST.6-8.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and 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.

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.

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.

WHST.6-8.9

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

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.

DIRECTIONS

- Students independently research about feudalism, filling out the research page as they go.
- Students share what they learned with a neighbor. If their neighbor has additional details, students can add them to their own research page.
- The class discusses why feudalism would not work today.
- Students use the research page to complete the outline.
- Students use the outline to write the paper.