

Introduction: The Peace of Wild Things

Unit Design:

This unit uses a concept-based design adapted from the work of H. Lynn Erickson (*Concept Based Curriculum and Instruction: Teaching Beyond the Facts*, Corwin Press, 2002) and a 4-point scoring guide based on the work of Robert Marzano (*Formative Assessment and Standards Based Grading*, Marzano Research, 2009).

Concept-based units are designed with concepts and big ideas at their heart. These concepts and ideas are those that will transfer to other units, other courses, and even other disciplines. Understanding and using these concepts and ideas is primary. Discrete facts and details are secondary in that they are used to support and develop these bigger ideas.

Because these units have ideas at their heart, they incorporate a variety of sources and skills. That is, these units are not focused on a single genre or work. They purposefully integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening as means of exploring these central ideas.

This unit also incorporates Marzano's work on formative assessments. Each formative assessment is designed to intentionally prepare students for their summative assessment. The 4-point scoring guides are designed to be put into the hands of students, so that they practice scoring their own work and others and so that they become familiar with the descriptors they will encounter on their summative scoring guide.

The standards identified in this unit are Nebraska State Reading and Writing Standards for Grades 9-12.

What is included:

1. The unit is designed as a 7-week unit that includes:
 - An introduction which explains the intent and composition of a concept-based, integrated unit
 - A brief explanation of the unit scoring guides
 - A unit framework which provides a brief introduction, lists the big ideas and essential questions, as well as identifies targeted reading and writing standards
 - A suggested weekly learning sequence that includes learning targets and formative assessments
 - Two summative assessments: a reflective essay and an original poem
 - Scoring guides for both formative and summative assessments
 - Possible resources: short fiction, nonfiction, poetry, quotes, TED and YouTube videos, etc.
2. The unit design provides an option for a 5-week unit. By eliminating weeks #6-7 and the second summative assessment (an original poem) teachers could opt for a shorter unit that culminates in an expository reflective essay.

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3. Weekly plans include the big ideas and compelling questions for each week, learning targets (what students should understand and what students should be able to do), reading and writing standards, formative and/or summative assessments. The first weekly plan identifies some suggested texts, but for the remaining weeks, teachers are free to choose texts that they believe would best suit their students and teaching style. Text selections are certainly not limited to those included in the Resource folder.

What is not included:

1. Weekly plans do not include daily lesson plans. These plans are left to the discretion of each teacher. Most formative assessments are intended to be used at the end of the week, allowing students time to read and discuss before they write. This, too, however is up to the teacher's discretion.
2. Specific speaking and listening standards and assessments designed to meet these standards are not included. These, however, may be added if a teacher wishes.