

To view this meeting, the livestream link is: <https://meet.google.com/gyk-zpuu-dyr>

To make a public comment, the call in number is

(US) 1 678-888-3281 PIN: 960 036 879#

VIRTUAL: Regular BOE Agenda
March 3, 2026

REMOTE MEETING Due to Weather
7:00 PM

As stewards of Newtown Public Schools, we commit to conducting ourselves with honesty, integrity, and respect. Guided by Newtown's Core Values and the Portrait of a Graduate, we will strive to prepare every student to think critically and innovate with curiosity; adapt, persevere, and pursue goals with strategic focus; act with compassion, collaborate across differences, and communicate with clarity. We hold ourselves to the same attributes we seek to instill in our students, embodying them in our work together.

AGENDA

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE
 - A. Sandy Hook School Scripps Spelling Bee Winners
3. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. Action on Minutes from 2/18/26
 - B. Action on donation made to the NHS class of 2026.
 - C. Correspondence Report
4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
5. REPORTS
 - A. Chair Report
 - B. Superintendent's Report
 - C. Committee and Liaison Reports
 - D. Student Representatives Report
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Second Read and Action American Studies Curriculum
 - B. Second Read and Action on Policies
 1. 1050 Non-Discrimination Community
 2. 3160 Board Budget Procedures
 3. 4118.11 Non-Discrimination Personnel
 4. 5110 Non-Discrimination Students
 - C. Second Read and Action on Policies to Rescind
 1. 3541.35 Transportation—Procedures for Emergencies/Safety
 - D. Items of Information — Administrative Regulation

R3541 To Be Followed in the Event of a Bus Accident

7. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Facilities Planning Committee
- B. Action on Stop Arm Enforcement
- C. First Read of 7th and 8th Grade Science Curriculum

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

9. ADJOURNMENT

***During the first Public Participation, the Board welcomes commentary regarding items on the agenda. After being recognized, please state your name and address for the record. Per Board Policy 9325, we request that speakers be respectful and limit comments to not more than three minutes, and we note that public complaints about employees are not permitted during meetings. All such concerns should instead be submitted to the Superintendent. During the second Public Participation, commentary may address the agenda or may introduce issues for the Board to consider in the future. The Board does not engage in dialogue during either public comment period. If you desire more information or answers to specific questions, please email the Board: NewtownBOE@newtown.k12.ct.us*



**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.

Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting held on February 18, 2026
Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

Members Present: A. Plante, M. Beylouni, C. Gilson, (Remote) D. Linnetz, D. Ramsey

Members Absent: S.Tomai, J. Vouros

Staff Present: A. Uberti, Superintendent, T. Gouveia, Director of Business, Frank Purcaro, Asst.Superintendent, J.DeStefano, Grants Specialist

Mrs. Plante called the meeting to order at 7:11pm

Item 1: Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2: Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Minutes from the 2/3/2026 BOE Meeting, the Correspondence Report, as well as the \$3000 donation to NHS for The Lt.James A.Goodrich Scholarship Fund.

Mr. Ramsey seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved to add an agenda item to rescind policies 2151, 2100, 5118, 1230, 2141 given the adoption of the replacement policies. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3: Public Participation None

Item 4: Reports

Chair Report:

Mrs. Plante reviewed the current status of the Budget Process. The budget has been presented to the Board of Finance (BOF), who are currently reviewing it and generating questions to be addressed at the meeting on February 23rd.

Superintendent's Report:

Mrs. Uberti provided an update on the radon situation at Middle Gate. Mitigation systems were installed over the long weekend and are expected to be operational by the end of the week.

Retesting will occur in all mitigated rooms, with a follow-up test in one year. Radon testing at NMS will begin next week.

The district is exploring a STOP Arm Enforcement Program using smart cameras to reduce illegal passing of buses. The program has support from the Chief of Police and First Selectman, with a possible launch in August 2026. Mrs. Uberti also noted an upcoming budget discussion session with the PTA/PSA at Reed Intermediate School on February 24th at 6:30pm in the Library Media Center.

Committee and Liaison Reports:

Mr. Ramsey discussed the 7th and 8th-grade Science Curriculum Presentation, noting the alignment with next-generation science standards.

Student Representative Report:

Miss DiNoto updated the Board on a new tardy policy that is in effect (detention after three unexcused tardies). A scholarship workshop is scheduled for 2/25. An upcoming Mental Health Fair will be held in the NHS lobby with teacher support during class time to encourage participation and reduce stigma.

Athletic achievements: Boys wrestling won the Bobcat Classic (Antonio Arguello named Most Outstanding Wrestler); NHS Dance and Cheer teams both won SWC championships.

Item 5: Action Items

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved that the Board of Education approve the Financial Report for the month ending January 2026. Seconded by Mr. Ramsey.

Ms. Gouveia outlined key points, including changes in certified/non-certified salaries, unexpected increases in professional services, and fluctuations in electricity and natural gas consumption. She also summarized end of year expected balances with 99.74% budget expenditure. Mrs. Plante asks for a vote. Motion to approve passes unanimously.

Item 6: Old Business

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved that the Board of Education approve Policies 1-5 in Item A. Seconded by Mr. Ramsey. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved that the Board of Education rescind policies 2151, 2100, 5118, 1230, and 2141 given the adoption of replacement policies. Seconded by Mr. Ramsey. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved that the Board of Education rescind Policies 1-13 in Item B under Old Business. Seconded by Mr. Ramsey. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved to approve the revision of the 2025-2026 Academic Calendar to reflect Friday, April 10, 2026 as a three-hour early dismissal day for all students and staff.

Seconded by Mr. Ramsey.

The superintendent briefly discussed the snow day from December 23rd and that the Friday before Spring Break made sense to make up that half day. The projected last day of school is June 15th. The calendar will be updated as snow days occur. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz moved to approve the 2027-2028 Academic Calendar. Seconded by Mr. Ramsey.

Superintendent Uberti discussed the layout of this calendar being similar to our current calendar. Mrs. Linnetz brought up one question about flexibility of SAT dates if changes needed to be made. Superintendent Uberti confirmed that any changes would be brought to the Board. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7: New Business

First Read of American Studies Curriculum

Policies First Read: Mrs. Linnetz addressed technical changes and definitional updates to align with CT Statutes for Policies 3160,1050,4118.11/4218.11 and 5110 on the Agenda.

Item 8: Public Participation None

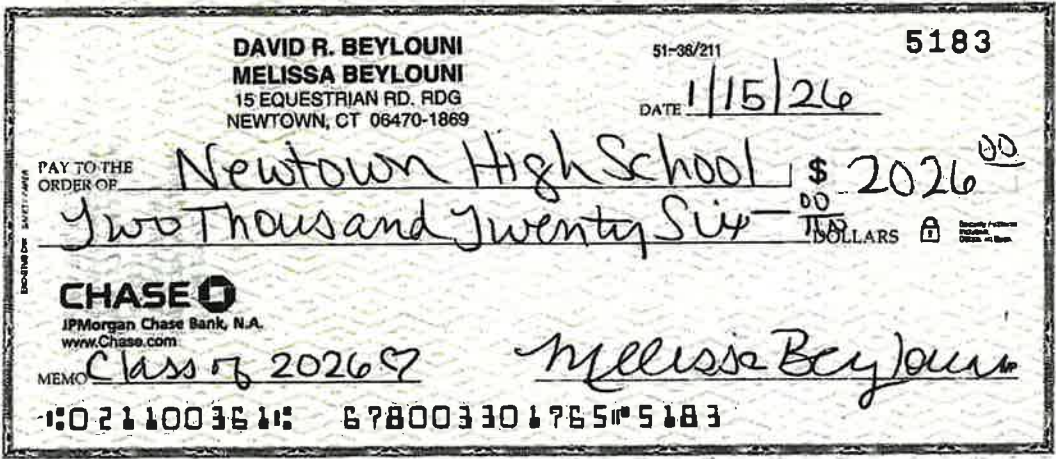
Item 9: Adjournment

MOTION: Mrs. Linnetz made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mrs. Beylouni. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary



NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Poseno, Mandi <posenom@newtown.k12.ct.us>

NHS Class of 2026 Donation

Poseno, Mandi <posenom@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Fri, Feb 27, 2026 at 1:02 PM

To: Melissa Beylouni <missybeylouni@gmail.com>, Mandi Poseno <posenom@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Good morning Mandi!

Britney asked me to send you a little note regarding our donation. So every year, I think it's fun to make a donation in the amount of the class that is graduating so this year it's \$2026! The intention of this donation is for the class to use it as they see fit. I do give it to the advisors and along with the class they decide what to do with the money. This year, I believe they're going to use it towards a really good DJ, Photo Booth, Etc. a few things like that for the senior prom.

Let me know if you need any more info!

Thank you,
Melissa

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Newtown Public School District

Newtown Board of Education

Correspondence Report 02/18/2026 – 03/02/2026

Date	Sender Name	Subject
02/18/2026	Anne Uberti	NPS Weekly Update 2.18.2026
02/19/2026	Noone, Kimberly	NHS Scholastic Art Winner
02/20/2026	Perruccio, Genevie	Deadline Extended/ Senator Murphy's Martin Luther King Jr. Essay Contest
02/20/2026	Anne Uberti	Friday Notes 2.20.2026
02/24/2026	Mandi Poseno	Invitation: BOE @ Tuesday March 2, 2026 7PM – 9PM
02/25/2026	Anne Uberti	NPS Weekly Update 2.25.2026
02/26/2026	Board Book	Meeting Notification: March 3, 2026 at 5:30 PM – Policy Sub-Committee Agenda
02/27/2026	Noone, Kimberly	Artist on the Rise NHS Artists to be Showcased
02/27/2026	Anne Uberti	Friday Notes 2.27.2026
02/27/2026	K Stetson	Inquiring
03/01/2026	Alison Plante	Weekly Update – March 1
03/01/2026	Anne Uberti	Information for Tuesday's Meeting
03/02/2026	BoardBook	Meeting Notification: March 3, 2026 at 7:00PM – Regular BOE Agenda
03/02/2026	Doria Linnetz	March 3 Policy Sub Committee Meeting
03/02/2026	Sheintop, Lauren	Hope Squad events 3/11 and 3/13
03/02/2026	Pullman & Comley, LLC via	Title IX on the Nines: Title IX Coordinators as Gatekeepers – Key Considerations for Institutions and Administrators – March 9, 2026
03/02/2026	Anne Uberti	NPS Weekly Update 3.3.26

The Correspondence Report reflects a periodic summary of correspondence received by the Newtown Board of Education. In accordance with applicable privacy laws and Board policies, certain communications may be excluded from the Report from time to time.



American Studies (Due for Review/Revision)

Newtown High School / High School / Social Studies

10 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Thursday, Sep 19, 2024 by Diaz, Joanna

Unit Calendar by Year

Unit	Au	Sep					Oct				Nov				Dec			Jan					Feb					Mar					Apr				May				Ju
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38			
What is an American?		█																																							
What is the Price of Progress?																																									
Who is Included in "We the People?"																																									
What Should We Fight For?																																									

◀ 4 Units found ▶



Unit Plan

What is an American?

Newtown High School / High School / Social Studies

Week 1 - Week 10 | 10 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Sep 19, 2024 by Diaz, Joanna

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lenses: Identity

Process Concepts: Perspective, Narrative construction, Perception

English Concepts: Voice, Style, Tone, Audience, Personal narrative, Memoir, Memory, Personal truth

History Concepts: Citizenship, Democracy, Culture, Dominance/Weakness, Values/Ideals, Propaganda, Migration, Immigration, Push/Pull Factors, Idealism, Reality, Emotion

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Writing personal narratives facilitates the investigation and discovery of personal truth.
2. Memoirs and personal narratives cultivate a deeper understanding of individual and collective identity.
3. Perspective, experience and time shape memories and interpretation of the truth.
4. Memoirs manipulate language (style, sentence structure, tone, voice) to influence the audience's perception of the writer's experience.
5. A democracy reflects citizens' values, needs, wants and defines responsibilities.
6. Stronger nations attain cultural dominance over weaker nations.
7. Propaganda stimulates an emotional investment in a cause.
8. When putting idealistic visions into practice, leaders must navigate realities.
9. People weigh push/pull factors when determining risk and/or benefit of migration.
10. A nation's people determine personal and collective response to immigration based on values and practicalities.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

- 1a. What is a personal narrative? (F)
- 1b. Why do individuals write about themselves? (C)
- 1c. How do authors decide what to include in an autobiography/memoir? (C)
- 1d. Is there one objective truth? (P)

- 2a. What are the distinctions between memoir, autobiography, and personal narrative? (F)
- 2b. How does reading others' personal stories help individuals understand themselves? (C)
- 2c. How does reading others' personal stories help individuals understand a collective identity? (C)
- 2d. Is there an American Identity? (P)

- 3a. What is perspective? (F)
- 3b. What is point of view? (F)
- 3c. What is memory? (F)
- 3d. How do perspective, experience, and time shape our memories? (C)
- 3e. How is it problematic when people have different memories of the same event? (P)

- 4a. What is syntax? (F)
- 4b. What is tone? (F)
- 4c. What is voice? (F)
- 4d. What is author's craft? (F)

- 4e. How do authors manipulate language? (C)
- 4f. How does the language in the memoir influence the audience? (C)
- 4g. Does personal writing always need an audience? (P)

- 5a. How do the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments reflect peoples' needs and values? (C)
- 5b. How are a nation's origins reflected in its ideals? (C)
- 5c. Why did the U.S. expand westward? (F)
- 5d. What justifies a nation's geographic expansion? (C)
- 5e. How does expansion contribute to a national experience? (C)
- 5f. How were the rights of certain groups (African Americans, Women, Native Americans and the lower class) ignored before 1900? (C)
- 5g. To what extent do we live up to our founding ideals? (P)

- 6a. What is imperialism? (F)
- 6b. What is the connection between industrialization and imperialism? (C)
- 6c. What are some of the reasons why the US desired colonies around 1900? (F)
- 6d. Where did the US try to extend its influence? (F)
- 6e. How and why did certain groups push for war with Spain? (F)
- 6f. Under what circumstances is a nation justified in declaring war? (C)
- 6g. Did the United States betray its principles in becoming a world power? (P)

- 7a. What caused WWI? (F)
- 7b. What events led to increasing American involvement in WWI? (F)
- 7c. How did the US government encourage active participation in the war effort? (F)
- 7d. What did the US expect the population to do to contribute to the war effort? (F)
- 7e. How are various propaganda techniques used to get citizens to aid a war effort? (C)
- 7f. How did WWI affect various social groups (ie women, African Americans)? (F)

- 8a. How and why does government limit free speech and other individual rights (the draft, Espionage Act) in times of war and upheaval? (C)
- 8b. How were Wilson's 14 Points designed to avoid future wars? (F)
- 8c. Why did the leaders of Europe reject aspects of Wilson's plan? (F)
- 8d. Why are nations inclined to choose concrete gains over an idealistic future? (C)

- 9a. What were some reasons people immigrated to the U.S. from 1880-1920? (F)
- 9b. How did newer immigrant groups differ from older, more established groups? (C)
- 9c. What was the typical immigrant experience? (C)
- 9d. How are immigrant experiences similar and/or different from one time period to another? (C)

- 10a. How and why did the US restrict immigration? (F)
- 10b. What types of responses do immigrants face upon arriving in a new place (welcoming, assimilation, resistance)? (C)
- 10c. What problems do some people associate with immigrant groups? (C)

10d. What are some benefits people associate with immigrant groups? (C)

10e. What is Nativism? (F)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Founding documents
Historical trends of 1800s
American Imperialism
Immigration
Progressive Era
Narrative Writing
Memoir writing
Speech writing
Author's craft
Rhetorical Devices

Standards




The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.




Analyzing and creating political cartoons in regards to US Imperialism
"New Colossus" Reading and Analysis
"New- New Colossus" poem writing
"I am from" poem, semi narrative poem
Historical trends of the 1800s information exchange- jigsaw or presentations
"1900 Essay" preparation/practice/self-evaluation
Family Immigration Artifact Fair/ My Immigrant Past
Current events- identifying issues, problems, and connections to course content
Close reading (Educated, Black Boy, Frederick Douglas)
Analyzing Propaganda Techniques and using the techniques to analyze WWI Propaganda




Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

 Graded Close Reading, Educated  

 I Am From Template    Fredrick Douglass Passage  

 The New Colossus/Big ideas practice page  

 Copy of Emma Lazarus Project/Poem  

 Progressive Era "Excellent Adventure"  

- My Immigrant Past
- My Immigrant Past Reflection
- 1900 Essay Honors.docx
- Seminar Rubric-Black Boy Fall 2021
- Seminar Rubric-Educated Fall 2021

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- United States History: Reconstruction to the Present
- Autobiography of Frederick Douglass
- Black Boy-Richard Wright
- Educated- Tara Westover
- "New Colossus" - Emma Lazarus
- This American Life: "The Problem We All Live With Part I"
- "America for Americans"- Theodore Roosevelt
- Various World War I Poems
- "Mckinley's War Message"
- Excerpt from the *Namesake*

Optional Activities

- Progressive Era: Excellent Adventure
- Imperialism PSA

- McKinleyWarMessage1898
- Namesake questions
- The Century Series
- World War I Poetry and assignment with "A Solider's Home"
- New Colossus
- This American Life
- The Namesake.pdf
- America for Americans.pdf

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

In Class Essay: Black Boy and Educated | Summative | Extended Essay

Consider *Black Boy*, *Educated*, your own and your classmates' family histories, our national immigration history, and "The Problem We All Live With," and answer the following question. **What is the value of using individual and personal stories to better understand our collective history?** The answer to this question then becomes your thesis/claim statement.

No Standards Assessed

Memoir Assignment | Summative | Narrative Writing Assignment

Use language (literary devices and purposeful diction) to relay a time in your life. Remember, a memoir is not necessarily about the "big" moments in your life.

No Standards Assessed

Historical Narrative Writing Assignment and Performance | Summative | Narrative Writing Assignment

Students will create a series of historical narratives, which answers the question, "What does it mean to be American?"

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

What is the Price of Progress?

Newtown High School / High School / Social Studies

Week 11 - Week 20 | 10 Curriculum Developers

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lenses: Opportunity, Conflict, Role of Government

Process Concepts: close reading, analysis, discussion

English concepts: rhetorical devices, connotation, tone, syntax, primary sources, secondary sources, argument, audience, claim/argument, persuasive writing

History concepts: Reform, Agitation, Resistance, Fear, Resentment, Discontent, Political Pressure, Growth, Depression, Change, Anxiety, Economic Hardships, Helplessness, Loss, Resistance

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Persuasive writers skillfully use connotation, rhetorical strategies, syntax, tone and form to persuade a targeted audience.
2. Persuasive writers synthesize primary and secondary source materials in conjunction with rhetorical strategies to create an argument/claim.
3. Defensible claims drive persuasive writing.
4. Discontent leads to many kinds of agitation.
5. Political pressure leads to societal reform.
6. Social reform and cultural change often spawn groups of resistance, fear, or resentment.
7. Economic growth prompts cultural and social change.
8. Economic depression causes anxiety, loss, and helplessness.
9. Government response to extreme economic hardship sets precedents for future societal expectations of government intervention.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

- 1a. What rhetorical strategies do authors use in crafting argument? (F)
- 1b. What different forms can an argument take? (F)
- 1c. How do authors determine the audience for their argument? (C)
- 1d. How do authors select the most effective form for their argument? (C)
- 2a. What is a primary source? (F)
- 2b. What is a secondary source? (F)
- 2c. How do writers evaluate and select effective sources for an argument? (C)
- 2d. How do authors synthesize sources to support a persuasive argument? (C)
- 3a. What makes a claim defensible? (F)
- 3b. How does the claim drive persuasive writing? (C)
- 4a. What groups and organizations formed to advocate for change (Progressives, Populists, NAACP, etc)? (F)
- 4b. What factors caused people in the US to feel economically and politically oppressed during the Americana Industrial era? (F)
- 4c. In what ways did people and groups express their resentment during the Americana Industrial era? (F)
- 4d. How and why did women and African Americans advocate for change during the Progressive Era? (C)

- 4e. What problems are associated with industrialization and urbanization? (C)
- 4f. How do citizens effectively pressure a government to make changes? (C)
- 5a. What societal reforms were enacted during the Progressive Era? (F)
- 5b. To what degree do political/economic reforms contribute to the overall progress of a country? (C)
- 6a. What groups or organizations formed to resist change during the American Industrial era? (F)
- 6b. What did these groups fear? (F)
- 6b. How does social reform cause groups to lose power? (C)
- 6c. How are rural and urban areas culturally different? (F)
- 6d. Why might there be tension between the two areas? (C)
- 6e. Why do Nativist groups tend to emerge during periods of immigration? (C)
- 6f. Does social reform by nature cause backlash? (P)
- 7a. How and why did consumer habits change after WWI? (F)
- 7b. How and why did social norms change after WWI? (F)
- 7c. What factors led to the rapid economic growth of the 1920's? (F)
- 7d. What are the underlying flaws of the American economy that led to the Depression? (F)
- 7e. How does speculative investment lead to economic crashes? (C)
- 7f. What cultural and social changes for African Americans are represented by the Harlem Renaissance? (F)
- 7g. What are the characteristics of a consumer-driven economy? (F)
- 7h. Can people be fulfilled by material gain? (P)
- 8a. How did the Depression impact peoples' lives (job loss, foreclosure, losing savings)? (F)
- 8b. How did the downturn in the economy affect different social/economic classes? (C)
- 8c. What demographic changes did the Depression cause? (F)
- 8d. How do people respond to economic hardship? (C)
- 8e. Is an individual solely responsible for his/her own economic well-being? (P)
- 9a. What was Hoover's response to the depression? (F)
- 9b. How was FDR's approach different from Hoover's? (F)
- 9c. What programs did Roosevelt establish to deal with the Depression? (F)
- 9d. How did peoples' view of government response change as a result of the Great Depression? (C)
- 9e. How are peoples' expectations changed due to the economic crisis? (C)
- 9f. What is the appropriate role for a government that claims to be, "of the people, by the people, and for the people"? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Connotation/Denotation

Syntax

Tone

Rhetorical Devices (Appeals)

Argument

Audience

Claim

Progressivism

The Roaring Twenties

Depression

New Deal

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

CCSS: English Language Arts 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Reading: Literature

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RL.11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- RL.11-12.8. (Not applicable to literature)

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Reading: Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RI.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RI.11-12.2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RI.11-12.3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RI.11-12.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RI.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RI.11-12.9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- W.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- W.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- W.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- W.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- W.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- W.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- W.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

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

- W.11-12.3a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- W.11-12.3b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
- W.11-12.3d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- W.11-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- SL.11-12.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

- SL.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range or formal and informal tasks.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Language

5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- L.11-12.5a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
- L.11-12.5b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
- L.11-12.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Language Progressive Skills

- L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

CCSS: Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Reading: History/Social Studies

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- WHST.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- WHST.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- WHST.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- WHST.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.
- WHST.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- WHST.11-12.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- WHST.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- WHST.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- WHST.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- WHST.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- WHST.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- WHST.11-12.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

1920's Culture Collage

Automobile Spinoffs Handout

1920's Slang Stories- Students create a story using 20's slang/situations

Immigration Act of 1924 DBQ

The Century Videos "Boom to Bust" and "Stormy Weather"- understanding of the 20's and 30's

New Deal Matrix/ABC book- Students investigate aspects of the New Deal



Pre-reading activities (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

Study guides (*The Great Gatsby*)



Close Reading activities (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

Text Based Seminars (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)



Portrait of the Newtown Graduate



[Template] Gatsby- Chapter 4 Close Reading  























































Gatsby Seminar 4 through 6  

Janie's tree/your tree activity  

Honors Gatsby Quiz 1   Automobile Spinoffs  

The Great Gatsby PreRead  

The Great Gatsby: Chapter 7-9 Seminar  

-  The Great Gatsby: Chapter 1-3 Seminar  
-  Light and Dark Motif    Gatsby Ch. 2 Study Guide  
-  Gatsby Ch. 4 Study Guide  
-  Their Eyes Were Watching God and Black Panther Seminar #2  
-  Gatsby Ch. 5 Study Guide  
-  Gatsby Ch. 7 Study Guide  
-  Gatsby Ch. 8 Study Guide    Jungle.pdf  
-  Gatsby Ch. 9 Study Guide  
-  1920's Culture Collage- Better Version  
-  1924ImmigActDBQsources.pdf  
-  Boom to Bust Video Guide  
-  [Template] Stormy Weather- original  
-  Introduction to Eatonville/TEWWG  
-  1920sSlang.pdf  
-  Language in Their Eyes Were Watching God  
-  New Deal Matrix/A-B-Cs  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources




Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.




United States History: Reconstruction to the Present- Pearson
 Battle of Belleau Woods
The Great Gatsby- F. Scott Fitzgerald
The Great Gatsby- directed by Baz Luhrmann
Their Eyes Were Watching God- Zora Neale Hurston
Black Panther- directed by Ryan Coogler
 Select Hemingway stories- *In Our Time*
This American Life episodes
 "Tune in and Booze Out"
 "Letters from the Great Depression"




Optional activities:




Progressive Era Excellent Adventure- Character Journal Activity
 Progressive Era Imagery- Analysis of Pictures
 Progressive Era Cartoons
 American Snapshots- Researching a person or group from Progressive Era
 New Deal Debate/Twitter War- Was New Deal a success?



 Progressive Era "Excellent Adventure"  




 Progressive Era Imagery  

 Battle of Belleau Wood Reading and activity  




 Progressive Era Cartoons  

 GreatDepressionLetters.pdf  

 TuneInBoozeOut&PriceWasRight.pdf  

 American Snapshots directions rubric topics  

 Twitter War Standards    The Century Series  

 This American Life: Break Up  

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

American Studies English Midterm | Summative | Written Test

Other written assessments

Carefully read and mark the passage (though the annotations are not graded for this exam), then write a close reading essay **that addresses the author's purpose in the passage, as well as the strategies used to achieve that purpose.**

No Standards Assessed

Their Eyes Were Watching God/Black Panther Essay | Summative | Extended Essay

What do the novel and the film suggest about the possibility of sustaining a utopian society? (You can use either definition of a utopia to answer this question).

No Standards Assessed

The Great Gatsby Essay | Summative | Extended Essay

Your job is to decide which aspect of the novel is most worthy of discussion. First, establish what you think is a prominent theme in the text. Then, you should think about the best way to examine that theme. For example, you might think that Fitzgerald wants to examine the death of the American Dream or, at least, its inevitable collapse. You then decide that the best way to approach the conversation of that theme is through an in depth examination of the symbols in the text, particularly those that represent vision or blindness. You then craft a thesis based on that idea.

No Standards Assessed

This American Life Project | Summative | Technology Project

The students will create an audio or video podcast that deals with a major theme of the unit. They must examine and demonstrate an interpretation of the theme from a historical and modern perspective.


No Standards Assessed



Midterm Exam:History | Summative | Other written assessments




Synthesis essay- Appropriate role of government




Close reading essay- "America for Americans"




No Standards Assessed

 HonorsAmericanStudiesGatsbyEssay2021  

 American Studies English Midterm 2022  

 Their Eyes Were Watching God and Black Panther Essay  

 This American Life  

 MidtermRoleofGovtEssay&Rubric.pdf  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Who is Included in "We the People?"

Newtown High School / High School / Social Studies

Week 21 - Week 30 | 10 Curriculum Developers

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lenses: Agency, Justice

Process Concepts: determining context, context, analyzing structure

English concepts: Literature, Layered Meaning, audience, structure, critical lens, voice, theme, context, injustice, social justice, struggle

History concepts: Competition, Superiority, Dominance, Tension, Nations, Conflict, Opportunity, Inequality/Equality, Reform, Resistance, Fear, Resentment, Injustice, Success, Tactics, Uprisings, Oppression, Change

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Literature exposes injustice and advocates for social justice.
2. American literature reveals the unique struggles and triumphs of marginalized or oppressed voices.
3. Readers employ critical lenses to reveal layered meanings in the text.
4. Evaluation of context and manipulation of text structure contribute to conveying a message to the intended audience for both the author and in analysis.
5. Nations compete to achieve and maintain superiority and dominance.
6. Ideological conflict between superpowers manifests social and cultural tension.
7. Differing economic opportunities can lead to enduring inequality.
8. Mass popular uprisings pressure government to reconcile injustice.
9. People fight oppression using different tactics with varying degrees of success.
10. Social reform and cultural change incite resistance/fear/resentment.
11. Success of one group in achieving change inspires others to fight for change.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

- 1a. What is injustice? (F)
- 1b. What is social justice? (F)
- 1c. How does literature expose injustice? (C)
- 1d. How can literature advocate for social justice? (C)
- 1e. Can literature and art be considered a form of argument? (P)
- 1f. Can a book change the world? (P)

- 2a. How has America's unique cultural history contributed to the marginalization and oppression of certain voices? (F)
- 2b. How have American authors amplified the voices of marginalized individuals, their struggles and triumphs? (C)
- 2c. Can a book change a person's life? (P)

- 3a. What is a critical lens? (F)
- 3b. Through what types of critical lenses can one view literature? (F)
- 3c. How does the use of critical lenses affect understanding and appreciation of a text? (C)
- 3d. How can reading through a critical lens help readers understand the context of a work? (C)

- 4a. What is structure? (F)
- 4b. What are some structures authors use? (F)
- 4c. How can structure be manipulated? (C)
- 4d. How can structure affect meaning? (C)
- 4e. How do context and audience inform structure? (C)
- 4f. Can structure interfere with meaning? (C)

5a. Why do wartime allies often differ on the terms of peace? (C)
5b. How did US and Soviet actions in Europe in the aftermath of WWII lead to conflict? (C)
5c. How and why did the US and Soviet Cold War struggle lead the US to armed conflict in Korea? (F)
5d. When did the US and Soviets come close to direct war during the Cold War? (F)
5e. To what extent did the US achieve Communist containment? (C)
5f. What were some of the successes and failures for the US in its Cold War struggle? (F)

6a. What actions did Americans take because of their Cold War fears? (F)
6b. What questionable actions did Americans and the government take domestically to combat communist infiltration of US society? (F)
6c. How did the US and the USSR portray each other during the Cold War? (F)
6d. To what extent is there a tradeoff between national security and civil rights? (C)
6e. How did the Cold War fears (spies, nuclear weapons, technology, etc) become ingrained in American popular culture (movies, TV advertising, etc)? (F)
6f. Does fear cause people to abandon their principles? (P)
6g. Is it ever appropriate for a government to lie or hide information from its people? (P)

7a. What were some of the dominant characteristics of 1950s American society? (F)
7b. To what extent was conforming to the American ideal (patriotic, religious, materialistic, nuclear family, suburban) part of American society post WWII? (C)
7c. How did some individuals rebel against the American ideal? (F)
7d. How does the conflict between US and Soviets expose some of the social and economic imperfections of American society? (C)

8a. By the 1940's, what was the status of African Americans politically, socially, and economically in both the North and South? (F)

8b. How did WWII help spark the Civil Rights Movement? (F)
8c. During the 1940's and 1950's who advocated for a change in the status of African Americans in the US and how? (F)
8d. How did the federal government react to Civil Rights protests? (F)

9a. How and why did proponents of the Civil Rights Movement embrace the tactics of MLK's non-violent resistance movement? (F)
9b. How did the national media help bring support for the movement from the mainstream American public? (F)
9c. How did more militant movements like Black Nationalism differ from the non-violent protest movement in terms of goals, methods, and gains? (F)

9d. How is the civil rights struggle representative of the power struggle between state and national government? (F)
9e. To what extent can legislation truly resolve inequality? (P)
9f. Does race, geography, socioeconomic class, and other factors impact one's opportunity? (P)

10a. How and why did Southern society respond to the Civil Rights movement? (F)

10b. How did state and local government resist civil rights protests? (F)

10c. Why do people cling to the status quo? (C)

11a. What are the parallels between the fight for civil rights and other minority groups (Native Americans, Latino Americans, Women, LGBTQIA+) in America? (F)

11b. How were minority groups' strategies similar to those in the African American struggle? (F)

11c. What civil rights inequalities continue to exist? (C)

11d. Is full integration achievable? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Theme

Critical lenses

Thesis/Claim Statement

Race relations/ Civil Rights Movement

Protest movements

Gender roles

Pop culture and Culture in the 50s

Evolution of media

Trust in government

Cold War

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

CCSS: English Language Arts 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Capacities of the Literate Individual

Students Who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, & Language

- They demonstrate independence. [Show Details](#)
- They build strong content knowledge. [Show Details](#)
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline. [Show Details](#)
- They comprehend as well as critique. [Show Details](#)
- They value evidence. [Show Details](#)
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably. [Show Details](#)
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures. [Show Details](#)

Reading: Literature

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RL.11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RL.11-12.6. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RL.11-12.7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- RL.11-12.8. (Not applicable to literature)

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RL.11-12.9. Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

- RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading: Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RL.11-12.3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RL.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RL.11-12.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RL.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. (Not applicable to literature)

- RI.11-12.8. Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses).

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RI.11-12.9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

- RI.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- RI.11-12.10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- W.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- W.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- W.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- W.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- W.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- W.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- W.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- W.11-12.2c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- W.11-12.2d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
- W.11-12.2e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- W.11-12.2f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
- W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

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

- W.11-12.3a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- W.11-12.3b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
- W.11-12.3d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- W.11-12.3e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- W.11-12.9a. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).
- W.11-12.9b. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses)”).
- W.11-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- SL.11-12.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
- SL.11-12.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

- SL.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

- SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

Conventions of Standard English 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- L.11-12.1a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
- L.11-12.1b. Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, Garner's Modern American Usage) as needed.
- L.11-12.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- L.11-12.2a. Observe hyphenation conventions.
- L.11-12.2b. Spell correctly.
- L.11-12.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language 3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

- L.11-12.3a. Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., Tufte's Artful Sentences) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.
- L.11-12.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

- L.11-12.4a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- L.11-12.4b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
- L.11-12.4c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
- L.11-12.4d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- L.11-12.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- L.11-12.5a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
- L.11-12.5b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
- L.11-12.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

- L.11-12.6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Language Progressive Skills

- L.3.1f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect.
- L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to/too/two; there/their).
- L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect.
- L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.
- L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.
- L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
- L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.
- L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.
- L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
- L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- L.9–10.1a. Use parallel structure.

CCSS: Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Capacities of the Literate Individual

Students Who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, & Language

- They build strong content knowledge. [Show Details](#)
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline. [Show Details](#)
- They comprehend as well as critique. [Show Details](#)
- They value evidence. [Show Details](#)
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably. [Show Details](#)
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures. [Show Details](#)

Reading: History/Social Studies

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RH.11-12.6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Reading: Science & Technical Subjects

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RST.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- WHST.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- WHST.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- WHST.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- WHST.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- WHST.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.
- WHST.11-12.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- WHST.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- WHST.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- WHST.11-12.2c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- WHST.11-12.2d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
- WHST.11-12.2e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
- WHST.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- WHST.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- WHST.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- WHST.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- WHST.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- WHST.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- WHST.11-12.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- WHST.11-12.10. 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.

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

1950's Life Hyperdocs which include various sources on gender, fear, rebellion, culture

Real Story of the Cold War- events of the Cold War

We Didn't Start the Fire Lyrical References

The Century Series Videos- "Best Years" and "Happy Daze"

African American Experience Thematic timeline

Civil Rights poetry- analysis of 4 poems

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Civil Rights DBQ Packet

Evaluating sources- Art as an Argument

The Crucible- Pre-reading, close reading, seminars

Raisin in the Sun- Pre-reading, close reading, seminars

"Plan your Protest" activity

Eyes on the Prize- Civil Rights Movement Documentary, School Edition

- AmericanStudiesGroupDiscussionRubric2021-22, A Raisin in the Sun
- The Crucible Seminar
- Formula for a Witch Hunt
- Honors Crucible Quiz, Act 2
- PrereadRaisin2021
- Glossary
- The Crucible Preread
- Power Dynamics in The Crucible
- Flower Thrower- Banksy
- The Crucible Act 3: Reverse Quiz
- PlanYourProtestwksht.pdf
- [Template] [Template] The REAL Story of the Cold War
- CRMpoetry.pdf
- PostWWIIWomenandPursuitofHappiness.pdf
- Eyes on the Prize
- Hysteria Hyperdoc
- 1950s Conformity Hyperdoc
- 1950s Rebellion Hyperdoc
- 1950's Gender Roles
- We Didn't Start Fire
- Best Years Video Questions
- Happy Daze Video Guide
- CRMdocpasspacketA-G.pdf

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

United States History: Reconstruction to Present- Pearson

The Century Series selected videos

Eyes on the Prize- PBS anthology

The Crucible- Arthur Miller

Raisin in the Sun- Lorraine Hansberry

"*Strange Fruit*" Billie Holiday

Optional activities:

Raisin in the Sun Theatre Workshop

The Crucible Act I Reflections/Study Guide

- Raisin in the Sun Theatre Workshop
- Act I Reflections
- The Century Series
- Strange Fruit: Video

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Art as an Argument | Summative | Personal Project

Other written assessments | Technology Project | Visual Arts Project

We will explore how different media are used to convey arguments.

[118 Standards Assessed](#)

The African-American Experience Thematic Timeline | Summative | Other written assessments

Students will investigate different eras and themes of race relations over the span of US History to determine progress and/or lack of progress.

[11 Standards Assessed](#)

Raisin in the Sun Essay | Summative | Extended Essay

What does the language, in both the play and in the second piece you chose, suggest about the history of racism in this country?

[99 Standards Assessed](#)

Civil Rights Recruitment Fair | Summative | Other oral assessments

The students will create an oral presentation and a display to recruit others to a Civil Rights cause.

[17 Standards Assessed](#)

 Honors Raisin in the Sun Essay 2022    Art as an Argument 2021  

 The African-American Experience Annotated Thematic Timeline    Civil Rights Movement Recruitment Campaign Portfolio  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

What Should We Fight For?

Newtown High School / High School / Social Studies

Week 31 - Week 38 | 10 Curriculum Developers

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lenses: Inquiry, Identity, Conflict

Process Concepts: versatility, independence, authenticity, research

English concepts: primary research, secondary research, speaker, audience, audience engagement, purpose, citations, organization, presentation, genre, form, discussion, fiction, storytelling, rhetorical strategies

History concepts: Uncertainty, Desperation, Authoritarianism, Propaganda, Modern Warfare, Morality, Fear Culture, Adaptation, Homefront Support, Campaign, World Affairs, Truth, Citizenship, Subjugation, Persecution, Military Objectives, Victory and Defeat

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. The study of narrative requires us to understand the effect of the story on the audience.
2. The study of fiction allows us to understand the incomprehensible.
3. Authentic inquiry comprises a fundamental aspect of being human.
4. Research to pursue inquiry requires initiating, accessing and evaluating primary and secondary sources.
5. In written work, rhetorical strategies, structure, and visuals convey different meanings to an audience when adapted.
6. In presentations, rhetorical strategies, structure, and visuals engage an audience when adapted.
7. Uncertainty engenders desperation which allows an authoritarian leader and systems to emerge.
8. Modern warfare necessitates the government use propaganda and involvement in world affairs.
9. Citizens explore and analyze information provided by the government to determine if it is truth.
10. Waging a protracted military campaign necessitates homefront support.
11. Subjugation and persecution of minority groups endures.
12. When waging war military objectives supersede moral considerations.
13. Modern conflicts require new interpretations of victory and defeat.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

- 1a. What is narrative? (F)
- 1b. In what ways does the audience engage with narrative? (C)
- 1c. Can a narrative change the way the audience understands itself? (P)
- 2a. What is fiction? (F)
- 2b. How does fiction change our perceptions? (C)
- 2c. Can fiction allow us to understand the unimaginable? (P)
- 3a. What is authentic inquiry? (F)
- 3b. How can a researcher frame questions for the best possible results? (C)
- 3c. How can a researcher pursue a line of inquiry? (C)
- 3d. How does inquiry enhance critical thinking skills? (C)
- 3e. Is inquiry necessary for progress? (P)
- 3f. What is the value of being curious? (C)
- 4a. When can one trust what one reads? (C)
- 4b. What is experiential research? (F)
- 4c. How do primary sources supplement secondary sources? (F)
- 4d. How does inquiry guide research? (C)
- 4e. How do accurate source citations promote further inquiry? (C)
- 4f. How does one initiate research? (C)
- 5a. What are rhetorical strategies? (F)
- 5b. What is visual rhetoric? (F)

- 5c. How do speaker, audience, and purpose interact? (C)
- 5d. How does structure affect meaning? (C)
- 5e. How do writers manipulate their audience? (C)

- 6a. What are some qualities of a good presentation? (C)
- 6b. How do speaker, audience, and purpose interact? (C)
- 6c. How does structure affect meaning? (C)
- 6d. How do speakers manipulate their audience? (C)
- 6e. How do rhetorical strategies operate in spoken communication? (C)
- 6f. What is the definition of audience engagement? (F)
- 6g. What are some strategies speakers use to engage their audience? (C)
- 6h. How do presenters ensure transfer of knowledge to their audience? (C)
- 6i. What are the responsibilities of an audience? (C)
- 6j. Is an audience always a group of learners? (P)

- 7a. What economic, social, and political conditions are necessary for a dictator to arise? (C)
- 7b. What methods did leaders like Hitler, Stalin, etc use to gain popularity during the WWII era? (F)
- 7c. How do dictators systematically maintain their power and control? (C)
- 7d. What were the responses of the various nations/leaders confronted by aggression? (F)
- 7e. How and why did America choose to isolate itself from European affairs? (F)
- 7f. Why do people gravitate toward radical ideas and regimes? (C)

- 8a. What were the root causes of the conflict in Vietnam? (F)
- 8b. How did the US involvement in Vietnam fit into its larger Cold War struggle? (F)
- 8c. How was the media coverage evolved since WWII? (F)
- 8d. To what extent are wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan/Iraq similar? (C)
- 8e. Is government propaganda a necessary tool in wartime? (P)

- 9a. How united was the US homefront in WWII? (C)
- 9b. How did the public views of the war impact the military's ability to win the war in Vietnam? (F)
- 9c. How and why did the antiwar movement grow during the Vietnam era? (F)
- 9d. How was opposition to the draft symbolic of the antiwar movement? (F)
- 9e. How can war polarize a population? (C)
- 9f. Is dissent in wartime unpatriotic? (P)

- 10a. How did the US become the "arsenal of democracy"? (F)
- 10b. How did individual Americans on the homefront contribute to the war effort? (F)
- 10c. How did the US government use media to promote the war effort? (F)
- 10d. How did the shift to war production affect minority groups? (C)

- 11a. How and why did the Nazis persecute Jews and other "undesirables" in Europe? (C)
- 11b. What were the reasons for the US internment Japanese and Japanese Americans during WW II? (F)
- 11c. How were the treatment of Japanese in the US and the treatment of Jews in the German occupied territories alike and different? (C)

- 11d. Why is scapegoating so common in times of crisis? (C)
- 12a. How were civilians impacted by WWII and the Vietnam War? (F)
- 12b. How and why were world leaders held accountable for their actions before and during the war? (C)
- 12c. To what extent should civilians be targeted in war? (P)
- 12d. To what extent should military objectives supersede moral considerations? (P)
- 12e. To what degree should a nation limit rights and freedoms when national security is at risk? (C)
- 12f. What questionable actions of dictators has the US tacitly supported in the name of promoting our interests? (F)
- 12g. How has US involvement in the affairs of other nations contributed to an anti-American backlash? (C)
- 12h. Is it possible to fight a “humane war?” (P)
- 13a. How did military strategy and objectives change or evolve for both the US and its adversaries in Vietnam? (F)
- 13b. How does the US military respond to the guerilla warfare tactics of the enemy? (C)
- 13c. Why do less advanced militaries usually revert to guerilla warfare? (C)
- 13d. Why did Al-Qaeda attack the US on 9/11? (F)
- 13e. Following 9/11 what steps did the US take in its “War on Terror”? (F)
- 13f. How has the US honed its weapons technology to reduce civilian casualties in war? (F)
- 13g. Why do groups or individuals resort to terrorism? (C)
- 13h. What should the US role be in a post Cold War world? (P)
- 13i. Are modern wars winnable? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Visual argument
Locating and evaluating secondary sources
Locating and evaluating primary sources
Discussion
Presentation
Portfolio Presentation
Genre work
Revision
Close Reading
Reflection
WWII
Vietnam
War on Terror

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

[CCSS: English Language Arts 6-12](#)
[CCSS: Grades 11-12](#)
[Reading: Literature](#)

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RL.11-12.6. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

- RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Reading: Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RI.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RI.11-12.2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RI.11-12.3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RI.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RI.11-12.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RI.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

- RI.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- W.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- W.11-12.1b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- W.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- W.11-12.1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- W.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- W.11-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- SL.11-12.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
- SL.11-12.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

- SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

Conventions of Standard English 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- L.11-12.1a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
- L.11-12.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- L.11-12.2b. Spell correctly.
- L.11-12.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language 3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

- L.11-12.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

- L.11-12.4b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).

5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- L.11-12.5a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
- L.11-12.5b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
- L.11-12.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

- L.11-12.6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

CCSS: Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Reading: History/Social Studies

Key Ideas and Details 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

- RH.11-12.10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11–12 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Reading: Science & Technical Subjects

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- RST.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

Craft and Structure 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RST.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 11–12 texts and topics.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- RST.11-12.6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, identifying important issues that remain unresolved.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- RST.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RST.11-12.9. Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- WHST.11-12.1a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- WHST.11-12.1c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- WHST.11-12.1e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.
- WHST.11-12.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- WHST.11-12.2a. Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- WHST.11-12.2b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- WHST.11-12.2c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- WHST.11-12.2d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
- WHST.11-12.2e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
- WHST.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

Production and Distribution of Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- WHST.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- WHST.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

- WHST.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

- WHST.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- WHST.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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

- WHST.11-12.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- WHST.11-12.10. 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.

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Core Learning Activities

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Causes of WWII, "From One War to Another"

WWII Chronology

Fantasy Draft of Allies

"Far Away But Not Forgotten" Reading Quiz






























Gulf of Tonkin Incident Analysis

Vietnam/Counterculture Era Artifact Fair

Counterculture "Conversation"

The Things They Carry- Pre-read, reflections, close reading, discussions, quote analysis

Proteus Preparation (research, writing, portfolio presentation, conferencing)

-  "Spin"  
-  TTTC Ch 1 Study Guide Questions  
-  The Things I Carry 2022  
-  "On the Rainy River" Personal Reflections  
-  Copy of GroupDiscussionRubric2020-21, The Things They Carried  
-  This is Us How to Tell a True War Story  
-  "How to Tell a True War Story"  
-  "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong" Quote Analysis  
-  Reflection on "The Man I Killed" and "Ambush"  
-  "Speaking of Courage," "Notes," and "In the Field"  

- Proteus – 2022 Research Paper Introduction
- Proteus Explanation
- Outline Template
- Proteus Proposal Checklist & Grading
- A Counterculture “Conversation”
- Dear America Questions 2022
- FarAwayButNotForgotarticle&quiz.pdf
- GulfoTonkinResInfoLBJApril65speechVNVocabSlang.pdf
- WWIIchronologyHomefrontPosterInfo.pdf
- From1WartoAnotherPacketPtsofNoReturn.pdf

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- United States History: Reconstruction to Present- Pearson
- The Things They Carried- Tim O'Brien
- The Century Series
- Vietnam/Counterculture Era Vocab
- Dear America: Letters Home From Vietnam
- Proteus Exemplars
- Do We Bomb Auschwitz- Moral Dilemma (watch and discuss)
- Iraq Chronology- War on Terror timeline
- Unbroken- film
- Optional Activities:
- WWII Journals
- Slaughterhouse Five (novel and activities)

- Should We Bomb Auschwitz video
- IraqChronology.pdf
- War Who Decides.pdf
- The Century Series
- Proteus Research Paper Online Humor Exemplar 2019
- Proteus Fashion Evolution Exemplar 2021
- Dear America: Part I
- Dear America: Part 2
- [Template] [Revised] World War II Journals Assignment and standard
- Slaughterhouse Five Questions 7-10
- [Template] Slaughterhouse Five Chapter 3 Questions
- Slaughterhouse Five - Mind Body Map

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Vietnam/Counterculture Family Artifact Fair Interview and Write-Up | Summative | Other written assessments

Oral Report

Students will interview an individual from the Vietnam era and draw conclusions from the interaction.

- Vietnam/Counterculture Family Artifact Fair Interview and Write-Up

9 Standards Assessed

Proteus Presentation | Summative | Other oral assessments




Final exam presentation.




[12 Standards Assessed](#)

Proteus Project | Summative | Other written assessments

Final exam project. Select a topic. Conduct research on the topic. Maintain a list of works cited and consulted. (NoodleTools is the best way to maintain this). Write a sequence of pieces that present the issue from a variety of perspectives and that illustrates appropriate historical context.

[20 Standards Assessed](#)

 American Studies- Proteus Portfolio Rubric  

 American Studies Proteus Presentation rubric  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

An open book with a blank page, resting on an American flag. The book is open to a page that is mostly blank, with some faint text visible at the top. The background is a close-up of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The text "American Studies" is overlaid on the book's page.

American Studies

**Mrs. Joanna Diaz and Mrs. Jessica Metz
Mrs. Amy Deeb- Social Studies Department Chair
Mrs. Abi Marks -English Department Chair
January 2026**

Unit 1: What is an American?

Lens: Identity

English Concepts: Voice, Style, Tone Audience, Personal narrative, Memoir, Memory, Personal truth

History Concepts: Citizenship, Democracy, Culture, Dominance/Weakness, Values/Ideals, Propaganda, Migration, Immigration, Push/Pull Factors, Idealism, Reality

Core Learning Activities: Analyzing primary documents in regards to US development, influential people, and change

"New Colossus" Reading and Analysis

"New- New Colossus" poem writing

"I am from" poem, semi narrative poem

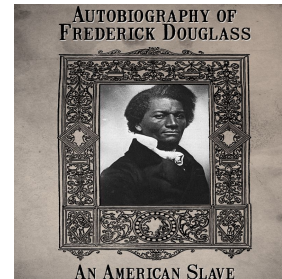
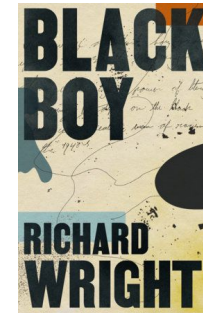
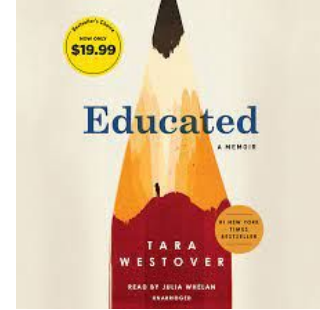
Close Reading Analysis ~ *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Multiple seminars (*Educated*, *Black Boy*)

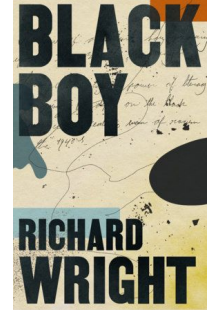
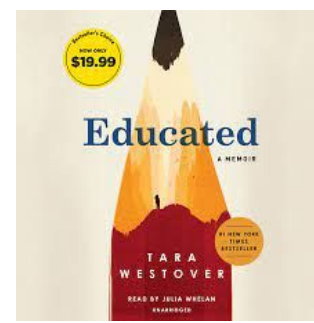
Historical trends of the 1800s information exchange- interactive role play and presentations

"1800s Essay" preparation/practice/self-evaluation

Family Immigration Artifact Fair/ My Immigrant Past



What is an American? (Continued)



In Class Essay: *Black Boy* and *Educated*

Summative: Extended Essay

Consider *Black Boy*, *Educated*, your own and your classmates' family histories, our national immigration history, and "The Problem We All Live With," and answer the following question. **What is the value of using individual and personal stories to better understand our collective history?**

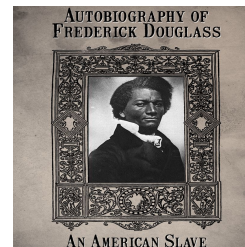
Memoir Assignment

Summative: Narrative Writing Assignment

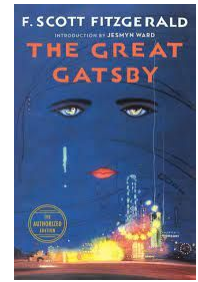
Use language (literary devices and purposeful diction) to relay a time in your life. Remember, a memoir is not necessarily about the "big" moments in your life.

Hands on Learning

Using hands on learning and creating lessons and projects that are interesting to students help engage students to think about what it means to be an American and what it took to get America to where it is today. Also discussing comparisons from our lives today to what people of the past had to deal with or go through.



What is the Price of Progress?



Lenses: Opportunity, Conflict, Role of Government

English concepts: rhetorical devices, connotation, tone, syntax, primary sources, secondary sources, argument, audience, claim/argument, persuasive writing

History concepts: Reform, Agitation, Resistance, Fear, Resentment, Discontent, Political Pressure, Growth, Depression, Change, Anxiety, Economic Hardships, Helplessness, Loss, Resistance

Core Learning Activities:

1920s Culture Collage

Automobile Spinoffs Handout

1920s Slang- Students create a story using 20's slang/situations OR we do a discussion about the terms and

Immigration project, slideshow, and Ellis Island simulation

The Century Videos "Boom to Bust" and "Stormy Weather"- understanding of the '20s and '30s

New Deal discussion and slideshow

1917 analysis, how did progress lead to WW1?

Pre-reading activities (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

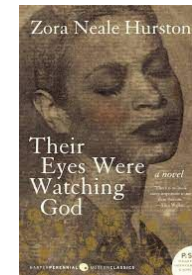
Study guides (*The Great Gatsby*)

Close Reading activities (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

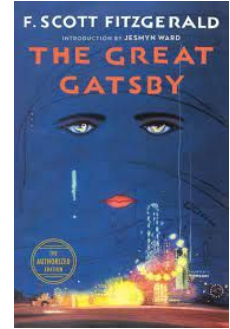
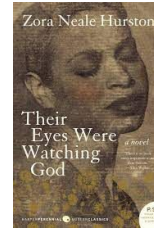
Text Based Seminars (*The Great Gatsby*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)

Excerpts from Kristin Hannah's *The Four Winds*

Dust Bowl - slideshow, imagery activity - create a story of the people you see



What is the Price of Progress? (Continued)



Their Eyes Were Watching God/Black Panther Essay

Summative: Extended Essay

What do the novel and the film suggest about the possibility of sustaining a utopian society?

The Great Gatsby Essay

Summative: Extended Essay

Your job is to decide which aspect of the novel is most worthy of discussion. First, establish what you think is a prominent theme in the text. Then, you should think about the best way to examine that theme. For example, you might think that Fitzgerald wants to examine the death of the American Dream or, at least, its inevitable collapse. You then decide that the best way to approach the conversation of that theme is through an in depth examination of the symbols in the text, particularly those that represent vision or blindness. You then craft a thesis based on that idea.

Who is included in “We the People?”

Lenses: Agency, Justice

English concepts: Motif, audience, structure, critical lens, voice, theme, context, injustice, social justice

History concepts: Power, Superiority, Dominance, Tension, Nations, Conflict, Opportunity, Inequality/Equality, Reform, Resistance, Fear, Resentment, Injustice, Success, Tactics, Uprisings, Oppression, Change

Core Learning Activities:

1950s Life Hyperdocs which include various sources on gender, fear, rebellion, culture

Real Story of the Cold War- events of the Cold War

“We Didn't Start the Fire” Lyrical References & lyrical rewrite

The Century Series Videos- "Best Years" and "Happy Daze"

African American Experience Thematic timeline

Civil Rights Primary documents

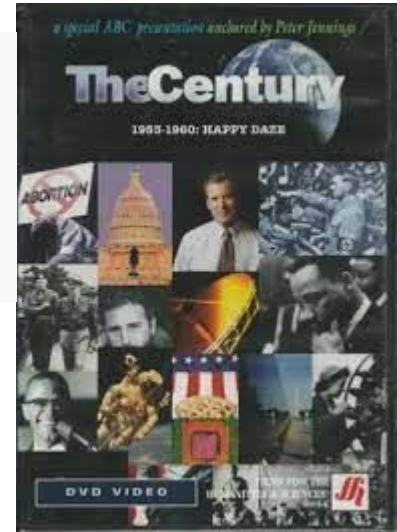
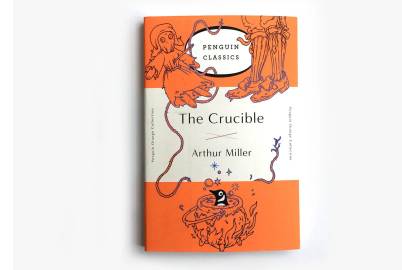
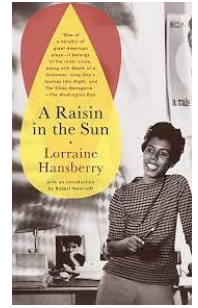
Evaluating sources- Art as an Argument

The Crucible- Pre-reading, close reading, seminars

Raisin in the Sun- Pre-reading, close reading, seminars, readers theater

"Plan your Protest" activity

Eyes on the Prize- Civil Rights Movement Documentary, School Edition



Who is included in “We the People?” (Continued)

Art as an Argument

Summative: Personal Project

Visual Arts Project, Technology Project, Other written assessments

We will explore how different media are used to convey arguments.

The African-American Experience Thematic Timeline

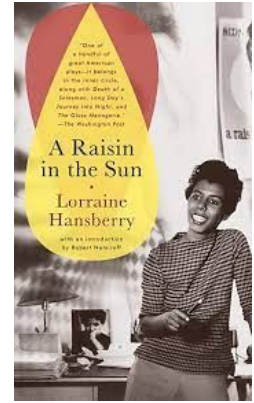
Summative: Other written assessments

Students will investigate different eras and themes of race relations over the span of US History to determine progress and/or lack of progress

Civil Rights Recruitment Fair

Summative: Other oral assessments

The students will create an oral presentation and a display to recruit others to a Civil Rights cause.



What Should We Fight For?

Lenses: Inquiry, Identity, Conflict

English concepts: primary research, secondary research, speaker, audience, audience engagement, purpose, citations, organization, presentation, genre, form, discussion, fiction, storytelling, rhetorical strategies

History concepts: Uncertainty, Desperation, Authoritarianism, Propaganda, Modern Warfare, Morality, Fear Culture, Adaptation, Homefront Support, Campaign, World Affairs, Truth, Citizenship, Subjugation, Persecution, Military Objectives, Victory and Defeat

Core Learning Activities:

Causes of WWII, "From One War to Another"

WWII Chronology

WWII homefront reading (includes women roles)

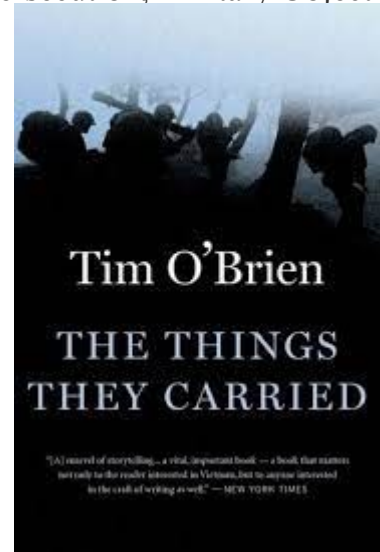
“Unbroken” viewing and analyze

Vietnam/Counterculture discussion, images, slideshow, hippie culture and women in battle

The Things They Carry- Pre-read, reflections, close reading, discussions, quote analysis

Proteus Preparation (research, writing, portfolio presentation, conferencing);

Excerpts from Kristin Hannah’s *The Women*



What Should We Fight For? (Continued)

Proteus Presentation

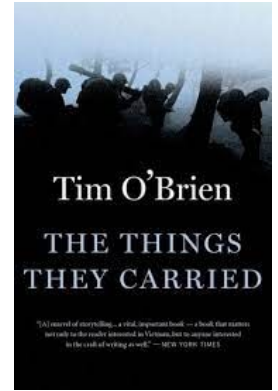
Summative: Other oral assessments

Final exam presentation.

Proteus Project (Includes 8-10 pg. Research paper)

Summative: Other written assessments

Final exam project. Select a topic. Conduct research on the topic. Maintain a list of works cited and consulted.(NoodleTools is the best way to maintain this). Write a sequence of pieces that present the issue from a variety of perspectives and that illustrates appropriate historical context.



Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection Part 1

Please answer the following questions regarding revisions to the curriculum and your experience with curriculum writing:

1. How has the curriculum improved from the original version to the this newly revised version?

Added new hands on activities such as the Immigration Experience at Ellis Island Simulation, removed Immigration Act of 1924 DBQ. Added a SOAPS activity where students analyze multiple primary sources that center around African Americans during this time period. Added a Becoming A Muckraker (research and presentation assignment). Removed the Political Cartoon creation. Removed New Deal Matrix. Added the Prohibition Recall Relay. Added showing and analyzing the film 1917. Reading about the New Deal. Added the most updated version of We Didn't Start the Fire and then have students create their own version. Removed the Civil Rights DBQ, and adjust the midterm so it was more of a combination of critical thinking and fact recall. Overall we have tried to create a curriculum that is more hands on and student centered so students can get the most from the class as they can. Current curriculum is robust and rigorous, and has become much more hands-on and collaborative for students. We removed "America for Americans" by Teddy Roosevelt (did not fit fluidly into Unit 1 and students struggled, overall. Removed "This American Life" podcast creation to ensure content / texts addressed thoroughly and deeply.

Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection Part 2

1. Reflecting back on the process, what improvements to the curriculum do you look forward to implementing the most?

Enjoyed adding supplemental excerpts to deepen understanding of 1930s Dust Bowl and women's roles in Vietnam. We have worked hard to make modifications to assignments/assessments so the curriculum is accessible to more students. As a team, we continue to ensure that curriculum represents and honors a myriad of voices and stories from American history, and we look forward to continuing to craft a curriculum that is rich and impactful.

Passed during the 2025 legislative session, Public Act 25-139 adds sexual assault victim and human trafficking victim as protected classes under Connecticut's anti-discrimination laws. This policy has been revised to reflect these additions. We also updated the location and contact information for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, as the Boston office has closed. Finally, we have made technical revisions throughout.

**Series 1000
Community/Board Operation**

1050

**POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING
NON-DISCRIMINATION (COMMUNITY MEMBERS)**

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

It is the policy of the Newtown Board of Education (the "Board") that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law ("Protected Class") is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the "District"), whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics, school-sponsored activities, as well as the District website. When the Board has created a limited public forum, the Board shall provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other groups as required by law.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board further prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment, and is therefore prohibited by this policy.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

Definitions:

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy:

A. **Discrimination:** Discrimination in violation of this policy occurs when an individual is denied participation in, or the benefits of, a program or activity of the Board because of such individual's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class.

B. **Harassment:** Harassment is a form of Protected Class discrimination that is prohibited by law and by this policy. Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when it creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the District.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the types of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to a hostile environment:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that is prohibited by law and Board policy. For more information regarding harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or gender identity or expression, contact the District's Title IX Coordinator at:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

C. Gender identity or expression: Gender identity or expression refers to a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

D. Sexual orientation: Sexual orientation refers to a person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are romantically, emotionally or sexually attracted, inclusive of any identity that a person (i) may have previously expressed, or (ii) is perceived by another person to hold.

E. Veteran: A veteran is any person honorably discharged from, released under honorable conditions from or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition from active service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Space Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard. "Qualifying condition" means (i) a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury made by an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (ii) an experience of military sexual trauma disclosed to an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, or (iii) a determination that sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for an other than honorable discharge, as determined in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 27-103(c), (d).

F. Race: The term race is inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. "Protective hairstyles" includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

G. Domestic violence: Domestic violence means (1) a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury against a family or household member, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38a; (2) stalking, including but not limited to, stalking as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-181d, of such family or household member; (3) a pattern of threatening, including but not limited to, a pattern of threatening as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-62, of such family or household member or a third party that intimidates such family or household member; or (4) coercive control of such family or household member, which is a pattern of behavior that in purpose or effect unreasonably interferes with a person's free will and personal liberty. "Coercive control" includes, but is not limited to, unreasonably engaging in

any of the following: (a) isolating the family or household member from friends, relatives or other sources of support; (b) depriving the family or household member of basic necessities; (c) controlling, regulating or monitoring the family or household member's movements, communications, daily behavior, finances, economic resources or access to services; (d) compelling the family or household member by force, threat or intimidation, including, but not limited to, threats based on actual or suspected immigration status, to (i) engage in conduct from which such family or household member has a right to abstain, or (ii) abstain from conduct that such family or household member has a right to pursue; (e) committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates the family or household member; or (f) forced sex acts, or threats of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to, threatened acts of sexual conduct, threats based on a person's sexuality or threats to release sexual images.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Students or Employees:

Complaints of alleged discrimination and/or harassment of students and/or employees will be investigated in accordance with the non-discrimination policies applicable to students and/or personnel respectively. Complaints pertaining to specific forms of discrimination and/or harassment, such as sexual harassment or disability-based harassment, have specific policies and procedures applicable to these forms of harassment and will be investigated in accordance with the specific procedures for such issues. If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment of an employee or of a student based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Complaints involving allegations of discrimination or harassment of an employee or of a student based on disability will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Community Members on the Basis of Sex:

In the event the District receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g., an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee) on the basis of sex, the complaint shall be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, who shall take steps designed to ensure that applicable state and federal law are followed.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Community Members on the Basis of Disability:

In the event the District receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g., an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee)

based on disability, the complaint shall be referred to the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator, who shall take steps designed to ensure that applicable state and federal law are followed.

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment or retaliation.

Any individual who believes a community member has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of this policy should report such concern in writing to **the Assistant Superintendent** in accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in the Board's Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Community, which accompany this policy, and are available online at <https://www.newtownpolicies.org/>. or upon request from the main office of any District school.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

In addition to reporting to District officials in accordance with this policy, individuals also may file a complaint with the following agencies:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education ("OCR"):

Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (employees only):

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800-669-4000)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
OR
2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations based on religion; OR
3. who would like a copy of the Board's complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination or harassment:

may contact any District administrator or the following District official:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex may contact the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, and/or who may wish to request or discuss accommodations for a disability, may contact the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Legal References:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.
Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. § 7905
Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq.
Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794
Connecticut General Statutes § 1-1n, “Gender Identity or Expression”
defined
Connecticut General Statutes § 27-103
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-51, Definitions
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-58, Deprivation of rights
Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act, Connecticut General
Statutes § 46a-60
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81c, Sexual orientation
discrimination: Employment
Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-1, Family relations matters and
domestic violence defined
Public Act No. 25-139, “An Act Concerning Human Trafficking and
Sexual Assault Victims”

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

9/18/2025

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS (COMMUNITY MEMBERS)

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

It is the policy of the Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”) is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the “District”), whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law. When the Board has created a limited public forum, the Board shall provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other groups as required by law.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board further prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

The District will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of Protected Class harassment or discrimination. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, and other corrective actions as appropriate.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual’s association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the types of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to a hostile environment:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Students or Employees:

Complaints of alleged discrimination and/or harassment of students and/or personnel will be investigated in accordance with the non-discrimination policies applicable to students and/or personnel respectively. Complaints pertaining to specific forms of discrimination and/or harassment, such as sexual harassment or disability-based harassment, have specific policies and procedures applicable to these forms of harassment and will be investigated in accordance with the specific procedures for such issues. If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment of a student or an employee based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Complaints involving allegations of discrimination or harassment of an employee or of a student based on disability will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Community Members on the Basis of Sex:

In the event the District receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g. an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee) on the basis of sex, the complaint shall be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, who shall take steps designed to ensure that applicable state and federal law are followed.

Alleged Discrimination/Harassment of Community Members on the Basis of Disability:

In the event the District receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g., an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee) based on disability, the complaint shall be referred to the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator, who shall take steps designed to ensure that applicable state and federal law are followed.

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

Any individual who believes that they, or another individual, has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of Board policy should report such concern in writing to Frank Purcaro, Assistant Superintendent, 3 Primrose Street Newtown, CT 06470, Telephone: 203-426-7617, purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us in accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in these Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Community.

Complaint Procedure:

Preferably, complaints should be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the alleged occurrence. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. The District will investigate such complaints promptly and equitably, and will take corrective action when allegations are verified.

As soon as an individual feels that they, or another individual, has been subjected to Protected Class discrimination or harassment, the individual should make a written complaint to the Superintendent or designee.

The individual who is alleged have experienced Protected Class discrimination/harassment (the "complainant") and any individual accused of Protected Class discrimination/harassment (the "respondent") (if applicable) will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of the individual's rights under this policy and regulation. In the event reported conduct allegedly violates more than one policy, the Board will coordinate an investigation in compliance with the applicable policies, laws and regulations.

The complaint should state the:

- A. Name of the complainant,
- B. Date of the complaint,

- C. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- D. Name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or discriminator(s),
- E. Location where such alleged harassment/discrimination occurred,
- F. Names of any witness(es) to the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- G. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and
- H. Proposed remedy.

Any individual who makes an oral complaint of discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g., an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee) will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If an individual is unable to make a written complaint, the employee receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing, assist the individual with completing the written complaint form, or request the assistance of a District administrator to do so.

All complaints received by employees are to be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent or designee. Upon receipt of a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a community member (e.g., an individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities who is not a student or an employee) under this complaint procedure, the Superintendent shall promptly investigate the complaint, or designate a District administrator or other trained individual to do so. During the course of the investigation, the investigator shall interview or consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant, the reporter (if different from the complainant), the respondent and any witnesses to the conduct. Complaints will be investigated promptly within the timeframes identified below. Timeframes may be extended as needed given the complexity of the investigation, availability of individuals with relevant information and/or other extenuating circumstances. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible, as determined by the investigator.

Upon receipt of a written complaint of discrimination or harassment of a community member, the investigator should:

1. Offer to meet with the complainant and respondent (if applicable) within ten (10) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) to

discuss the nature of the complaint, discuss the availability of interim measures, identify individuals the complainant or respondent believes has relevant information, and obtain any relevant documents the complainant or respondent may have;

2. Provide the complainant and respondent (if applicable) with a copy of the Board's non-discrimination policy and accompanying regulations;
3. Conduct an investigation that is adequate, reliable, and impartial. Investigate the factual basis of the complaint, including, as applicable, conducting interviews with the parties to the complaint and any relevant witnesses or other individuals deemed relevant to the complaint;
4. Review any records, notes, statements, or other documents relevant to the complaint;
5. Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigative process, in accordance with state and federal law;
6. Complete a final investigation report that includes: (i) a findings of fact based on the evidence gathered; (ii) for each allegation, the conclusion(s) and reasoning(s) as to whether the discrimination or harassment occurred; and (iii) for any individual(s) found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment, a broad statement of consequences imposed (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements) (e.g., "Consequences were imposed.").
7. Communicate the outcome of the investigation in writing to the complainant and respondent (if any) (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements), within thirty (30) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The complainant and respondent (if any) shall be notified of any extension of the investigation timeline. The written notice shall include a finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the extent possible, how the District will take steps designed to remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;
8. If a complaint is made during summer recess, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible given the availability of employees and/or other individuals who may have information relevant to the complaint. If fixed timeframes cannot be met, the complainant and respondent (if any) will receive notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary;

9. Whenever allegations are verified, ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken (including, but not limited to, disciplinary action) aimed at preventing the recurrence of the discrimination or harassment. Corrective action should include steps designed to avoid continuing discrimination or harassment;
10. After receiving the written notice of the outcome, parties shall have ten (10) school days to submit a formal written statement of appeal, if they so choose, to the Superintendent challenging the outcome of the investigation and explaining the basis for appeal. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Superintendent shall appoint a decisionmaker(s) for the appeal, who may be the Superintendent or designee. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will provide the appealing party's written statement to the non-appealing party. The non-appealing party will then have ten (10) school days to submit to the decision-maker(s) for the appeal a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome of the investigation. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal shall review the evidence and the information presented by the parties and determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. Such action may include consultation with the investigator(s) and the parties, a meeting with appropriate individuals to attempt to resolve the complaint, or a decision affirming or overruling the written outcome. Generally, a party's disagreement with the outcome of the investigation, alone, will not be basis for further action. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will attempt to issue written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within thirty (30) school days of receipt of all written statements from the parties.

Complaint Procedure for Superintendent/Board Member Complaints:

Any District administrator or Board member who receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of a community member by a Board Member and/or the Superintendent shall forward the complaint promptly to the Assistant Superintendent. Complaints pertaining to the Superintendent or Board of Education members will be forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Education. Complaints pertaining to the Board Chair will be forwarded to the Board Vice Chair. In all cases, the individual receiving the complaint shall take appropriate steps to cause the matter to be investigated in a manner consistent with the procedures described above.

If a complainant or a respondent is not satisfied with the findings and conclusions of an investigation in which the Superintendent or a member of the Board is the respondent, within ten (10) school days of receiving the findings such party may present the complaint and written outcome to the Board Chair (or, if initially presented by the Board Chair, the Board Vice Chair), who will take appropriate steps to cause the matter to be reviewed in a manner consistent with the Board's non-discrimination policy and regulation. Such steps may include retention of an investigator different from the investigator who investigated the complaint.

Remedial Action:

If the District makes a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of a community member, the District will take remedial action designed to:

- A. eliminate the discriminatory/harassing/retaliatory conduct,
- B. prevent its recurrence, and
- C. address its effects on the complainant and any other affected individuals.

Examples of appropriate action may include, but are not limited to:

- A. In the case of a student respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, discipline (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion), educational interventions, exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or sports programs, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- B. In the case of an employee respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, supervisor notification, discipline (including possible termination of employment), training, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- C. In the case of respondent who is otherwise associated with the school community, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from school property and/or activities and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- D. Follow-up inquiries with the complainant and witnesses to ensure that the discriminatory/harassing conduct has stopped and that they have not experienced any retaliation;
- E. Supports for the complainant; and
- F. Training or other interventions for the larger school community designed to ensure that students, staff, parents, Board members and other individuals within the school community understand the types of behavior that constitute discrimination/harassment, that the District does not tolerate it, and how to report it.

Staff Development:

The District will periodically provide staff development for District administrators and periodically distribute the Board's Non-Discrimination policies and the implementing administrative regulations to staff, students and parents in an effort to maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

In addition to reporting to District officials in accordance with this policy, individuals also may file a complaint with the following agencies:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):

Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800-669-4000)

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
OR
2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations based on religion; OR
3. who would like a copy of the Board’s complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination or harassment:

may contact any building administrator or the following District official:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex may contact the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member (e.g., other individual affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, and/or who may wish to request or discuss accommodations for a disability, may contact the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

9/18/2025

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM
(For complaints based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking)

Name of the reporter _____

Relationship of reporter to the District _____

Name of the complainant/victim _____

Relationship of complainant/victim to the District _____

Date of the complaint _____

Date of the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Name or names of the alleged discriminator(s) or harasser(s) _____

Location where such alleged discrimination/harassment occurred _____

Name(s) of any witness(es) to the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged discrimination or harassment _____

Proposed remedy: _____

9/18/2025

BOARD BUDGET PROCEDURES AND LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

In accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222, the Board of Education (the “Board”) shall prepare an itemized estimate of its budget each year for submission to the Board of Finance and Legislative Council for review. The Legislative Council is the “Fiscal Authority” as defined in the Town Charter. For purposes of this policy, an itemized estimate means an estimate in which the following broad budgetary categories listed below are divided into one or more budgetary category line items.

- 100 - Salaries
- 200 - Employee Benefits
- 300 - Purchased Professional Services
- 400 - Purchased Property Services
- 500 - Other Purchased Services
- 600 - Supplies
- 700 - Property
- 800 - Other
- 900 - Special Education Contingency

The itemized estimate provided to the Fiscal Authority is referred to herein as the “Itemized Estimate.”

The Board shall review the recommendations and suggestions made by the Fiscal Authority as to how it may consolidate non-educational services and realize financial efficiencies. If the Board rejects such suggestions and recommendations, it shall provide the Fiscal Authority a written explanation of the reason for the rejection.

Following the annual appropriation, the Board shall meet and revise the Itemized Estimate, if necessary, and adopt a final appropriated budget for the year. Line items in the budget may be allocated more specifically by the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee in the development, administration and monitoring of the budget.

The Superintendent and/or the Superintendent’s designee shall be responsible for administering and monitoring the budget through the course of the year. The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a system of appropriate expenditures and encumbrance accounting that is organized to conform with the requirements for State and Federal Accounting Reports. A quarterly financial report shall be prepared in a narrative format summarizing each budgetary category line item, the appropriated budget amount, expenditure to date encumbrances, projected expenditures, difference between the projected expenditures and the appropriation, and general comments indicating the reasons for the difference.

Such financial reports shall be presented to the Board at the second regularly scheduled meeting in the month following the quarterly period for which such report is prepared, in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Submitted</u>
July, August, September	October
October, November, December	January
January, February	March
March, April	May
Year-End Financial Report	August*

*The year-end report shall be completed and presented by the end of August.

Based on expenditures and budget projections, with such Itemized Estimates, the Superintendent or the Director of Business shall recommend to the Board transfers from one of the broad budgetary categories in the Itemized Estimate (as set forth above) to another as needed.

For effective and efficient administration of day-to-day operations, budget transfer authority is granted to the Superintendent or the Director of Business, as his/her designee, under the following restrictions:

Board authorization is required for any transfer between major object codes exceeding \$10,000.

Transfers between major object codes less than \$10,000 may be made without prior Board of Education approval, but will be referenced and approved as part of the monthly Itemized Estimate.

Transfers within major object codes may be made without prior Board of Education approval, but will be referenced and approved as part of the monthly Itemized Estimate.

Notice of major object codes falling into a negative balance will also be included in the monthly Itemized Estimate.

If an emergency transfer of \$50,000 or less is needed and the Board is unable to meet in advance, the Superintendent may approve the transfer and report to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

The Board shall not expend more than the amount of the appropriation and the amount of money received from other sources, including any unexpended funds that have been set aside in a nonlapsing account as authorized by law and described below, for educational purposes. If any occasion arises whereby additional funds are needed by the Board, the Chairperson of the Board shall notify the Fiscal Authority and submit a request for such necessary additional funds. No additional funds shall be expended until such supplemental appropriation is granted and no supplemental expenditures shall be made in excess of those so authorized.

Unexpended Funds

Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, municipal charter, home rule ordinance, or other ordinance, the Board may deposit into a nonlapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation, in an amount not to exceed two per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for such prior fiscal year. Each expenditure from the account must be authorized by the Board and shall be made only for educational purposes, in accordance with state law.

Each fiscal year, the Board shall compile and submit to the Connecticut State Department of Education a report regarding the nonlapsing account, including, but not limited to, the total balance of the account, the amount deposited into such account in a fiscal year, and an accounting of the expenditures made from such account.

Legal Reference:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221
 § 10-222
 § 10-248a

Public Act 25-175, “An Act Revising the Effective Dates of Provisions Regarding Certain Municipal Referenda and Equity Joint Ventures and Concerning Contracts with the Department of Developmental Services, the Commissioner of Education’s Network of Schools, the Reporting of Certain School District Financial Information, the Failure to File for Certain Grand List Exemptions and the Deferrals of Certain Towns’ Real Property Revaluations.”

Adopted: December 17, 2024
Revised: June 3, 2025

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL
Newtown, Connecticut

Passed during the 2025 legislative session, Public Act 25-139 adds sexual assault victim and human trafficking victim as protected classes under Connecticut’s anti-discrimination laws. This policy has been revised to reflect these additions. We also updated the location and contact information for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, as the Boston office has closed. Finally, we have made technical revisions throughout.

**Series 4000
Personnel**

**4118.11
4218.11**

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

The Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) will not make employment decisions (including decisions related to hiring, assignment, compensation, promotion, demotion, disciplinary action and termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, gender identity or expression, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”), except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification.

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual’s actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class, whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the “District”). The Board’s prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics.

Discrimination on the Basis of Erased Criminal History Prohibited:

The Board will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment solely on the basis of the individual’s erased criminal history record information, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-80a.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment and is therefore prohibited by this policy.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

Definitions:

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy:

A. Discrimination

It is illegal for employers to treat employees differently in relation to hiring, discharging, compensating, or providing the terms, conditions, and privileges of employment because of such employee's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class.

B. Harassment

Harassment is a form of Protected Class discrimination that is prohibited by law and by this policy. Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on an employee's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class. Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when 1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the types of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment, and are therefore prohibited by this policy:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases commonly considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;

- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that is prohibited by law and Board policy. For more information regarding harassment based on sex, contact the District's Title IX Coordinator at:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

C. Genetic information

The information about genes, gene products, or inherited characteristics that may derive from an individual or a family member. "Genetic information" may also include an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

D. Veteran

A veteran is any person honorably discharged from, released under honorable conditions from or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition from active service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Space Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard. "Qualifying condition" means (i) a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury made by an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (ii) an experience of military sexual trauma disclosed to an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, or (iii) a determination that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for an other than honorable discharge, as determined in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 27-103(c),(d).

E. Gender identity or expression

Gender identity or expression refers to a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

F. Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation refers to a person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are romantically, emotionally or sexually attracted, inclusive of any identity that a person (i) may have previously expressed, or (ii) is perceived by another person to hold.

G. Race

The term race is inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. "Protective hairstyles" includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

H. Domestic violence

The term domestic violence means (1) a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury against a family or household member, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38a; (2) stalking, including but not limited to, stalking as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-181d, of such family or household member; (3) a pattern of threatening, including but not limited to, a pattern of threatening as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-62, of such family or household member or a third party that intimidates such family or household member; or (4) coercive control of such family or household member, which is a pattern of behavior that in purpose or effect unreasonably interferes with a person's free will and personal liberty. "Coercive control" includes, but is not limited to, unreasonably engaging in any of the following: (a) isolating the family or household member from friends, relatives or other sources of support; (b) depriving the family or household member of basic necessities; (c) controlling, regulating or monitoring the family or household member's movements, communications, daily behavior, finances, economic resources or access to services; (d) compelling the family or household member by force, threat or intimidation, including, but not limited to, threats based on actual or suspected immigration status, to (i) engage in conduct from which such family or household member has a right to abstain, or (ii) abstain from conduct that such family or household member has a right to pursue; (e)

committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates the family or household member; or (f) forced sex acts, or threats of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to, threatened acts of sexual conduct, threats based on a person's sexuality or threats to release sexual images.

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment or retaliation.

Any employee who believes they or another employee has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of this policy should report such concern in writing to **Assistant Superintendent** in accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in the Board's Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Personnel, which accompany this policy and are available online at www.newtownpolicies.org or upon request from the main office of any District school.

Employees are encouraged to report incidents of alleged Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation immediately.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on disability, such complaints will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

In the event conduct reported as Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment allegedly violates more than one policy, the Board will coordinate any investigation in compliance with the applicable policies.

Mandatory Staff Reporting for Student Incidents:

Board employees are required to report incidents of alleged student-to-student and employee-to-student discrimination, harassment or retaliation that may be based on a Protected Class when Board employees witness such incidents or when Board employees receive reports or information about such incidents, whether such incidents are verbal or physical or amount to discrimination, harassment or retaliation in other forms. **Reports should be made to any District administrator or to:**

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Remedial Action:

If the District makes a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the District will take remedial action designed to:

- A. eliminate the discriminatory/harassing/retaliatory conduct,
- B. prevent its recurrence, and
- C. address its effects on the complainant and any other affected individuals.

Examples of appropriate action may include, but are not limited to:

- A. In the case of a student respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, discipline (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion), educational interventions, exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or sports programs, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- B. In the case of an employee respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, supervisor notification, discipline (including possible termination of employment), training, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- C. In the case of respondent who is otherwise associated with the school community, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from school property and/or activities and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- D. Follow-up inquiries with the complainant and witnesses to ensure that the discriminatory/harassing conduct has stopped and that they have not experienced any retaliation;
- E. Supports for the complainant; and
- F. Training or other interventions for the larger school community designed to ensure that students, staff, parents, Board members and other individuals within the school community understand the types of behavior that constitute discrimination/harassment, that the District does not tolerate it, and how to report it.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

In addition to reporting to the Board, any employee also may file a complaint with the following agencies:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):

Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800-669-4000)

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any employee who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations based on religion; OR
3. would like a copy the Board’s complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination or harassment

should contact the following District official:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any employee who has questions or concerns about the Board’s policies regarding discrimination on the basis of sex applicable to employees should contact the District’s Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any employee who:

1. has specific questions or concerns about the Board’s policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability applicable to employees; OR
2. wishes to request an accommodation on the basis of disability

should contact the District’s Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Deborah Mailloux-Petersen
Director Pupil Personnel
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: 203-426-7628
Email: peteresend@newtown.k12.ct.us

Legal References:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.
Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq.
Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794
Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008,
Pub.L.110-233, 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff; 29 CFR 1635.1 et seq.
Connecticut General Statutes § 1-1n, “Gender Identity or Expression”
defined
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-153, Discrimination on the basis of
sex, gender or expression or marital status prohibited
Connecticut General Statutes § 27-103

Connecticut General Statutes § 31-51i
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-51, Definitions
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-58, Deprivation of rights
Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act, Connecticut General
Statutes § 46a-60
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-80a
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81c, Sexual orientation
discrimination: Employment
Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-1, Family relations matters and
domestic violence defined

Public Act No. 25-139, “An Act Concerning Human Trafficking and
Sexual Assault Victims”

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

10/21/2025

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION
COMPLAINTS (PERSONNEL)**

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

The Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) will not make employment decisions (including decisions related to hiring, assignment, compensation, promotion, demotion, disciplinary action and termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, gender identity or expression, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”), except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification.

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual’s actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class, whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the “District”). Students, Board employees, Board members and third parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

Discrimination on the Basis of Erased Criminal History Prohibited:

The Board will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment solely on the basis of the individual’s erased criminal history record information, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-80a.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

The District will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of Protected Class discrimination or harassment. Any such reprisals or retaliation may result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, and other corrective actions as appropriate.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the types of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to a hostile environment, and are therefore prohibited:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases commonly considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; OR
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment or retaliation.

Employees are encouraged to report incidents of alleged Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation immediately.

Any employee who believes they or another employee has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of Board policy should report such concern in writing to **Assistant Superintendent** in

accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in these Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Personnel.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on disability, such complaints will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

In the event conduct reported as Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment allegedly violates more than one policy, the Board will coordinate any investigation in compliance with the applicable policies.

Mandatory Staff Reporting for Student Incidents:

Board employees are required to report incidents of alleged student-to-student and employee-to-student discrimination, harassment or retaliation that may be based on a Protected Class when Board employees witness such incidents or when Board employees receive reports or information about such incidents, whether such incidents are verbal or physical or amount to discrimination, harassment or retaliation in other forms. **Reports should be made to any District administrator or to:**

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Complaint Procedure:

Preferably, complaints should be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the alleged occurrence. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. The District will investigate such complaints promptly and equitably, and will take corrective action when allegations are verified.

As soon as an individual feels that they, or another employee, has been subjected to Protected Class discrimination or harassment, the individual should make a written complaint to the Superintendent or designee.

The individual who is alleged to have experienced Protected Class discrimination/harassment (the "complainant") and any individual accused of Protected Class discrimination/harassment (the "respondent") (if applicable) will be provided a

copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of the individual's rights under this policy and regulation. In the event the Superintendent or designee receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment based on sex, the Superintendent or designee shall follow the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. In the event the Superintendent or designee receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment based on disability, the Superintendent or designee shall follow the procedures set forth the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

The complaint should state the:

- A. Name of the complainant,
- B. Date of the complaint,
- C. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- D. Name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or discriminator(s),
- E. Location where such alleged harassment/discrimination occurred,
- F. Names of any witness(es) to the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- G. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and
- H. Proposed remedy.

Any individual who makes an oral complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment of an employee will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If an individual is unable to make a written complaint, the employee receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing, assist the individual with completing the written complaint form or request that a District administrator assist the individual.

All complaints received by employees are to be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent or designee. Upon receipt of a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of an employee under this complaint procedure, the Superintendent shall promptly investigate the complaint, or designate a District administrator or other trained individual to do so.

During the course of the investigation, the investigator shall interview or consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant, the reporter (if different from the complainant), the respondent, and any witnesses to the conduct. Complaints will be investigated promptly within the timeframes identified below. Timeframes may be extended as needed given the

complexity of the investigation, availability of individuals with relevant information and/or other extenuating circumstances. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible, to the extent consistent with due process, as determined by the investigator.

Upon receipt of a written complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment of an employee, the investigator should:

1. Offer to meet with the complainant and respondent (if applicable) within ten (10) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) to discuss the nature of the complaint, discuss the availability of interim measures, identify individuals the complainant or respondent believes has relevant information, and obtain any relevant documents the complainant or respondent may have;
2. Provide the complainant and respondent (if applicable) with a copy of the Board's non-discrimination policy and accompanying regulations;
3. Conduct an investigation that is adequate, reliable, and impartial. Investigate the factual basis of the complaint, including, as applicable, conducting interviews with the parties to the complaint and any relevant witnesses or other individuals deemed relevant to the complaint;
4. Review any records, notes, statements, or other documents relevant to the complaint;
5. Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigative process, in accordance with state and federal law;
6. Complete a final investigation report that includes: (i) a findings of fact based on the evidence gathered; (ii) for each allegation, the conclusion(s) and reasoning(s) as to whether the discrimination or harassment occurred; and (iii) for any individual(s) found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment, a broad statement of consequences imposed (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements) (e.g., "Consequences were imposed.").
7. Communicate the outcome of the investigation in writing to the complainant and respondent (if any) (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements), within thirty (30) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The complainant and respondent (if any) shall be notified of such extension. The written notice shall include a

finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the extent possible, how the District will take steps designed to remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;

8. If a complaint is made during summer recess, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible given the availability of employees and/or other individuals who may have information relevant to the complaint. If fixed timeframes cannot be met, the complainant and respondent (if any) will receive notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary;
9. Whenever allegations are verified, ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken (including, but not limited to, disciplinary action) aimed at preventing the recurrence of the discrimination or harassment. Corrective action should include steps designed to avoid continuing discrimination or harassment;
10. After receiving the written notice of the outcome, parties shall have ten (10) school days to submit a formal written statement of appeal, if they so choose, to the Superintendent challenging the outcome of the investigation and explaining the basis for appeal. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Superintendent shall appoint a decisionmaker(s) for the appeal, who may be the Superintendent or designee. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will provide the appealing party's written statement to the non-appealing party. The non-appealing party will then have ten (10) school days to submit to the decision-maker(s) for the appeal a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome of the investigation. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal shall review the evidence and the information presented by the parties and determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. Such action may include consultation with the investigator(s) and the parties, a meeting with appropriate individuals to attempt to resolve the complaint, or a decision affirming or overruling the written outcome. Generally, a party's disagreement with the outcome of the investigation, alone, will not be basis for further action. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will attempt to issue written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within thirty (30) school days of receipt of all written statements from the parties.

Complaint Procedure for Superintendent/Board Members Complaints:

Any District administrator or Board member who receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of any employee by a Board Member or by the Superintendent shall forward the complaint promptly to **Assistant Superintendent**. Complaints pertaining to the Superintendent or Board of Education members will be forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Education. Complaints pertaining to the Board Chair will be forwarded to the Board Vice Chair. In all cases, the individual receiving the complaint shall take appropriate steps to cause the matter to be investigated in a manner consistent with the procedures described above.

If a complainant or a respondent is not satisfied with the findings and conclusions of an investigation in which the Superintendent or a member of the Board is the respondent, within ten (10) school days of receiving the findings such party may present the complaint and written outcome to the Board Chair (or, if initially presented by the Board Chair, the Board Vice Chair), who will take appropriate steps to cause the matter to be reviewed in a manner consistent with the Board's non-discrimination policy and regulation. Such steps may include retention of an investigator different from the investigator who investigated the complaint.

Remedial Action:

If the District makes a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of an employee, the District will take remedial action designed to:

- A. eliminate the discriminatory/harassing/retaliatory conduct,
- B. prevent its recurrence, and
- C. address its effects on the complainant and any other affected individuals.

Examples of appropriate action may include, but are not limited to:

- A. In the case of a student respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, discipline (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion), educational interventions, exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or sports programs, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- B. In the case of an employee respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, supervisor notification, discipline (including possible termination of employment), training, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- C. In the case of respondent who is otherwise associated with the school community, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from school property and/or activities and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- D. Follow-up inquiries with the complainant and witnesses to ensure that the discriminatory/harassing conduct has stopped and that they have not experienced any retaliation;
- E. Supports for the complainant; and
- F. Training or other interventions for the larger school community designed to ensure that students, staff, parents, Board members and other individuals within the school community understand the types of behavior that constitute discrimination/harassment, that the District does not tolerate it, and how to report it.

Staff Development:

The District will periodically provide staff development for District administrators and periodically distribute the Board's Non-Discrimination policies and the implementing administrative regulations to staff and students in an effort to maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

In addition to reporting to the Board, any employee also may file a complaint with the following agencies:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education ("OCR"):

Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800-669-4000)

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any employee who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations based on religion; OR
3. would like a copy the Board's complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination or harassment

should contact the following District official:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any employee who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of sex applicable to employees should contact the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: (203) 426 7617
e-mail: purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any employee who:

1. has specific questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability applicable to employees; OR
2. wishes to request an accommodation on the basis of disability

should contact the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Deborah Mailloux-Petersen
Director Pupil Personnel
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: 203-426-7628
Email: peteresend@newtown.k12.ct.us

10/21/2025



DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM
(For complaints based on race, color, religion, age, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, genetic information, veteran status, or status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking)

Name of the reporter _____

Name of the complainant/victim _____

Reporter's relationship complainant/victim _____

Date of the complaint _____

Date of the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Name or names of the alleged discriminator(s) or harasser(s) _____

Location where such alleged discrimination/harassment occurred _____

Name(s) of any witness(es) to the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged discrimination or harassment _____

Proposed remedy _____

10/21/2025

Passed during the 2025 legislative session, Public Act 25-139 adds sexual assault victim and human trafficking victim as protected classes under Connecticut's anti-discrimination laws. This policy has been revised to reflect these additions. We also updated the location and contact information for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, as the Boston office has closed. Finally, we have made technical revisions throughout

**Series 5000
Students**

5110

NON-DISCRIMINATION (STUDENTS)

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

The Newtown Board of Education (the "Board") complies with all laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities, including all academic, extra-curricular, and school-sponsored activities, on the basis of any protected characteristic (or protected class) including race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law ("Protected Class"), subject to the conditions and limitations established by law. When the Board has created a limited public forum, the Board shall provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other groups as required by law.

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class, whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the "District"). The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment and is therefore prohibited by this policy.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities) are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

Definitions:

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy:

A. Discrimination:

With respect to students, unlawful discrimination occurs when a student is denied participation in, or the benefits of, a program or activity of the Board because of such student's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class.

B. Harassment:

Harassment is a form of Protected Class discrimination that is prohibited by law and by this policy. Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when it creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the District.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the types of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to a hostile environment, and are therefore prohibited by this policy:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases commonly considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful, or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that is prohibited by law and Board policy. For more information regarding harassment based on sex, contact the District's Title IX Coordinator at:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

C. Veteran:

A veteran is any person honorably discharged from, released under honorable conditions from or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition from active service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force and Space Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard. "Qualifying condition" means (i) a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury made by an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (ii) an experience of military sexual trauma disclosed to an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, or (iii) a determination that sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for an other than honorable discharge, as determined in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 27-103(c), (d).

D. Gender identity or expression:

Gender identity or expression refers to a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

E. Sexual orientation:

Sexual orientation refers to a person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are romantically, emotionally or sexually attracted, inclusive of

any identity that a person (i) may have previously expressed, or (ii) is perceived by another person to hold.

F. Race:

The term race is inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. “Protective hairstyles” includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

G. Domestic violence:

The term domestic violence means (1) a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury against a family or household member, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38a; (2) stalking, including but not limited to, stalking as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-181d, of such family or household member; (3) a pattern of threatening, including but not limited to, a pattern of threatening as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-62, of such family or household member or a third party that intimidates such family or household member; or (4) coercive control of such family or household member, which is a pattern of behavior that in purpose or effect unreasonably interferes with a person’s free will and personal liberty. “Coercive control” includes, but is not limited to, unreasonably engaging in any of the following: (a) isolating the family or household member from friends, relatives or other sources of support; (b) depriving the family or household member of basic necessities; (c) controlling, regulating or monitoring the family or household member’s movements, communications, daily behavior, finances, economic resources or access to services; (d) compelling the family or household member by force, threat or intimidation, including, but not limited to, threats based on actual or suspected immigration status, to (i) engage in conduct from which such family or household member has a right to abstain, or (ii) abstain from conduct that such family or household member has a right to pursue; (e) committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates the family or household member; or (f) forced sex acts, or threats of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to, threatened acts of sexual conduct, threats based on a person’s sexuality or threats to release sexual images.

[In response to requests from many of our clients, Shipman has developed the language below to in order to address incidents of biased conduct and/or communications by students. Please note that bias in this context is not currently defined by law, except when such bias raises to the level of unlawful discrimination and/or harassment. That said, it is commonly acknowledged that incidents of bias may be precursors to discriminatory and/or harassing conduct. Boards that wish to explicitly include reference to bias in this policy may utilize the language below in order to acknowledge the concerns presented regarding bias:

Biased Conduct:

The Board recognizes that certain student conduct or communications may be considered indicative of bias towards individuals who are members of a Protected Class, even when such conduct or communications do not rise to the level of discrimination and/or harassment. The Board directs the District administration to address any such biased conduct or communications in a manner consistent with the Board's legal obligations under state and federal law and Board policy, including free speech considerations, in order to promote a school environment that is welcoming and safe for all individuals.]

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

Any student, staff member and/or parent/guardian who believes a student has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of this policy should report such concern in writing to **Assistant Superintendent** in accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in the Board's Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Students, which accompany this policy and are available online at www.newtownpolicies.org or upon request from the main office of any District school. Students are encouraged to immediately report concerns about Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

Students may make verbal or written reports about Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to any Board employee.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment of a student based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Complaints involving allegations of discrimination or harassment of a student based on disability will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA. In the event reported conducted allegedly violates more than one policy, the Board will coordinate any investigation in compliance with the applicable policies.

Mandatory Staff Reporting for Student Incidents:

Board employees are required to report incidents of alleged student-to-student and employee-to-student discrimination, harassment or retaliation that may be based on a Protected Class when Board employees witness such incidents or when Board employees receive reports or information about such incidents, whether such incidents

are verbal or physical or amount to discrimination, harassment or retaliation in other forms. **Reports should be made to any District administrator or to:**

**Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us**

Remedial Action:

If the District makes a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of a student, the District will take remedial action designed to:

- A. eliminate the discriminatory/harassing/retaliatory conduct,
- B. prevent its recurrence, and
- C. address its effects on the complainant and any other affected individuals.

Examples of appropriate action may include, but are not limited to:

- A. In the case of a student respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, discipline (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion), educational interventions, exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or sports programs, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- B. In the case of an employee respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, supervisor notification, discipline (including possible termination of employment), training, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- C. In the case of respondent who is otherwise associated with the school community, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from school property and/or activities and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- D. Follow-up inquiries with the complainant and witnesses to ensure that the discriminatory/harassing conduct has stopped and that they have not experienced any retaliation;
- E. Supports for the complainant; and
- F. Training or other interventions for the larger school community designed to ensure that students, staff, parents, Board members and other individuals within the school community understand the types of behavior that constitute discrimination/harassment, that the District does not tolerate it, and how to report it.

District staff members and administrators will work with students and parents/guardians to take steps designed to prevent acts of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

In addition to reporting to the Board, any student and/or parent/guardian also may file a complaint with the following agencies:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):

Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
 2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations for a student based on religion;
- may contact:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who has questions or concerns about the Board’s policies regarding discrimination or

harassment of students on the basis of sex may contact the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who:

1. has specific questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability applicable to students; OR
2. wishes to request an accommodation for a student on the basis of disability

may contact the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Deborah Mailloux-Petersen
Director of Pupil Services
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-246-7628
petersend@newtown.k12.ct.us

Legal References:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, et seq.
Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. § 7905
Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, et seq.
Connecticut General Statutes § 1-1n, "Gender Identity or Expression"
defined
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-15c
Connecticut General Statutes § 27-103
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-51, Definitions
Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-58, Deprivation of rights
Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-1, Family relations matters and
domestic violence defined
Public Act No. 25-139, "An Act Concerning Human Trafficking and
Sexual Assault Victims"

ADOPTED: _____
REVISED: _____

10/21/2025

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS (STUDENTS)

Protected Class Discrimination Prohibited:

The Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) complies with all laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities, on the basis of any protected characteristic (or protected class) including race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”), subject to the conditions and limitations established by law. When the Board has created a limited public forum, the Board shall provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other groups as required by law.

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual’s actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class, whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board, is prohibited in the Newtown Public Schools (the “District”). The Board’s prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

The District will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of Protected Class discrimination or harassment. Any such reprisals or retaliation may result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, and other corrective actions as appropriate.

Discrimination on the Basis of Protected Class Association Prohibited:

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual’s association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment.

Scope and Applicability:

Students, Board employees, Board members and community members (e.g., other individuals affiliated with the District, accessing or seeking access to District facilities)

are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of the type of prohibited conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment that can lead to a hostile environment, and are therefore prohibited:

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression);
- other words or phrases commonly considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful, or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to involve intent to harm, be directed toward a specific person, or involve repeated incidents.

Reporting to District Officials:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. The District will investigate both formal and informal complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

Any student, staff member and/or parent/guardian who believes a student has experienced Protected Class discrimination or harassment or an act of retaliation or reprisal in violation of Board policy should report such concern in writing to

Frank Purcaro

Assistant Superintendent

Newtown Public Schools

3 Primrose Street

Newtown, CT 06470

Telephone: 203-426-7617

purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

in accordance with the Board's complaint procedures included in these Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Students.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment of a student based on sex, such complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Complaints involving allegations of discrimination or harassment of student based on disability will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA. In the event reported conducted allegedly violates more than one policy, the Board will coordinate any investigation in compliance with the applicable policies.

Students are encouraged to immediately report any concerns about Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

Mandatory Staff Reporting for Student Incidents:

Board employees are required to report incidents of alleged student-to-student and employee-to-student discrimination, harassment or retaliation that may be based on a Protected Class when Board employees witness such incidents or when Board employees receive reports or information about such incidents, whether such incidents are verbal or physical or amount to discrimination, harassment or retaliation in other forms. **Reports should be made to any District administrator or to:**

**Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us**

Complaint Procedure

Preferably, complaints should be filed within thirty (30) days of the alleged occurrence. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. The District will investigate such complaints promptly and equitably, and will take corrective action when allegations are verified.

As soon as a student feels that they, or another student has been subjected to Protected Class discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the individual should make a written complaint to Frank Purcaro, Assistant Superintendent, or to the building principal, or designee.

Students may make verbal or written reports about Protected Class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to any Board employee. Board employees receiving such reports shall promptly forward them to any District administrator or to Frank Purcaro, Assistant Superintendent.

The student and/or parent/guardian or other individual will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of the student's rights under this policy and regulation. In the event the **Assistant Superintendent, Frank Purcaro** receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a student based on sex, the **Assistant Superintendent, Frank Purcaro** shall follow the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. In the event the **Assistant Superintendent, Frank Purcaro** receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a student based on disability, the Director of Pupil Personnel, **Deborah Mailloux-Petersen** shall follow the procedures set forth in the applicable Board policy regarding Section 504/ADA.

The complaint should state the:

- A. Name of the complainant/victim,
- B. Date of the complaint,
- C. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- D. Name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or discriminator(s),
- E. Location where such alleged harassment/discrimination occurred,
- F. Names of any witness(es) to the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- G. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and
- H. Proposed remedy.

Any student and/or parent/guardian or other individual who makes an oral complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment of a student to any of the above-mentioned personnel will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If a student (or individual acting on behalf of the student) is unable to make a written complaint, the Board employee receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing or assist the student (individual acting on behalf of the student) in completing the written complaint form or ask a District administrator for assistance in doing so.

All complaints are to be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent or designee. Upon receipt of a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment of a student under this complaint procedure, the Superintendent shall designate a District administrator (or other trained individual) to promptly investigate the complaint. During the course of the investigation, the investigator shall interview or consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the individual alleged to

have experienced Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment (the “complainant”), the reporter (if different from the complainant) the alleged discriminator/harasser (“respondent”) and any witnesses to the conduct. Complaints will be investigated promptly within the timeframes identified below. Timeframes may be extended as needed given the complexity of the investigation, availability of individuals with relevant information and/or other extenuating circumstances. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible to the extent consistent with principles of due process, as determined by the investigator.

Upon receipt of a written complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment of a student, the investigator should:

1. Offer to meet with the complainant (and respondent, if applicable) within ten (10) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) to discuss the nature of the complaint, discuss the availability of interim measures, identify individuals the complainant or respondent believes has relevant information, and obtain any relevant documents the complainant or respondent may have;
2. Provide the complainant (and respondent, if applicable) with a copy of the Board’s non-discrimination policy and accompanying regulations;
3. Conduct an investigation that is adequate, reliable, and impartial. Investigate the factual basis of the complaint, including, as applicable, conducting interviews with the parties to the complaint and any relevant witnesses or other individuals deemed relevant to the complaint;
4. Review any records, notes, statements, or other documents relevant to the complaint;
5. Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigative process, in accordance with state and federal law;
6. Complete a final investigation report that includes: (i) a findings of fact based on the evidence gathered; (ii) for each allegation, the conclusion(s) and reasoning(s) as to whether the discrimination or harassment occurred; and (iii) for any individual(s) found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment, a broad statement of consequences imposed (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements) (e.g., “Consequences were imposed.”).
7. Communicate the outcome of the investigation in writing to the complainant (and respondent, if applicable) (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements), within thirty (30) business days (provided that

such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants, the complexity of the investigation, and/or other extenuating circumstances) from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The complainant (and respondent, if applicable) shall be notified of any extension of the investigation timeline. The written notice shall include a finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the extent possible, how the District will take steps designed to remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;

8. If a complaint is made during summer recess, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible given the availability of employees and/or other individuals who may have information relevant to the complaint. If fixed timeframes cannot be met, the complainant (and respondent, if applicable) will receive notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary;
9. Whenever allegations are verified, ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken (including, but not limited to, disciplinary action) aimed at preventing the recurrence of the discrimination or harassment. Corrective action should include steps designed to avoid continuing discrimination or harassment;
10. After receiving the written notice of the outcome, parties shall have ten (10) school days to submit a formal written statement of appeal, if they so choose, to the Superintendent challenging the outcome of the investigation and explaining the basis for appeal. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Superintendent shall appoint a decisionmaker(s) for the appeal, who may be the Superintendent or designee. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will provide the appealing party's written statement to the non-appealing party. The non-appealing party will then have ten (10) school days to submit to the decision-maker(s) for the appeal a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome of the investigation. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal shall review the evidence and the information presented by the parties and determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. Such action may include consultation with the investigator(s) and the parties, a meeting with appropriate individuals to attempt to resolve the complaint, or a decision affirming or overruling the written outcome. Generally, a party's disagreement with the outcome of the investigation, alone, will not be basis for further action. The decisionmaker(s) for the appeal will attempt to issue written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within thirty (30) school days of receipt of all written statements from the parties.

Remedial Action:

If the District makes a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation of a student, the District will take remedial action designed to:

- A. eliminate the discriminatory/harassing/retaliatory conduct,
- B. prevent its recurrence, and
- C. address its effects on the complainant and any other affected individuals.

Examples of appropriate action may include, but are not limited to:

- A. In the case of a student respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, discipline (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion), educational interventions, exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or sports programs, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- B. In the case of an employee respondent, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, supervisor notification, discipline (including possible termination of employment), training, and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- C. In the case of respondent who is otherwise associated with the school community, interventions for the individual who engaged in the discrimination/harassment may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from school property and/or activities and/or referral to appropriate state or local agencies;
- D. Follow-up inquiries with the complainant and witnesses to ensure that the discriminatory/harassing conduct has stopped and that they have not experienced any retaliation;
- E. Supports for the complainant; and
- F. Training or other interventions for the larger school community designed to ensure that students, staff, parents, Board members and other individuals within the school community understand the types of behavior that constitute discrimination/harassment, that the District does not tolerate it, and how to report it.

District staff members and administrators will work with students and parents/guardians to take steps designed to prevent acts of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

Staff Development:

The District will periodically provide staff development for District administrators and periodically distribute the Board's Non-Discrimination policies and the implementing administrative regulations to staff, students and parents in an effort to maintain an environment free of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

Reporting to State and Federal Agencies:

Any student and/or parent/guardian also may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education ("OCR"):
Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC Office

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
(202 453-6020)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Any student and/or parent/guardian may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number 1-800-477-5737)

Questions/Requests for Accommodation:

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who:

1. has questions or concerns about this policy or its accompanying regulations;
2. wishes to request or discuss accommodations for a student based on religion;

may contact:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination or harassment of students on the basis of sex may contact the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Frank Purcaro
Assistant Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7617
purcarof@newtown.k12.ct.us

Any parent, student, staff member, Board member or community member who:

1. has specific questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability applicable to students; OR
2. wishes to request an accommodation for a student on the basis of disability

may contact the District's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Deborah Mailloux-Petersen
Director of Pupil Services
Newtown Public Schools
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Telephone: 203-426-7627
petersend@newtown.k12.ct.us

10/21/2025



DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM
(For complaints based on race, color, religion, age, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, veteran status, or status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking)

Name of the reporter _____

Name of the complainant/victim _____

School/program and grade of the complainant/victim _____

Reporter's relationship to the complainant/victim _____

Date of the complaint _____

Date of the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Name or names of the alleged discriminator(s) or harasser(s) _____

Location where such alleged discrimination/harassment occurred _____

Name(s) of any witness(es) to the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged discrimination or harassment _____

Proposed remedy _____

10/21/2025

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Procedures for Emergencies; Safety - Transportation

Procedures to be Followed in the Event of an Accident to a Bus

1. In the event of an accident (any kind of impact) the driver or bus management shall contact, by radio or other means as soon as possible, the Office of the Superintendent and inform them of the location and information on injuries, if any. If the driver is unable to contact the bus management, he/she shall contact the police. The driver shall remain at the accident scene until a representative arrives from the office.
2. If necessary, dispatch or bus management will immediately contact emergency medical services. Anyone in need of immediate medical attention and/or hospitalization, they will be taken to the nearest hospital.
3. The driver, officers at the scene, and/or administrators on the scene, will take student names, seating arrangements, and provide police with dates of birth and addresses.
4. Bus drivers are not to release students until directed by an administrator or police.
5. Parents of students in need of medical attention will be notified as soon as possible by a school district administrator. An administrator, at an appropriate time, may send written correspondence to parents briefly describing the situation. Initially, only information pertaining to location, date, time, and seriousness of reported injuries should be transmitted.
6. Bus management will arrange, if necessary, alternate transportation from the scene of the accident to home or school as appropriate.

Administrative Regulation to Be Followed in the Event of a School Bus Accident

If a school bus or school transportation vehicle is involved in a traffic accident or incident (any impact) while transporting students, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Immediate Notification and Emergency Response

- The bus driver shall immediately assess the situation and **call 911** to request police and emergency medical services when injuries are apparent, suspected, or when safety conditions warrant.
- The driver shall then contact the bus company by radio or other available means as soon as possible and provide:
 - Exact location of the accident
 - Nature of the incident
 - Information regarding injuries, if any
- The driver shall remain at the scene of the accident until relieved by law enforcement, emergency personnel, a school district administrator, or a representative of the bus company, unless the driver requires immediate medical attention.

2. Bus Company Responsibilities

- Bus company management shall immediately notify the **Office of the Superintendent or designee** and provide available information regarding the location and severity of the accident.
- A bus company representative shall respond to the scene as appropriate.
- The bus company shall arrange **alternate transportation**, if necessary, for students to home or school once they have been released.

3. District Notification and On-Scene Support

- Central Office shall notify the appropriate school administrator.
- The school Principal or designee may dispatch staff to the scene to assist with student identification, supervision, and communication as appropriate.

4. Student Supervision and Accountability

- Unless safety or security conditions require evacuation, students shall remain seated on the bus and await the arrival of police and emergency personnel.
- The driver and/or responding personnel shall document student names and seating locations when feasible.
- Student identifying information required for official reports, including dates of birth and addresses, shall be provided to law enforcement by the bus company or district administration as appropriate.

5. Release of Students

- **Bus drivers shall not release students** from the scene of an accident unless directed by:
 - A school district administrator or designee, or

- Law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.
- Students requiring medical evaluation shall be transported to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

6. **Medical Assessment**

- If a bus is en route **to school** at the time of the accident and students are released from the scene without medical transport, students shall be assessed by the school nurse upon arrival before returning to class.
- If the bus is en route **from school**, emergency medical personnel shall determine whether further medical evaluation is required.

7. **Parent/Guardian Communication**

- Parents/guardians of students requiring medical attention shall be notified as soon as possible by a school district administrator or designee.
- When appropriate, the district may issue written communication to parents that includes only verified information related to:

Location

- Date and time
- General nature and seriousness of reported injuries

8. **Documentation**

- The bus company and district administration shall complete and retain all required accident and incident reports.
- Documentation shall be reviewed as part of ongoing transportation safety oversight.



Newtown Public Schools

Charge of the Facilities Planning Committee

An advisory planning process to develop a long-term vision for district facilities aligned with the Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate.

Purpose

The Newtown Public Schools' Facilities Planning Committee will be established as an ad hoc committee of the Newtown Board of Education, in accordance with Policy 9130, to evaluate the long-term facility needs of Newtown Public Schools and to develop a clear, aspirational vision for district facilities and learning environments aligned with the district's Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate.

The Committee's work will extend beyond review of prior studies to include vision development, community engagement, and the identification of priorities and next steps necessary to guide future Board decision-making in a thoughtful, transparent, and fiscally responsible manner.

If the Committee determines that external professional expertise is necessary to support its work, it may recommend that the Board of Education authorize the development of a scope of services and procurement process in accordance with district policy.

Scope of Work

1. Establish a Vision for Future-Ready Learning Environments

- Develop a forward-looking vision for district facilities and learning spaces that support instructional excellence, student wellness, safety, collaboration, innovation, and community use.
- Ensure alignment between facilities planning and the district's Strategic Plan, Portrait of a Graduate competencies, and evolving educational practices.
- Consider how grade configurations, program delivery models, and space utilization may support or constrain the district's long-term goals.

2. Review and Synthesize Existing Information

- Review and synthesize prior district studies and data, including but not limited to:
 - Facilities Conditions Assessment
 - Space Utilization Study
 - Enrollment projections
 - Capital improvement planning documents
- Identify strengths, constraints, and gaps in the existing information base.

- Determine whether additional data or analysis may be required to support informed decision-making.

3. Engage Stakeholders and the Community

- Communicate the Committee’s purpose, process, and emerging thinking to key stakeholders and the broader community.
- Provide structured opportunities for engagement and feedback, which may include school site visits, public, staff and student input sessions, surveys and collaboration with community groups.
- Consider and reflect community input in the development of priorities and recommendations.

4. Identify Strategic Priorities for Further Exploration

- Develop and apply clear criteria to evaluate potential facilities initiatives.
- Based on facility conditions, educational alignment, financial considerations, and community input, identify priority areas that may warrant deeper exploration in a subsequent phase of work.
- Recommend which facilities projects, renovations, replacements, system upgrades, reconfigurations, or broader planning efforts should advance for additional study or cost analysis.

5. Recommend Next Steps and Implementation Pathways

- Outline potential pathways for advancing the district’s facilities vision, which may include phased capital improvements, targeted building projects, or a broader planning effort.
- Identify the logical order of next steps, the points at which Board action would be required, and the formal approval processes necessary to advance the work.

Timeline

The Committee’s work shall occur from March through August 2026 and will focus on vision development, stakeholder engagement, and priority identification.

The Committee will submit its recommendations to the Board of Education no later than September 30, 2026.

Upon receipt of the committee's recommendations, the Board of Education will determine whether to authorize any subsequent phase of facilities planning. Any future feasibility study, capital project, or construction initiative would require separate Board action and, where applicable, additional town approvals.

Deliverables

The Committee will provide the Board of Education with:

1. A long-term vision for district facilities and learning environments aligned with the Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate.
2. A summary of community engagement activities and key themes that informed the Committee’s work.
3. A set of prioritized recommendations identifying areas for further exploration, including rationale and guiding criteria.
4. A recommended framework for the next phase of work, which may include:
 - Proposed scope of study
 - Indicative timeline

- Recommended professional support, if applicable
- Key decision points

Membership and Appointments

The Committee shall consist of members appointed by the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall recommend a proposed slate of members for Board approval.

Membership shall reflect a cross-section of district and community stakeholders and may include:

- Representation from the Board of Education
- The Superintendent and/or district's school administrators
- Teachers and/or other certified staff
- Parents or guardians
- Community members with relevant expertise or interest
- Representatives from municipal leadership and town boards

The Board of Education may adjust membership as necessary to ensure broad representation and informed discussion.

Operating Procedures

The Committee shall conduct its meetings in accordance with applicable Board of Education policies and Connecticut open meeting requirements. Meeting schedules and procedural guidelines shall be determined by the Committee at its initial meeting.

Grade 7 Science Curriculum Summarized

Presented by Susan Musco

Earth is made up of interacting systems that are shaped by the flow of energy from both external and internal sources. Energy from the Sun drives *weather* and *erosion*, while Earth's internal heat powers *plate tectonics*, *volcanoes*, and *mountain building*, creating *landforms* and *natural resources*. These processes create the conditions necessary for life, and human body systems are adapted to survive in this environment by using oxygen from the atmosphere, water from the hydrosphere, and nutrients from the geosphere. Systems such as the *respiratory*, *circulatory*, *digestive*, and *nervous systems* work together to acquire raw materials (*protein synthesis*), process energy, respond to environmental changes, and *maintain homeostasis*, allowing humans to live and thrive on Earth.

UNIT 1

Developing Scientific Inquiry and Engineering Skills



Purpose

- To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Lens

- Communication

Concepts

- data collection
- analysis
- evidence
- reasoning
- variables
- observations
- inferences
- predictions
- scientific questions.

Activities

- Identifying Variables and Writing Hypotheses
- Qualitative / Quantitative Me Assignment
- Gro-Dino Scientific Method Lab
- Creating Data Tables and Graphs
- Writing Claim, Evidence and Reasoning Paragraphs

Unit 1 Generalizations

- Scientific inquiry drives the development of knowledge through observation and investigation
- Scientific inquiry relies on qualitative and quantitative observations by using them to make inferences and/or predictions which facilitates problem solving.
- Formulating measurable and observable relationships among factors supports the systematic investigation needed to generate explanations and address scientific inquiries.
- The scientific method allows for collection and organization of data into appropriately constructed tables and graphs in order to evaluate, interpret and communicate results.
- The examination and interpretation of information enable the recognition of patterns and the formation of meaningful insights, which support effective problem-solving

UNIT 2

Earth's Energy/ Systems



Purpose

- Understand how Earth's energy systems and geological processes shape our planet.

Lens

- Energy transfer and energy transformations.

Concepts

- Scale, Proportion & Quantity
- Patterns
- Stability & Change
- Geoscience processes
- energy transfer
- energy transformation
- thermal energy
- internal/external forces

Activities

- Far Flung Fossils
- Relative Dating
- Geological timescale
- Informational reading strategies
- Interactive Rock Cycle
- Weathering and Erosion Study Guide
- Plate Tectonics Study Guide

Unit 2 Generalizations

- A structured temporal framework categorizes Earth's past into distinct intervals derived from identifiable patterns and changes over time.
- The flow of energy influences system balance and drives transformations within Earth's surface processes over time.
- Changes in energy within Earth systems reveal patterns that reflect the movement of tectonic plates over time.
- External and internal energy sources power the continuous movement and transformation of materials within Earth's systems.

Unit 3

Geoscience - Earth/Life Science Connections



Purpose

- Develop an understanding that humans rely on natural resources for survival.

Lens

- Stability and change

Concepts

- Natural Resources
- Sustainability
- Distribution
- Availability
- geoscience processes
- consumption

Activities

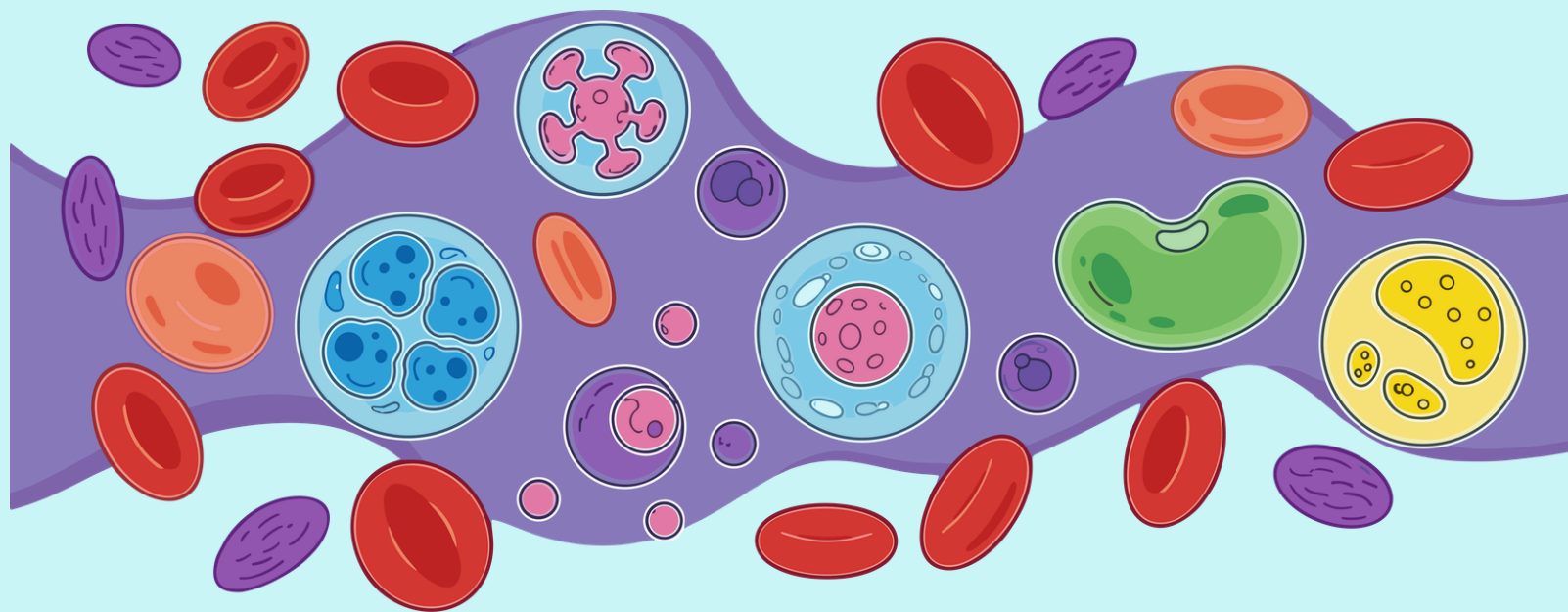
- Research using multiple sources, primarily Discovery Education (see resources for link), to compile information to execute the summative project at the end of the unit.
 - Written responses and map creation that shows locations of natural resources.
 - Description of geoscience processes that create the resources.
 - Draw conclusions about the relationship between population and resource availability.

Unit 3 Generalizations

- Earth's natural resources ensure the existence of life.
- Geoscience processes over time create natural resources.
- Resource availability and distribution impact human societies and ecosystems.
- Management of Earth's resources is crucial for sustainability.
- The increased consumption of natural resources significantly impacts the stability of Earth's systems.

Unit 4

Cells and Cell Processes



Purpose

- Explore how cells are the basic unit of life, with special structures responsible for specific functions, that utilize energy for survival.
- Explore the transfer of energy through the matter on earth and how it supports life.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Cells
- Organisms

Activities

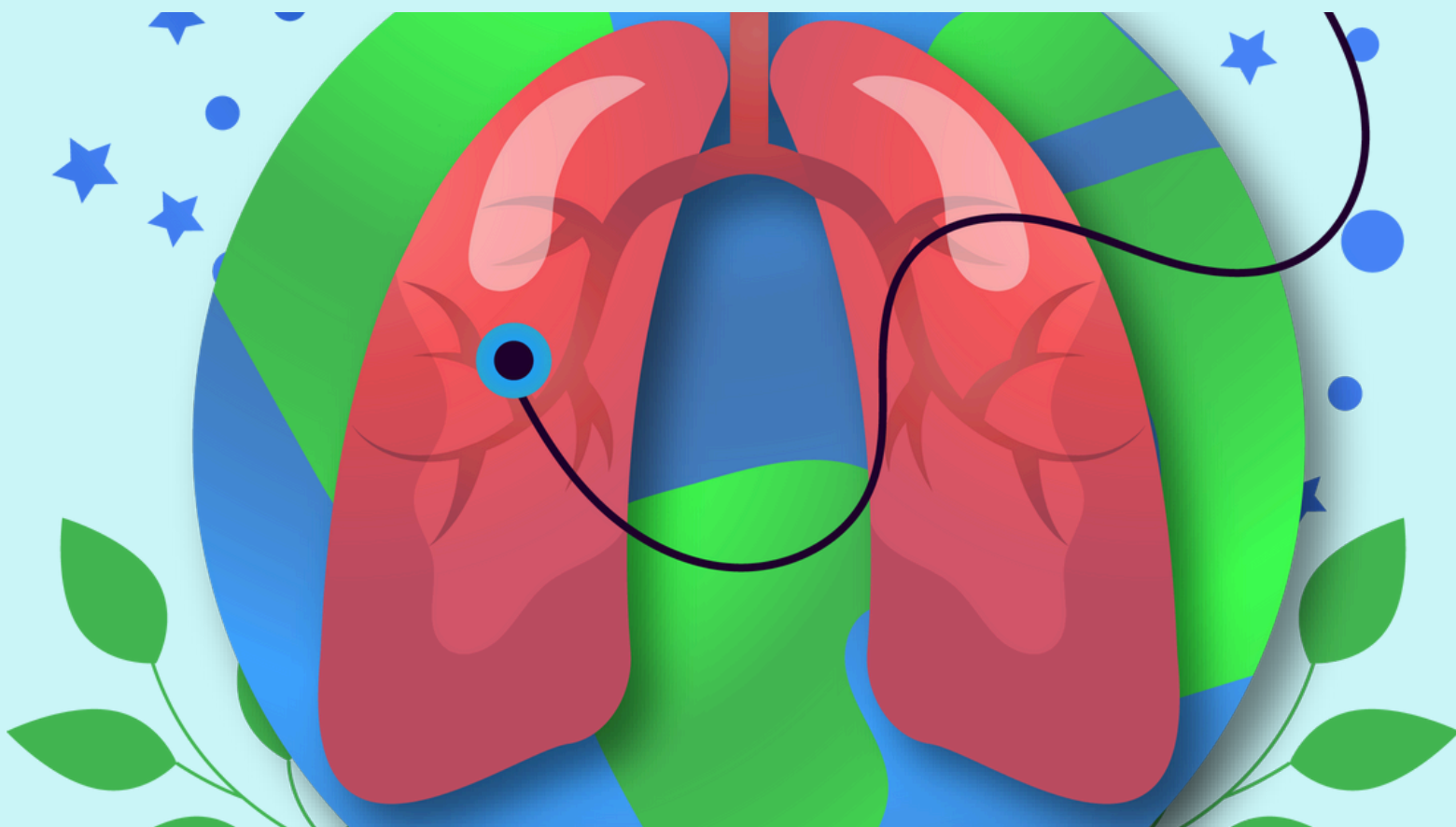
- Types of Cells - slide show and Venn diagram
- Cells, What do they do - Slide show and guided note taking.
- Inside a cell - Video (see resources for link) and guided note taking.
- Anatomy of The Cell
- How A Cell Operates
- Cell Analogy Project
- Cell Test Study Guide

Unit 4 Generalizations

- Cells create the structure of all organisms.
- Specialized structures in cells perform different functions that support homeostasis
- Energy transformations convert energy from one form to another so it can be used for life processes.
- Cells can be organized into larger structures and organ systems that interact to maintain homeostasis.
- Organisms depend on energy transformation creating an interdependence among all life on earth.

Unit 5

Respiratory System



Purpose

- Explore how the respiratory system interacts with other systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Respiratory System
- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis.

Activities

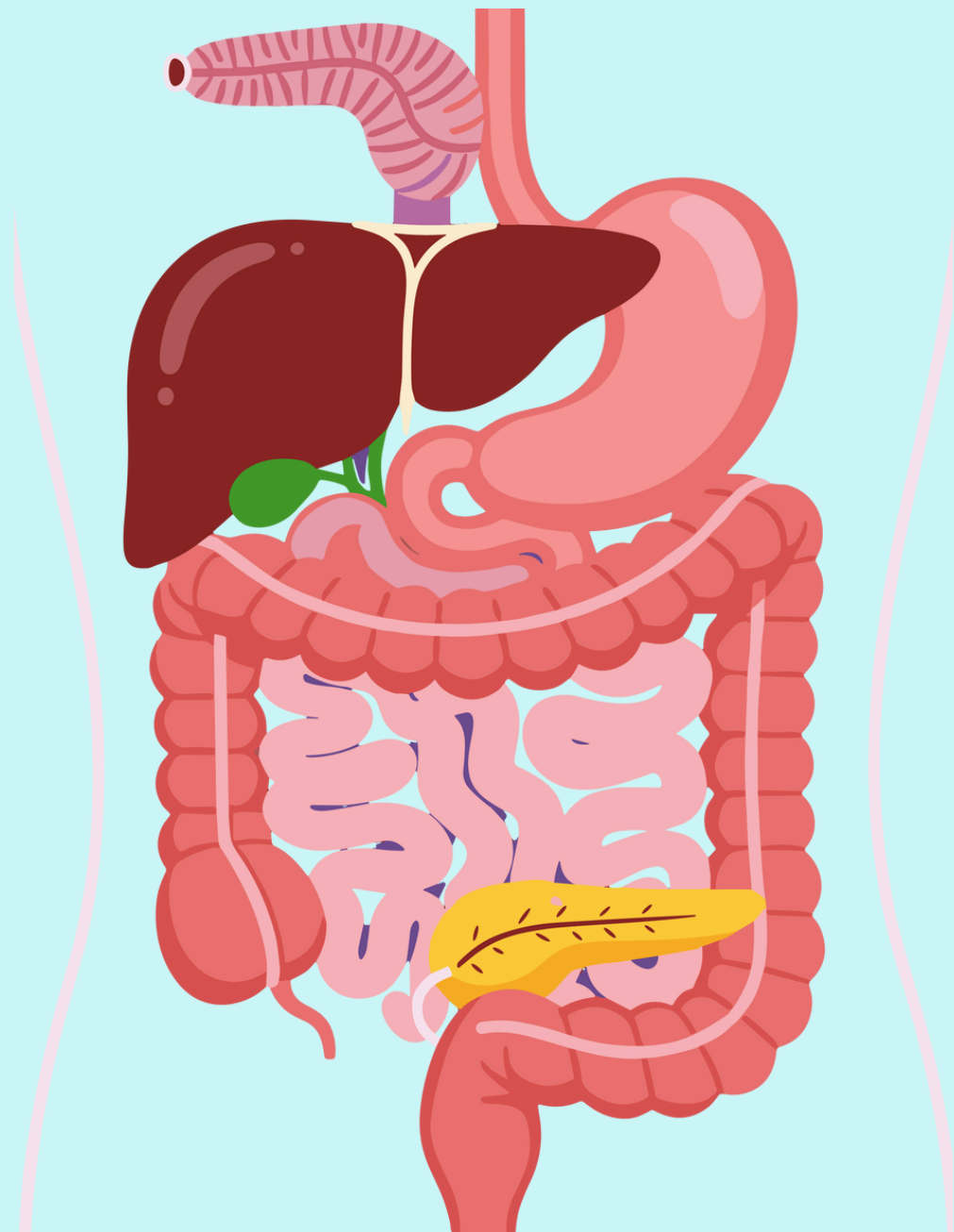
- The Breathing Process slide show and guided note taking
- The anatomy of the Respiratory System Project and Poster.
- Sequence for Respiration slide show and guided notes/worksheet
- Gas Exchange in the Alveoli packet.
- The Adventures of an Oxygen Molecule constructed writing response.

Unit 5 Generalizations

- Structures of the respiratory systems determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the respiratory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The respiratory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The respiratory system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 6

Digestive System



Purpose

- Explore how the digestive system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Digestion
- Digestive System
- Efficiency
- Energy Transformation

Activities

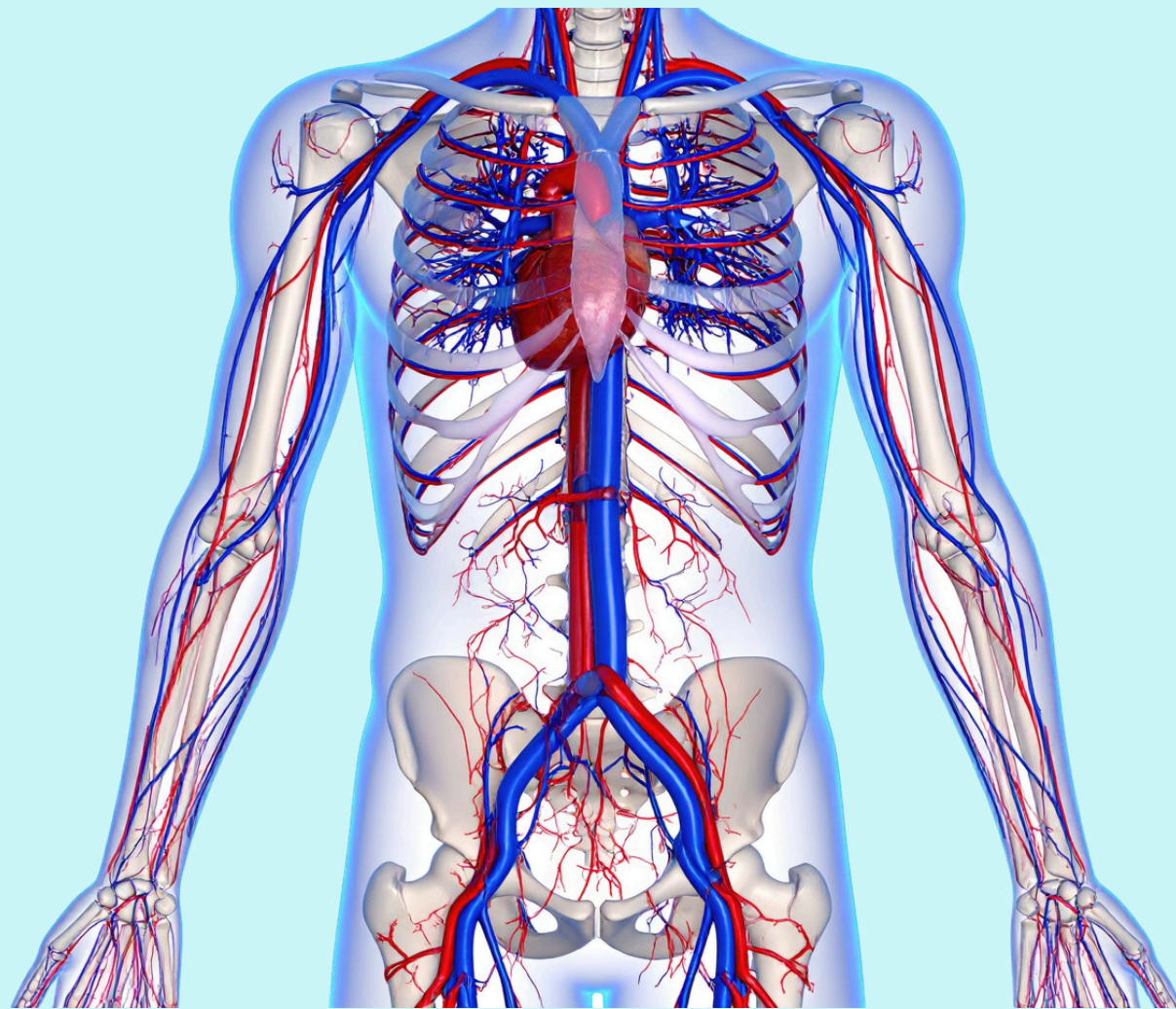
- Anatomy of the Digestive System Packet
- Digestive System - Structure and Function slide show and graphic organizer.
- Digestive System Study Guide
- [Digestive System](#) Video

Unit 6 Generalization

- Structures of digestive system determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the digestive system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The digestive system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The digestive system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 7

Circulatory System



Purpose

- Explore how the circulatory system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Circulation

Activities

- Getting to Know the Circulatory System
- Human Circulatory System
- The Internal and External Anatomy of the Human Heart
- Heart Internal and External
- The Beat Goes On/ Labeling the Heart
- Blood Flow Through the Heart Slideshow and Video for Review
- Three Types of Blood Vessels Slideshow
- Blood Composition Slide
- Independent Heart Rate Lab Proposal and Checklist (Lab Safety Contract, attached)
- Circulatory System Study Guide

Unit 7 Generalizations

- Structures of the circulatory system determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the circulatory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The circulatory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The circulatory system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 8

Nervous System



Purpose

- Explore how the nervous systems interacts with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence
- Communication
- Environment
- Memory

Activities

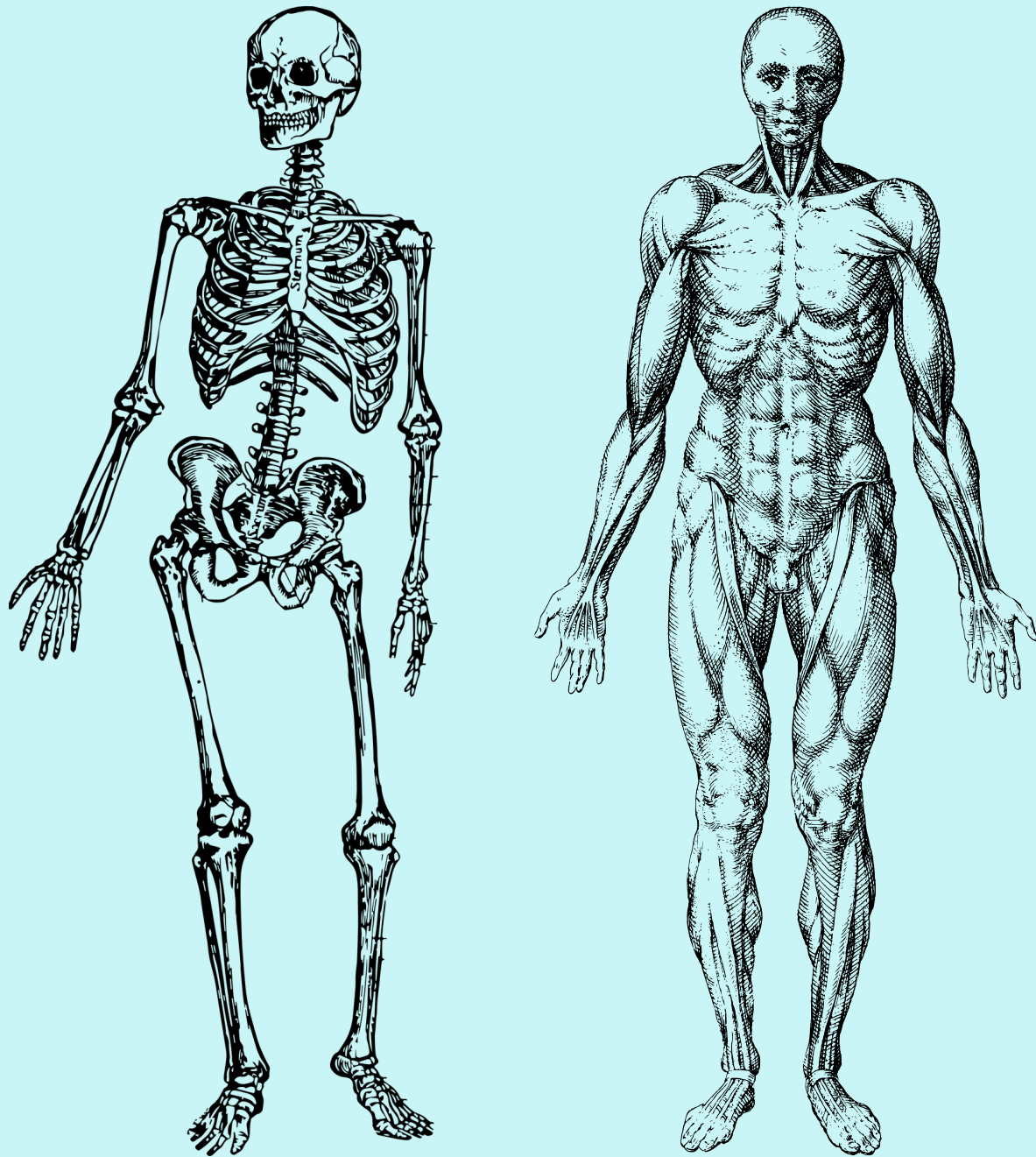
- Nervous System slide show and guided notes
- Nervous System Study Guide
- Discover Education - The Central Nervous System Studio Board (worksheet Lobes of the Brain)
- Diagraming a reflex arc
- Neural Processing Time Lab

Unit 8 Generalizations

- Structures of the nervous system function to respond to stimulus.
- Energy transformations at sensory receptors—such as mechanical pressure, chemical interactions, or light—enable the conversion of external stimuli into electrical signals.
- The central nervous system (CNS) and peripheral nervous system (PNS) interact to detect changes in the environment and produce an appropriate response.
- Memories formed through past experiences influence learned behaviors, and in what ways do these behaviors help the nervous and endocrine systems work together to maintain homeostasis in changing internal and external conditions.
- Communication through the nervous system coordinate the activities of multiple body systems, and the interdependence of these systems is essential for maintaining homeostasis when the body encounters internal or external changes.

Unit 9

Musculoskeletal System (Optional)



Purpose

- An OPTIONAL unit that explores how the skeletal and muscular systems interacts with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis
- Movement, support and protection

Concepts

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence

Activities

- Muscle Types slide show and graphic organizer for guided notes
- Bones, Four parts of Human Bone slideshows and Bones, Joints and Ligaments guided notes.
- Muscle/Skeleton Review

Unit 9 Generalizations (Optional)

- Movement results from coordinated interactions among interdependent body systems
- Interdependent body systems interact to protect vital organs and maintain structural support.
- The musculoskeletal system relies on the interaction of various tissues and organs to support, protect and facilitate movement.
- The musculoskeletal system coordinates muscles, bones, and connective tissues to adjust strength, endurance, and flexibility, allowing the body to meet different physical demands and energy needs.

Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection

How has the curriculum improved from the original version to the this newly revised version?

This revised curriculum began to evolve in 2023 after conferring with the science department at Reed Intermediate School. As the NGSS is a framework, ours covering 6-8, it is important that all of the topics are covered to support the the next level. We decided which standards would be covered by each grade level then proceeded to create the current curriculum. This version is very cohesive. It truly follows one unifying idea throughout the year. All of the activities and skills derive from the idea that energy flows through matter and matter through energy which sustains life on our planet. This ensures that all of our student have shared experiences at Newtown Middle School.

Reflecting back on the process, what improvements to the curriculum do you look forward to implementing the most?

While the curriculum has been revised, it is something that we have been working on since the adoption of the NGSS standards in 2018. As a team, we are constantly reviewing it to insure that we are meeting the needs of our students. We have added a variety of activities that address different learning styles, like Adventures of a Red Blood Cell and Digestive System Game. We also have included many opportunities for the students to investigate, experiment and collect data on the natural process that we cover such as mechanical and chemical weathering, osmosis, and the effect of exercise on heart rate. These also help our students build the skills they need to be successful in the future. We are excited about this revised version because each unit relates and builds on the previous unit, uniting the major concepts. Our goal is that this will help our students learn how to apply new information to previous leaning. This will enable them to have valuable discourse about their learning and use this to solve problems.

The 7th Grade Team



Kathy Dye, Judy Cattanese, Susan Musco



Science Grade 7 (Under Review/Revision)

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Sunday, Feb 8, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Unit Calendar by Year

Unit	Au	Sep					Oct				Nov				Dec				Jan				Feb				Mar				Apr				May				Ju	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38		
Developing Scientific Inquiry & Engineering...		█																																						
Earth's Energy/ Systems (Physics Lens)							█																																	
Geo-Science - Earth / Life Science...										█																														
Cells & Cell Processes												█																												
Respiratory System														█																										
Digestive System																		█																						
Circulatory System																						█																		
Nervous System																																								
Musculoskeletal System (Optional)																																								

◀ 9 Units found ▶



Unit Plan

Developing Scientific Inquiry & Engineering Skills

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 1 - Week 5 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 26, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

- To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Communication

Concepts:

- data collection
- analysis
- evidence
- reasoning
- variables
- observations
- inferences
- predictions
- scientific questions.

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Topic Generalizations

1. Scientific inquiry drives the development of knowledge through observation and investigation
2. Scientific inquiry relies on qualitative and quantitative observations by using them to make inferences and/or predictions which facilitates problem solving.
3. Formulating measurable and observable relationships among factors supports the systematic investigation needed to generate explanations and address scientific inquiries.
4. The scientific method allows for collection and organization of data into appropriately constructed tables and graphs in order to evaluate, interpret and communicate results.
5. The examination and interpretation of information enable the recognition of patterns and the formation of meaningful insights, which support effective problem-solving

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Scientific inquiry drives the development of knowledge through observation and investigation
 - What tools are used to make scientific measurements? (F)
 - What are observations? (F)
 - What procedures are used to conduct controlled investigations? (F)
 - How is measurement used to make observations? (C)
 - How are specific scientific questions answered using observations in controlled investigations? (C)
2. Scientific inquiry relies on qualitative and quantitative observations by using them to make inferences and/or predictions which facilitates problem solving.
 - What is an inference? (F)
 - What is a quantitative observation? (F)
 - How are qualitative and quantitative observations used to make inferences and/or predictions in order to solve problems? (C)
 - How do observations lead to inferences? (C)

- How are qualitative and quantitative observations different? (C)
- What is the difference between an inference and a prediction? (C)

3. Formulating measurable and observable relationships among factors supports the systematic investigation needed to generate explanations and address scientific inquiries.

- What is the dependent variable? (F)
- What is the independent variable? (F)
- How are constants defined? (F)
- How does a prediction become a hypothesis? (C)
- How do scientists identify variables and constants in order to develop a testable hypothesis to find solutions to scientific questions? (C)
- How do scientists write a testable hypothesis? (C)

4. A systematic investigative process supports the structured gathering and representation of information, enabling meaningful evaluation, interpretation, and communication of findings.

- What precise methods are used to collect and organize data into appropriately constructed tables and graphs for the purpose of evaluating and interpreting and communicating results? (F)
- What are the X and Y axis on a graph? (F)
- Which variable goes on each axis? (F)
- What are the rules for making a graph? (F)
- How do scientists create a data table? (C)
- How do graphs reveal trends and help to make sense of data? (C)
- How can variables be identified and manipulated? (C)
- How do scientists communicate results? (C)
- How do scientists avoid bias in their communication? (C)

5. The examination and interpretation of information enable the recognition of patterns and the formation of meaningful insights, which support effective problem-solving

- What is a claim? (F)
- What evidence best supports scientific data? (C)
- How is data analyzed to identify trends, draw conclusions in order to solve problems and develop additional testable questions? (C)
- How is a claim supported with data? (C)
- How do scientists decide what evidence best supports scientific data? (C)
- How is a new variable identified based on data analysis? (C)
- How do scientists evaluate data to draw conclusions? (C)
- How can the results of experimentation be used to make informed decisions? (C)
- Is data all definitive? (Is it true that numbers never lie?) (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Observation skills in scientific inquiry,
 Formulating clear and focused scientific questions
 Identifying independent and dependent variables
 Creating graphs and data tables

Understanding relationships between variables
Writing claims about scientific evidence
Clarifying scientific models and phenomena
Evaluating evidence in scientific arguments (CER)
Refining scientific explanations (reasoning)
Gathering empirical evidence
Analyzing empirical data
Using models to explain scientific concepts
Distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative data
Constructing logical scientific arguments
Communicating scientific findings effectively

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Define a design problem that can be solved through the development of an object, tool, process or system and includes multiple criteria and constraints, including scientific knowledge that may limit possible solutions.
- Ask questions that challenge the premise(s) of an argument or the interpretation of a data set.
- Ask questions that can be investigated within the scope of the classroom, outdoor environment, and museums and other public facilities with available resources and, when appropriate, frame a hypothesis based on observations and scientific principles.
- Ask questions that require sufficient and appropriate empirical evidence to answer.
- Ask questions to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.
- Ask questions to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models.
- Ask questions to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument.
- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.

Practice 3. Planning and carrying out investigations

Planning and carrying out investigations in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include investigations that use multiple variables and provide evidence to support explanations or solutions.

- Collect data about the performance of a proposed object, tool, process or system under a range of conditions.
- Collect data to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence to answer scientific questions or test design solutions under a range of conditions.
- Evaluate the accuracy of various methods for collecting data.
- Conduct an investigation and/or evaluate and/or revise the experimental design to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence that meet the goals of the investigation.
- Plan an investigation individually and collaboratively, and in the design: identify independent and dependent variables and controls, what tools are needed to do the gathering, how measurements will be recorded, and how many data are needed to support a claim.

Practice 4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to extending quantitative analysis to investigations, distinguishing between correlation and causation, and basic statistical techniques of data and error analysis.

- Analyze and interpret data to determine similarities and differences in findings.
- Consider limitations of data analysis (e.g., measurement error), and/or seek to improve precision and accuracy of data with better technological tools and methods (e.g., multiple trials).
- Apply concepts of statistics and probability (including mean, median, mode, and variability) to analyze and characterize data, using digital tools when feasible.
- Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for phenomena.
- Use graphical displays (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, and/or tables) of large data sets to identify temporal and spatial relationships.
- Construct, analyze, and/or interpret graphical displays of data and/or large data sets to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.

Practice 5. Using mathematics and computational thinking

Mathematical and computational thinking in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to identifying patterns in large data sets and using mathematical concepts to support explanations and arguments.

- Apply mathematical concepts and/or processes (e.g., ratio, rate, percent, basic operations, simple algebra) to scientific and engineering questions and problems.
- Use mathematical representations to describe and/or support scientific conclusions and design solutions.
- Use digital tools (e.g., computers) to analyze very large data sets for patterns and trends.

Practice 6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include constructing explanations and designing solutions supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

- Apply scientific reasoning to show why the data or evidence is adequate for the explanation or conclusion.
- Construct a scientific explanation based on valid and reliable evidence obtained from sources (including the students' own experiments) and the assumption that theories and laws that describe the natural world operate today as they did in the past and will continue to do so in the future.
- Construct an explanation that includes qualitative or quantitative relationships between variables that predict(s) and/or describe(s) phenomena.

Practice 7. Engaging in argument from evidence

Engaging in argument from evidence in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to constructing a convincing argument that supports or refutes claims for either explanations or solutions about the natural and designed world(s).

- Make an oral or written argument that supports or refutes the advertised performance of a device, process, or system based on empirical evidence concerning whether or not the technology meets relevant criteria and constraints.

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)
















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Core Learning Activities




The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.




- Identifying Variables and Writing Hypotheses
- Qualitative / Quantitative Me Assignment
- Gro-Dino Scientific Method Lab
- Creating Data Tables and Graphs
- Writing Claim, Evidence and Reasoning Paragraphs

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

-  Rubicon Copy of Identifying Variables Slide Show  
-  Rubicon Copy of How to Write a Hypothesis  
-  Rubicon Copy of Data Tables and Graphing  
-  Rubicon Copy of Data Tables and Graphing  
-  Rubicon Copy of Gro-Dino Lab Report Outline  

 Rubicon Copy of Data Table and Graph Checklist  

 Rubicon copy 7th CER paragraph rubric  

 Rubicon Copy of Identifying Variables and Writing Hypotheses  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Meter, liter, gram, metric system, pre-fixes, qualitative, quantitative, inference, independent variable, dependent variable, hypothesis, constant, control, triple-beam balance, graduated cylinder, axes, graph, data table, validity, data consistency, trend, average.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Teaching Science Process Skills

Good Apple Science Resource Book For Grades 6-8

Joyce E. Raming, M.Ed.

Jill Bailer, M.ED.

John M. Ramsey, Ph.D.

Inquiry Skills Activity Book I,II and III

Prentice Hall Science Explorer

Pearson Education Inc.

Pearson Prentice Hall


Assessments


The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Qualitative Me/Quantitative Me | Summative | Exhibition




Personal Project




Assignment depicting student that includes descriptive qualitative observations of physical characteristics and quantitative metric measurements of student.

 Rubicon Copy of Qualitative Me Task Directions

 Rubicon Copy Qualitative Me Task Rubric

[2 Standards Assessed](#)

 Rubicon Copy Qualitative Me Task Rubric  

 Rubicon Copy of Qualitative Me Task Directions  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Earth's Energy/ Systems (Physics Lens)

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 6 - Week 9 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Purpose of the Unit

Understand how Earth's energy systems and geological processes shape our planet.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: energy transfer & energy transformations.

Concepts

- Scale, Proportion & Quantity
- Patterns
- Stability & Change
- Geoscience processes
- energy transfer
- energy transformation
- thermal energy
- internal/external forces

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. A structured temporal framework categorizes Earth's past into distinct intervals derived from identifiable patterns and changes over time.
2. The flow of energy influences system balance and drives transformations within Earth's surface processes over time.
3. Changes in energy within Earth systems reveal patterns that reflect the movement of tectonic plates over time.
4. External and internal energy sources power the continuous movement and transformation of materials within Earth's systems.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. A structured temporal framework categorizes Earth's past into distinct intervals derived from identifiable patterns and changes over time.
 - How are rock strata created?(F)
 - What is relative dating? (F)
 - What is carbon dating? (F)
 - What is a geologic column? (F)
 - What evidence do rock layers provide about Earth's history? (F)
 - What are fossils? (F)
 - What can we learn about the Earth's past by studying fossils? (C)
 - How has Earth changed over billions of years? (C)
2. The flow of energy influences system balance and drives transformations within Earth's surface processes over time.

- What are geoscience processes? (F)
- What is weathering? (F)
- What is deposition? (F)
- What is erosion? (F)
- What is sediment? (F)
- What is chemical weathering? (F)
- What is mechanical weathering? (F)
- What processes contribute to the formation of mountains, valleys, and other landforms? (C)
- How have geoscience processes such as erosion, volcanic eruptions, and plate tectonics have shaped Earth's surface over time? (C)

3. Changes in energy within Earth systems reveal patterns that reflect the movement of tectonic plates over time.

- What is thermal energy? (F)
- What are the four main layers of the Earth? (F)
- What are each of the layers composed of? (F)
-
- What is the theory of continental drift? (F)
- What is the evidence for continental drift? (F)
- What are mid-ocean ridges? (F)
- What is sea-floor spreading? (F)
- What is the theory of plate tectonics? (F)
- How do convergent plate boundaries move? (F)
- How do divergent plate boundaries move? (F)
- How do transform plate boundaries move? (F)
- How does the temperature change as you get deeper into the Earth? (C)
- How is thermal energy transferred through the layers of the Earth? (C)
- How does seafloor spreading support the theory of continental drift? (C)
- How did the discovery of sea-floor spreading lead to the theory of plate tectonics? (C)
- How does the distribution of fossils, rock formations, and seafloor structures provide evidence of past plate movements? (C)

4. External and internal energy sources power the continuous movement and transformation of materials within Earth's systems.

- How are igneous rocks formed? (F)
- How are metamorphic rocks formed? (F)
- How are sedimentary rocks formed? (F)
- What is the rock cycle? (F)
- How is the cycling of Earth's materials, including the rock cycle, driven by energy from the sun and Earth's interior? (C)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Continental Drift Theory, Sea-Floor Spreading, Theory of Plate Tectonics, geoscience processes, force, energy, gravity, energy transfer, energy transformation, matter, convection currents, conduction, radiation, convection, thermal energy, internal forces, weathering, erosion, deposition, natural resources.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Physical Science

MS.Structure and Properties of Matter

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-PS1-3. Gather and make sense of information to describe that synthetic materials come from natural resources and impact society. [Show Details](#)

MS.Energy

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-PS3-3. Apply scientific principles to design, construct, and test a device that either minimizes or maximizes thermal energy transfer.* [Show Details](#)
- MS-PS3-4. Plan an investigation to determine the relationships among the energy transferred, the type of matter, the mass, and the change in the average kinetic energy of the particles as measured by the temperature of the sample. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: MS Earth & Space Science

MS.History of Earth

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-ESS1-4. Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence from rock strata for how the geologic time scale is used to organize Earth's 4.6-billion-year-old history. [Show Details](#)
- MS-ESS2-2. Construct an explanation based on evidence for how geoscience processes have changed Earth's surface at varying time and spatial scales. [Show Details](#)
- MS-ESS2-3. Analyze and interpret data on the distribution of fossils and rocks, continental shapes, and seafloor structures to provide evidence of the past plate motions. [Show Details](#)

MS.Earth's Systems

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-ESS2-1. Develop a model to describe the cycling of Earth's materials and the flow of energy that drives this process. [Show Details](#)
- MS-ESS3-1. Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence for how the uneven distributions of Earth's mineral, energy, and groundwater resources are the result of past and current geoscience processes. [Show Details](#)

MS.Human Impacts

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-ESS3-4. Construct an argument supported by evidence for how increases in human population and per-capital consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems. [Show Details](#)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

























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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- Far Flung Fossils
- Relative Dating
- Geological timescale
- Informational reading strategies
- Interactive Rock Cycle
- Weathering and Erosion Study Guide
- Plate Tectonics Study Guide

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

-  Far Flung Fossils packet.pdf  
-  Rubicon Copy of Relative Dating Cards  
-  Rubicon Copy Relative Dating  
-  Rubicon Copy of Relative Dating  
-  Rubicon Copy Check for Understanding - Convection Currents  
-  Interactive Rock Cycle  
-  Rubicon Copy of Weathering and Erosion Study Guide  
-  Rubicon Copy of Plate Tectonic Study Guide  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Rock strata, geological timescale, fossils, Era, Period, inner core, outer core, mantle, asthenosphere, lithosphere, crust, plate boundary, transform, convergent, divergent, convection, density, subduction, deep ocean trench, mid-ocean ridge, rift valley, recycling, mountain, volcano, earthquake, sedimentary, metamorphic, igneous, weathering (mechanical vs chemical), melting, crystallization, deformation, sedimentation, rock cycle, erosion, deposition, constructive, destructive, renewable, non-renewable, mineral, ground-water, & energy.

Resources




Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Prentice Hall Science Explorer - Inside Earth

History of earth in one year

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICZjAEMw2Wk>

<http://www.middleschoolchemist...>

 <https://clever.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/courses/49191d45-2e31-4e93-8e73-b9160cc2128d>  

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Chemical Weathering Lab | Summative | Lab Assignment


Students chemically weather three unknown rock samples, collect & analyze data including % change in mass (both wet & dry masses) and compare results from the experiment with conducted multi-media research. The assessment requires the synthesis of data with research to draw conclusions and make recommendations for uses of each rock type.

 Rubicon Copy of Chemical Weathering Lab

[23 Standards Assessed](#)

Plate Tectonics Test | Summative | Standardized Test


Department generated common assessment that covers material learned while investigating plate tectonics.

 Rubicon Copy of Plate Tectonic Test

[3 Standards Assessed](#)

Weathering and Erosion Test | Summative | Standardized Test

Department created assessment based on material learned about weathering and erosion.

 Rubicon Copy of Weathering and Erosion Test Reg/Mod

No Standards Assessed

Energy Transfer: Conduction | Summative | Lab Assignment

Lab experience investigating the effect of chemical weathering on different rock types.

Rubicon Copy of Energy Transfer: Conduction

No Standards Assessed

Rubicon Copy of Chemical/Mechanical Weathering Lab

Rubicon Copy of Weathering and Erosion Test Reg/Mod

Rubicon Copy of Energy Transfer: Conduction

Rubicon Copy of Plate Tectonic Test

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Differentiation may include the following, based on learning styles:

- varied texts
- sentence starters
- focus questions
- skeleton notes
- flexible seating for prescribed activities
- organizational activities/ tools (binder checks, binder quiz, etc)

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

- NGSS interim data
 - NGSS lesson/ review
 - warm ups
 - exit tickets
 - study guides
 - notecards
-



Unit Plan

Geo-Science - Earth / Life Science Connection

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 10 - Week 11 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 8, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Develop an understanding that humans rely on natural resources for survival.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Stability and change

Concepts:

- Natural Resources
- Sustainability
- Distribution
- Availability
- geoscience processes
- consumption

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Earth's natural resources ensure the existence of life.
2. Geoscience processes over time create natural resources.
3. Resource availability and distribution impact human societies and ecosystems.
4. Management of Earth's resources is crucial for sustainability.
5. The increased consumption of natural resources significantly impacts the stability of Earth's systems.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Earth's natural resources ensure the existence of life
 - What elements are humans composed of? (F)
 - What do human, as living things, need from the planet to survive? (C)
 - How do humans acquire the elements necessary for survival? (C)
 - How is access to resources acquired? (C)
 - What are the physiological consequences of lack of resources? (C)
2. Geological processes over time create natural resources.
 - How are these resources created? (F)
 - What processes create natural resources? (F)
 - Can we make more of these resources? (F)
 - What conditions are needed? (F)
 - How long does it take? (F)
 - What are renewable resources? (F)
 - What are non-renewable resources? (F)

- How are non-renewable resources used? (F)
- What is coal? (F)
- How is coal formed? (F)
- Where is coal formed? (F)
- What is petroleum? (F)
- How is petroleum formed? (F)
- Where is petroleum formed? (F)
- How are minerals formed? (F)
- Where are minerals found? (F)
- How have past and ongoing geoscience processes determined the distribution of Earth's resources? (C)

3. Resource availability and distribution impact human societies and ecosystems.

- Where are the resources we need located? (F)
- Why are resources located where they are? (F)
- Why are they not evenly distributed? (F)
- How do we acquire resources that are not nearby?(C)
- How does the distribution of natural resources impact human populations? (C)
- Does the distribution of natural resources contribute to unfair economic disparity among populations?(P)

4. Sustainable management of Earth's resources is crucial for stability.

- What impact do our needs have on the planet? (F)
- What factors contribute to the limited availability of natural resources? (F)
- How can non-renewable resources be conserved? (F)
- Can non-renewable resources be created? (F)

5. The increased consumption of natural resources significantly impacts the stability of Earth's systems.

- What impact does human population growth and increased consumption of natural resources have on Earth's systems? (C)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Humans rely on Earth's natural resources.
 Minerals, fresh water, and biosphere resources are limited.
 Many resources are not renewable within human lifetimes.
 Resource distribution is uneven due to geologic processes.
 Earth's land, ocean, atmosphere, and biosphere provide essential resources.
 Past geologic processes influence current resource locations.
 Resource availability impacts human society and ecosystems.
 Sustainable resource management is crucial for future generations.
 Human activity affects the availability of natural resources.
 Understanding geologic history helps locate valuable resources.
 Renewable resources can be replenished naturally over time.
 Non-renewable resources are finite and deplete over use.
 Conservation efforts help manage limited natural resources.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 7. Engaging in argument from evidence

Engaging in argument from evidence in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to constructing a convincing argument that supports or refutes claims for either explanations or solutions about the natural and designed world(s).

- Construct, use, and/or present an oral and written argument supported by empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support or refute an explanation or a model for a phenomenon or a solution to a problem.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

ESS3: Earth and Human Activity

ESS3.A: Natural Resources

- Humans depend on Earth's land, ocean, atmosphere, and biosphere for many different resources. Minerals, fresh water, and biosphere resources are limited, and many are not renewable or replaceable over human lifetimes. These resources are distributed unevenly around the planet as a result of past geologic processes. (MS-ESS3-1)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

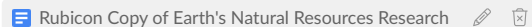


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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Research using multiple sources, primarily Discovery Education (see resources for link), to compile information to execute the summative project at the end of the unit.

- Written responses and map creation that shows locations of natural resources.
- Description of geoscience processes that create the resources.
- Draw conclusions about the relationship between population and resource availability.

 Rubicon Copy of Earth's Natural Resources Research  

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Abiotic
Biotic
Geosphere
Biosphere
Hydrosphere
Geologic processes
Renewable resources
Non-renewable resources
Fossil fuels
Petroleum
Coal

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

[Amazing Nature: Plants Dancing in Time Lapse](#)

[Nature Speaking: Reese Witherspoon Home](#)

[Discovery Education Techbook](#)

[Earth's Natural Resources Studio Board](#)

[Natural Resources Background Builder](#)

Natural gas
Mineral ore
Soil
Sediment
Water
Forests
Conservation
Sustainability


Assessments


The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Natural Resources Project | Summative | Exhibition




Technology Project | Personal Project




Describes how natural resources are formed through geoscience process, mapping the location of the resources and using the knowledge of geoscience processes that created them. Looks at the use and conservation of renewable and non renewable resources and the effects of human population on these resources.

 Rubicon Copy of Earth's Natural Resources Project Rubric

 Rubicon Copy of Natural Resources Maps

No Standards Assessed

 Rubicon Copy of Natural Resources Maps  

 Rubicon Copy of Earth's Natural Resources Project Rubric  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Cells & Cell Processes

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 12 - Week 14 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

The overarching goals of this unit are:

- Explore how cells are the basic unit of life, with special structures responsible for specific functions, that utilize energy for survival.
- Explore the transfer of energy through the matter on earth and how it supports life.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts:

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Cells
- Organisms

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Cells create the structure of all organisms.
2. Specialized structures in cells perform different functions that support homeostasis.
3. Energy transformations convert energy from one form to another so it can be used for life processes.
4. Cells can be organized into larger structures and organ systems that interact to maintain homeostasis.
5. Organisms depend on energy transformation creating an interdependence among all life on earth.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Cells create the structure of all organisms.
 - What is the basic unit of structure and function of all living things? (F)
 - What characteristics define living things? (F)
 - What are cells? (F)
 -
 - What are the two types of cells? (F)
 - How are prokaryotic cells organized? (F)
 - How are eukaryotic cells organized? (F)
 - Why are cells important to all living things? (C)
 - Why do some organisms consist of a single cell while others have many cells? (C)
 - In what ways are prokaryotic cells essential for the health, growth, or survival of eukaryotic organisms? (P)

2. Specialized structures in cells perform different functions that support homeostasis.

- What are the organelles and specialized structures in cells?(F)
- What are the parts of a cell? (F)
- What are the functions of those parts? (F)
- What are the building blocks of proteins? (F)
- How do these cells parts work together to synthesize proteins? (C)
- How do proteins perform life processes? (C)

3. Energy transformations convert energy from one form to another so it can be used for life processes.

- How does photosynthesis transform sunlight energy into chemical energy?
- What are the reactants and products of photosynthesis? (F)
- What is the energy transformation that occurs during photosynthesis? (F)
- What organelle is involved in photosynthesis? (F)
- What is the process of cellular respiration in eukaryotic cells? (F)
- What are the reactants and products of cellular respiration? (F)
- What is the energy transformation that occurs during cellular respiration? (F)
- What organelle is involved in cellular respiration? (F)
- Why does cellular respiration need to take place in both plant and animal cells? (C)
- How do the structures in plant cells enable photosynthesis, and why are these structures absent in animal cells?(C)

4. Cells can be organized into larger structures that interact to maintain homeostasis.

- How are cells organized in multicellular organisms? (F)
- What is homeostasis? (F)
- How do cells maintain homeostasis? (C)
- How do the different types of cells in multicellular organisms work together? (C)

5. Organisms depend on energy transformation creating an interdependence among all life on earth.

- Why are plants called producers? (C)
 - Why are animals called consumers? (C)
 - How are photosynthesis and cellular respiration interdependent on each other? (C)
 - What would life on Earth look like if photosynthesis suddenly stopped—how would it affect air, food, and ecosystems? (P)
 - In what ways does the ability of plants to convert sunlight into energy determine the survival of all living things?(P)
-

Content Knowledge

Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.

Cell theory principles
Types of cells and their structure and functions
Structure and function of cell organelles
Cell membrane function and structure
Photosynthesis process and function
Role of chloroplasts in photosynthesis
Cellular respiration process and function
Energy transformation in cells
Interdependence of cellular systems
Interdependence of photosynthesis and cellular respiration

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 2. Developing and using models

Modeling in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to developing, using, and revising models to describe, test, and predict more abstract phenomena and design systems.

- Develop a model to describe unobservable mechanisms.

Practice 3. Planning and carrying out investigations

Planning and carrying out investigations in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include investigations that use multiple variables and provide evidence to support explanations or solutions.

- Plan an investigation individually and collaboratively, and in the design: identify independent and dependent variables and controls, what tools are needed to do the gathering, how measurements will be recorded, and how many data are needed to support a claim.
- Conduct an investigation and/or evaluate and/or revise the experimental design to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence that meet the goals of the investigation.
- Evaluate the accuracy of various methods for collecting data.
- Collect data to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence to answer scientific questions or test design solutions under a range of conditions.
- Collect data about the performance of a proposed object, tool, process or system under a range of conditions.

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

4. Systems and System Models – A system is an organized group of related objects or components; models can be used for understanding and predicting the behavior of systems.

- Systems may interact with other systems; they may have sub-systems and be a part of larger complex systems.
- Models can be used to represent systems and their interactions—such as inputs, processes and outputs—and energy, matter, and information flows within systems.
- Models are limited in that they only represent certain aspects of the system under study.

6. Structure and Function – The way an object is shaped or structured determines many of its properties and functions.

- Complex and microscopic structures and systems can be visualized, modeled, and used to describe how their function depends on the shapes, composition, and relationships among its parts; therefore, complex natural and designed structures/systems can be analyzed to determine how they function.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- All living things are made up of cells, which is the smallest unit that can be said to be alive. An organism may consist of one single cell (unicellular) or many different numbers and types of cells (multicellular). (MS-LS1-1)
- Within cells, special structures are responsible for particular functions, and the cell membrane forms the boundary that controls what enters and leaves the cell. (MS-LS1-2)

LS1.C: Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms

- Plants, algae (including phytoplankton), and many microorganisms use the energy from light to make sugars (food) from carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and water through the process of photosynthesis, which also releases oxygen. These sugars can be used immediately or stored for growth or later use. (MS-LS1-6)
- Within individual organisms, food moves through a series of chemical reactions in which it is broken down and rearranged to form new molecules, to support growth, or to release energy. (MS-LS1-7)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

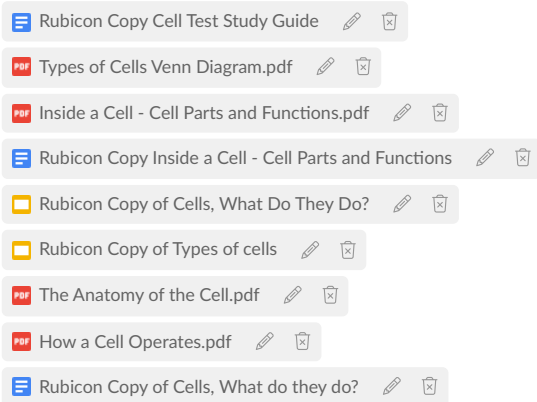
[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Types of Cells - slide show and Venn diagram
 Cells, What do they do - Slide show and guided note taking.
 Inside a cell - Video (see resources for link) and guided note taking.
 Anatomy of The Cell
 How A Cell Operates
 Cell Analogy Project
 Cell Test Study Guide



Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

cell, unicellular, multicellular, prokaryotic, eukaryotic, cell membrane, nucleus, cytoplasm, organelle, mitochondria, ribosome, chloroplast, photosynthesis, cellular respiration, homeostasis, tissue, organ, organ system

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Phenomenon:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRloCHpU4MQ&feature=youtu.be>

Pond water video and / or
 Check cells, dialysis tubing

Microorganisms
 By Barbara and Pat Ward
 Mark Twain/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Learning About Cells
By Debbie Routh
Mark Twain Media, Inc. Publisher

Human Biology Activities Kit
By John R. Roland
Published by Jossey-Bass

[Discovery Education Techbook](#)


[Inside a Cell Video](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Characteristics of Living Things Content Reading | Summative | Narrative Writing Assignment

Reading text and using the information in the text to decide whether it is living or non living based on criteria learned.


 Rubicon Copy of Characteristics of Living Things Content Reading


No Standards Assessed


Cell Analogy Project | Summative | Exhibition

Personal Project




To make an analogy between eukaryotic cells (**plant and animal**) and something (system or activity) you are familiar with in order to understand how eukaryotic cells work.




 Rubicon Copy of Cell Analogy Rubric




 Rubicon Copy Cell Analogy Project Explanation




 Rubicon Copy Cell Analogy Project Key




No Standards Assessed

 Rubicon Copy of Cell Analogy Rubric  

 Rubicon Copy Cell Analogy Project Explanation  




 Rubicon Copy Cell Analogy Project Key  

 Rubicon Copy of Cell Types & Processes Test  

 Rubicon Copy of Characteristics of Living Things Content Reading 2  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

 Rubicon Copy of Modified Cell Types & Processes Test  

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan Respiratory System

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 15 - Week 18 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Explore how the respiratory system interacts with other systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts:

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Respiratory System
- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis.

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Structures of the respiratory systems determine function and efficiency.
2. Functions of the respiratory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
3. The respiratory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
4. The respiratory system optimizes homeostasis.
5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Structures of the respiratory systems determine function and efficiency.
 - What are the parts of the respiratory system? (F)
 - What are the functions of each of the parts of the respiratory system (F)
 - What is the process of breathing? (C)
 - What is the role of air pressure in the process of breathing? (C)
 - How do different activities affect our breathing rate? (C)
2. Functions of the respiratory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
 - Where does cellular respiration take place? (F)
 - What are the reactants of cellular respiration? (F)
 - What are the products of cellular respiration? (F)
 - What is the process of cellular respiration? (C)
 - How are breathing and respiration different? (C)

- Why does the breathing rate change during different activities? (C)
3. The respiratory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation?
- What gases are exchanged during gas exchange? (F)
 - How does gas exchange occur in the alveoli of the lungs? (C)
 - What is the role of diffusion in gas exchange (C)
 - How is oxygen used by the human body? (C)
 - Why is it not necessary to store oxygen in the human body? (C)
 - What is the impact of reduced oxygen intake on the human body? (C)
4. The respiratory system optimizes homeostasis.
- What waste gases are removed during exhalation? (F)
 - How does the removal of waste products maintain homeostasis? (C)
 - What would the impact of not removing waste products be on the body? (C)
 - How does the energy produced by the transformation process of cellular respiration support homeostasis? (C)
5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.
- What is the sequence of respiration? (F)
 - How does the respiratory system interact with the circulatory and digestive systems? (C)
 - How do environmental factors impact the respiratory system? (C)
 - How does lifestyle choice impact the function of the respiratory system? (C)
 - What are the best lifestyle choices for maintaining optimum respiratory functions? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Respiratory system structure and function
 Gas exchange in lungs
 Role of alveoli in gas exchange
 Diaphragm and breathing mechanism
 Models to represent respiratory processes
 Respiratory system interaction with circulatory system
 Cellular respiration and energy production
 Sequence of respiration
 Removal of waste gasses
 Effects of exercise on respiration

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Structure, Function, and Information Processing

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS1-3. Use argument supported by evidence for how the body is a system of interacting subsystems composed of groups of cells. [Show Details](#)

MS.Matter and Energy in Organisms and Ecosystems

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS2-3. Develop a model to describe the cycling of matter and flow of energy among living and nonliving parts of an ecosystem. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

2. Cause and Effect: Mechanism and Prediction – Events have causes, sometimes simple, sometimes multifaceted. Deciphering causal relationships, and the mechanisms by which they are mediated, is a major activity of science and engineering.

- Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.

4. Systems and System Models – A system is an organized group of related objects or components; models can be used for understanding and predicting the behavior of systems.

- Systems may interact with other systems; they may have sub-systems and be a part of larger complex systems.
- Models can be used to represent systems and their interactions—such as inputs, processes and outputs—and energy, matter, and information flows within systems.
- Models are limited in that they only represent certain aspects of the system under study.

6. Structure and Function – The way an object is shaped or structured determines many of its properties and functions.

- Complex and microscopic structures and systems can be visualized, modeled, and used to describe how their function depends on the shapes, composition, and relationships among its parts; therefore, complex natural and designed structures/systems can be analyzed to determine how they function.

7. Stability and Change – For both designed and natural systems, conditions that affect stability and factors that control rates of change are critical elements to consider and understand.

- Small changes in one part of a system might cause large changes in another part.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions. (MS-LS1-3)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities




The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.




The Breathing Process slide show and guided note taking
The anatomy of the Respiratory System Project and Poster.
Sequence for Respiration slide show and guided notes/worksheet




Portrait of the Newtown Graduate




Gas Exchange in the Alveoli packet.

The Adventures of an Oxygen Molecule constructed writing response.




 The Anatomy of the Respiratory System Project.pdf  




 The Anatomy of the Respiratory System Poster.pdf  

 Breathing Process  

 Gas Exchange in the Alveoli.pdf  

 Sequence of Respiration  

 Sequence for Respiration.pdf  

 Rubicon Copy of The Adventures of Oxygen Molecules  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

lungs, alveoli, surface area, thoracic cavity, nasal cavity, pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi, bronchioles, diaphragm, diffusion, concentration, molecules, oxygen, carbon dioxide, inhalation, exhalation, air pressure, breathing rate, cellular respiration

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Human Biology Activities Kit

By John R. Roland

Published by Jossey-Bass

Your Body and How It Works

By Pat and Barb Ward

Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Human Biology and Health Student Textbook and All in One Teaching Resources

Prentice Hall Science Explorer

Published by Pearson/Prentice Hall


[Discovery Education Techbook](#)

Assessments


The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Respiratory System Test | Summative | Standardized Test

Department created assessment based on content learned about the respiratory system.

 Rubicon Copy of Respiratory Test

No Standards Assessed

 Rubicon Copy of Respiratory Test  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan Digestive System

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 19 - Week 22 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Purpose of the Unit: Digestive System

Explore how the digestive system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Homeostasis
- Energy transformation

Concepts:

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Digestion
- Digestive System
- Efficiency
- Energy Transformation

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Structures of digestive system determine function and efficiency.
2. Functions of the digestive system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
3. The digestive system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
4. The digestive system optimizes homeostasis.
5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Structures of digestive system determine function and efficiency.
 - What structures of the mouth assist in mechanically and chemically breaking down food? (F)
 - What is the esophagus? (F)
 - What structures of the stomach assist in mechanically and chemically breaking down food? (F)
 - What accessory organs assist the stomach in breaking down food by contributing chemicals to the digestive process? (F)
 - What structures in the small intestine assist in nutrient absorption? (F)

- How do structures in the digestive system determine function and efficiency? (C)

2. Functions of the digestive system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.

- How is food in the mouth broken down to increase surface area? (C)
- How does food mechanically break down in the mouth? (C)
- How does food chemically break down in the mouth? (C)
- How does food mechanically break down in the stomach? (C)
- How does food chemically break down in the stomach? (C)
- How are nutrients absorbed in the small intestine? (C)
- What do enzymes do and how do they assist in chemical digestion? (C)
- How does the esophagus move food from the mouth to the stomach? (C)
- What is the function of the stomach? (C)
- How do the digestive system organs interact? (C)
- How is food moved through the body? (C)
- What is the relationship between digestion, absorption, and elimination? (C)
- How is the function of each organ determined by its shape and structure? (C)

3. The digestive system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.

- What is the role of glucose in cellular respiration? (C)
- What is the role of the digestive system in cellular respiration, energy production, and energy transformations? (C)
- Where does the glucose that the body uses for energy come from? (F)
- What are the essential nutrients found in food needed for survival? (F)
- What are the functions of nutrients brought into the body? (F)
- What are enzymes and what do they do? (F)
- What is chyme? (F)

4. The digestive system optimizes homeostasis.

- What is the function of the large intestine and what major process occurs here, aiding in maintaining homeostasis? (F)
- How is solid waste prepared for removal? (F)

5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

- What other body systems aid the digestive system in its function? (F)
 - How would dysfunction of the digestive systems nutrient absorption processes threaten the health and survival of an organism? (C)
 - How would dysfunction of the digestive system's ability to eliminate waste threaten the health and survival of an organism? (C)
 - How could humans use their knowledge and understanding of the digestive system to make healthier choices? (P)
-

Content Knowledge

Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.

Types of digestive processes (digestion molecular absorption, elimination/ excretion)
Digestive structure and functions
Structure and function of digestive organs
Function of enzymes
Cellular respiration process and function
Energy transformations (matter to energy; energy for growth and repair)
Role of digestive processes in homeostasis
Interdependence of body systems
Making observations
Identifying variables
Presenting data
Scientific communication

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions. (MS-LS1-3)

LS1.C: Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms

- Within individual organisms, food moves through a series of chemical reactions in which it is broken down and rearranged to form new molecules, to support growth, or to release energy. (MS-LS1-7)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

A brief tour through the human digestive system, this video will address major structures and functions including the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, and large intestine. This video also mentions chemical and mechanical digestion as well as some digestive vocabulary.

Anatomy of the Digestive System Packet
Digestive System - Structure and Function slide show and graphic organizer.
Digestive System Study Guide

https://youtu.be/1UvuBYUbFk0?si=-WmzURfglHTs66_n

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Digestive System Study Guide

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YVb6-hPYDHRPho_hUPkeskn4h5kcr2xU4boX9HJR_qU/edit?usp=sharing

- 9-2 The Anatomy of the Human Digestive System_BLANK.pdf
- <https://clever.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/7fee6fec-b561-43bd-a288-b82632427440>
- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System -Structure and Function
- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System Graphic Organizer
- Rubicon Copy of Digestive Study Guide

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

digestion, absorption, elimination, organs, systems, mechanical digestion, chemical digestion, nutrients, molecules, enzymes (amylase, pepsin), surface area, homeostasis, function, efficiency, mouth, teeth, tongue, salivary glands, saliva, esophagus, peristalsis, stomach, (hydrochloric) acid, liver, gallbladder, bile, pancreas, small intestine, (micro)villi, large intestine, rectum, anus,

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- Human Biology Activities Kit*
By John R. Roland
Published by Jossey-Bass
- Your Body and How It Works*
By Pat and Barb Ward
Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.
- Human Biology and Health Student Textbook and All in One Teaching Resources*
Prentice Hall Science Explorer
Published by Pearson/Prentice Hall
- [Discovery Education Techbook](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

OPTIONAL Digestive System Board Game | Summative | Exhibition

Group Project

Optional assessment where students create a board game that teaches about the digestive system.

3 Standards Assessed

Digestive System Test | Summative | Standardized Test

Department created assessment covering content learned about the digestive system.

- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System Test NGSS Reg/Mod
- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System Test Reg/Mod

No Standards Assessed

- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System Test Reg/Mod
- Rubicon Copy of Digestive System Test NGSS Reg/Mod

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan Circulatory System

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 23 - Week 25 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Circulatory System

Explore how the circulatory system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Energy transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts:

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Circulation

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Structures of the circulatory system determine function and efficiency.
2. Functions of the circulatory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
3. The circulatory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
4. The circulatory system optimizes homeostasis.
5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Circulatory system structures determine function and efficiency.
 - What are the structures of the heart? (atria, ventricles)? (F)
 - What are valves? (F)
 - What is the septum? (F)
 - What are the four components of blood? (F)
 - What are the three major types of blood vessels? (F)
 - How does the circulatory system structures determine function and efficiency? (C)
2. Functions of the circulatory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
 - What is the function of the heart? (F)
 - What is the function of atria? (F)
 - What is the function of ventricles? (F)
 - What is the function of the septic? (F)
 - What is the function of valves? (F)
 - What is the function of veins? (F)

- What is the function of arteries? (F)
- What is the function of capillaries? (F)
- What are the functions of red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets, and plasma?(F)
- How do the functions of the circulatory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body? (C)

3. The circulatory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.

- How does oxygen get to red blood cells? (F)
- What is gas exchange? (C)
- What is diffusion? (C)
- What are the two loops of circulation? (F)
- How does oxygen bind to red blood cells? (C)
- How does the glucose from food get to body cells? (C)
- What is pulmonary circulation? (F)

4. The circulatory system optimizes homeostasis.

- How do healthy choices (regular exercise, diet, stress management, avoidance of drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep) promote cardiovascular health and, therefore, overall health? (C)
- Is exposure to toxins and stress, etc avoidable? (P)
- What is the connection between regular exercise, cellular respiration, and cardiovascular health? (C)
- How does carbon dioxide leave the circulatory system? (F) (C?)
- What would happen if there was a hole in the septum of the heart? (C)

5. The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.\

- What are the best lifestyle choices for maintaining optimum circulatory functions? (F)
- How do all organ systems contribute to cellular respiration to meet the human body's energy demands? (C)
- How does the circulatory system specifically contribute to cellular respiration to meet the human body's energy demands? (C)
- How would dysfunction of the circulatory system and its components contribute to deterioration of the body's health? (C)
- Which has a greater impact on the health of the body-- lifestyle or environment? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Types of circulatory processes (diffusion, gas exchange, oxygenation, clotting)

Circulatory structure and functions

Structure and function of circulatory organs

Function of antibodies/ antigens

Cellular respiration process and function

Energy transformations

Role of circulatory and pulmonary processes in homeostasis

Interdependence of body systems

Making observations

Data collection/ data analysis

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions. (MS-LS1-3)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Getting to Know the Circulatory System

Discovery Education- this is a reading and questions giving a general overview of the human circulatory system. Skills use include reading comprehension with purpose and is in support of the generalization that the circulatory system works with all systems to maintain homeostasis.

Reading: <https://google.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/158a8660-bf06-4626-b4ca-7fd6184aa3c2>

Human Circulatory System

This investigation reviews what we know about the circulatory system so far and then delves into exploring the components of the circulatory system. The circulatory system, also known as the cardiovascular system, includes the heart, blood vessels, and blood. It transports necessary substances through the body and removes waste products. This supports the generalization that structures of the circulatory system determine function and efficiency.

<https://google.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/f8f9a1cb-e36e-4584-92de-4042f9074afd/>

The Internal and External Anatomy of the Human Heart

Heart Internal and External

Anatomy worksheets (6-4 & 6-5)

These assignments go into detail about the structure of the human heart and support the generalization that structures of the circulatory system determine function and efficiency.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/15fFKUAKKrdW_mmqYqfwyyEryu4N4VH1/view?usp=sharing

The Beat Goes On/ Labeling the Heart

Discovery Education

This interactive game demonstrates how blood flows throughout your body and delivers the oxygen your cells need to survive. Your heart keeps the blood moving, sending it back and forth to your lungs

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

to keep it fresh with oxygen. Explore the parts of your heart and see it in action. This supports the generalization that circulation moves essential materials and removes waste products to promote interdependence of body systems and facilitate energy transformation.

<https://clever.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/4b848c65-499e-4add-b52f-336d2b236d9d>

Once students have finished The Beat Goes On and reviewed their notes/ classwork up to this point, they should use the slideshow to practice labeling the parts of the heart.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11CZQhGy7cvol8Hv9fC0o5PmamtQni6b14-d37QgahC0/edit?usp=sharing>

Blood Flow Through the Heart Slideshow and Video for Review Check for Understanding

This slideshow and video review the functions and structure of the heart and structures within the heart. It also reviews pulmonary circulation (that is, circulation between the heart and lungs, which facilitates the oxygenation of blood). This supports the generalization that circulatory interactions contribute to the life processes of human body systems.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V3AABAAoYLoz9lxDXbz8FihKutUx9rEzFjtVY4P1SMA/edit?usp=sharing>

Video demonstrating the pathway of blood through the human heart.

<https://youtu.be/jBt5jZSWWhMI?si=-Yt8d4MMXbHIXHru>

Three Types of Blood Vessels Slideshow

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1TBzClwf7tBP0fKPC_D47ucw5CwRqnKcnsfp9_MyOirE/edit?usp=sharing

Blood Composition Slide

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Uklw8YIVlvzYLDL37eKP1y8acQa96fKnC82Qhwhg-d4/edit?usp=sharing>

Blood Types and Transfusions

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SKdv2z5MHKK0AwfXo0v8x8Fpaoz1V3Fn/view?usp=sharing>

Independent Heart Rate Lab Proposal and Checklist (Lab Safety Contract, attached)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZI_VSwECFGsfNhFDtQYtyjlkU_qGb7O-ULN3ch7ywCU/edit?usp=sharing

CER Grading Rubric for Grade Seven

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R4dsXLh7ZZaafpbR9n_mJjaUW_eMasiejtMRkhsh4/edit?usp=sharing

Circulatory System Study Guide

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vTX-fBhL_SceaLvTUzoxeTsFYFrTpwzls35qc/edit?usp=sharing

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

heart, blood, blood vessels, oxygen, carbon dioxide, atrium/ atria, ventricles, oxygenated, deoxygenated, septum, valves, vein, arteries, capillaries, plasma, red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets, fibrin, hemoglobin, antigen, antibody, blood pressure, density, diffusion, circulation, cardiovascular health, pulmonary circulation, organ, system, gas exchange, cellular respiration, density, gravity

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Human Biology Activities Kit

By John R. Roland

Published by Jossey-Bass

Your Body and How It Works

By Pat and Barb Ward

Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Human Biology and Health Student Textbook and All in One Teaching Resources

Prentice Hall Science Explorer

Published by Pearson/Prentice Hall

[Discovery Education Techbook](#)


Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Journey of a Red Blood Cell | Summative | Exhibition

Personal Project


Students will use a comic strip/graphic novel format to describe the journey of a red blood cell throughout the body and all of the “experiences” it has.

 Rubicon Copy of The Journey of a Red Blood Cell 2022

No Standards Assessed

Circulatory System Test | Summative | Standardized Test

Department created assessment based on the content learned about the circulatory system .

 Rubicon Copy of Circulatory System Test

No Standards Assessed

 Rubicon Copy of The Journey of a Red Blood Cell 2022    Rubicon Copy of Circulatory System Test 2023  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan Nervous System

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 26 - Week 27 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 31, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Explore how the nervous systems interacts with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Energy Transfer
- Homeostasis

Concepts:

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence
- Communication
- Environment
- Memory

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Structures of the nervous system function to respond to stimulus.
2. Energy transformations at sensory receptors—such as mechanical pressure, chemical interactions, or light—enable the conversion of external stimuli into electrical signals.
3. The central nervous system (CNS) and peripheral nervous system (PNS) interact to detect changes in the environment and produce an appropriate response.
4. Memories formed through past experiences influence learned behaviors, and in what ways do these behaviors help the nervous and endocrine systems work together to maintain homeostasis in changing internal and external conditions.
5. Communication through the nervous system coordinate the activities of multiple body systems, and the interdependence of these systems is essential for maintaining homeostasis when the body encounters internal or external changes.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Structures of the nervous system function to respond to stimulus.
 - What are the regions of the brain? (F)
 - What is the main function of the cerebrum? (F)
 - What is the main function of the cerebellum? (F)
 - What is the main function of the brain stem? (F)
 - What are the three types of neurons? (F)
 - What is the function of sensory neurons? (F)
 - What is the function of the interneurons? (F)
 - What is the function of the motor neurons? (F)
 - What is a nerve impulse? (F)
 - What is a stimulus? (F)
 - How do structures of the nervous system work together to respond to the internal and external environment? (C)
2. Energy transformations at sensory receptors—such as mechanical pressure, chemical interactions, or light—enable the conversion of external stimuli into electrical signals.
 - What is a response? (F)
 - What is a stimulus? (F)

- What are the five senses? (F)
 - What type of energy travels through a neuron? (F)
 - Where is information analyzed? (F)
 - What is a reflex? (F)
 - How does the nervous system collect internal and external information? (C)
3. The central nervous system (CNS) and peripheral nervous system (PNS) interact to detect changes in the environment and produce an appropriate responses.
- What are the divisions of the nervous system? (F)
 - What is the function of the central nervous system? (F)
 - What is the function of the peripheral nervous system (F)
 - How are nerve impulses generated? (C)
 - How do nerve impulses cross the synapse? (C)
4. Memories formed through past experiences influence learned behaviors, and in what ways do these behaviors help the nervous and endocrine systems work together to maintain homeostasis in changing internal and external conditions?
- How are memories created? (C)
 - How do nervous system responses become learned behavior? (C)
 - How do learned behaviors aid in survival? (C)
 - How is the memory of a stimulus created? (C)
 - Are behaviors learned through experience always advantageous? (P)
5. Communication through the nervous system coordinate the activities of multiple body systems, and the interdependence of these systems is essential for maintaining homeostasis when the body encounters internal or external changes.
- How does the muscular system work with the nervous system in a reflex? (F)
 - How does the endocrine system work with the nervous system in a reflex? (F)
 - What interactions of the nervous system and other body systems contribute to the health and survival of the organism? (C)
 - How do reflex arcs aid in survival? (C)
 - How do the sense organs work with the nervous system to promote the health of the organism? (C)
 - How do the sense organs work with the nervous system to aid in survival? (C)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Sensory receptors detect external stimuli.
 Neurons transmit electrical signals.
 Synapses allow neuron communication.
 Brain processes and interprets information.
 Spinal cord transmits signals to and from brain.
 Reflex actions are rapid, involuntary responses.
 Central nervous system consists of brain and spinal cord.
 Peripheral nervous system connects the CNS to limbs and organs.
 Autonomic nervous system controls involuntary actions.
 Neurotransmitters facilitate signal transmission between neurons.
 Homeostasis regulated by the nervous system.

Nervous system interacts with other body systems.
Neuron structure supports its function.
Nervous system models show information flow.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Structure, Function, and Information Processing

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS1-3. Use argument supported by evidence for how the body is a system of interacting subsystems composed of groups of cells. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS1-8. Gather and synthesize information that sensory receptors respond to stimuli by sending messages to the brain for immediate behavior or storage as memories. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

2. Cause and Effect: Mechanism and Prediction – Events have causes, sometimes simple, sometimes multifaceted. Deciphering causal relationships, and the mechanisms by which they are mediated, is a major activity of science and engineering.

- Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.

4. Systems and System Models – A system is an organized group of related objects or components; models can be used for understanding and predicting the behavior of systems.

- Systems may interact with other systems; they may have sub-systems and be a part of larger complex systems.
- Models can be used to represent systems and their interactions—such as inputs, processes and outputs—and energy, matter, and information flows within systems.

6. Structure and Function – The way an object is shaped or structured determines many of its properties and functions.

- Complex and microscopic structures and systems can be visualized, modeled, and used to describe how their function depends on the shapes, composition, and relationships among its parts; therefore, complex natural and designed structures/systems can be analyzed to determine how they function.

7. Stability and Change – For both designed and natural systems, conditions that affect stability and factors that control rates of change are critical elements to consider and understand.

- Small changes in one part of a system might cause large changes in another part.
- Systems in dynamic equilibrium are stable due to a balance of feedback mechanisms.

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)




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Core Learning Activities




The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.




Nervous System slide show and guided notes
Nervous System Study Guide
Discover Education - The Central Nervous System Studio Board
(worksheet Lobes of the Brain)

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

 Rubicon Copy of Notes on Nervous system  

 Rubicon Copy of Nervous System Study Guide  

 Rubicon Copy of Unit 6: Nervous System  

 Rubicon Copy of Lobes of the Brain DE  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Neuron
Dendrite
Axon
Synapse:
Central Nervous System (CNS)
Peripheral Nervous System (PNS)
Brain
Spinal Cord
Sensory Neurons
Motor Neurons
Interneurons:
Reflex
Homeostasis
Stimulus
Response
Nerve Impulse
Neurotransmitter
Cerebrum
Cerebellum
Brainstem

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Human Biology Activities Kit

By John R. Roland

Published by Jossey-Bass

Your Body and How It Works

By Pat and Barb Ward




Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Human Biology and Health Student Textbook and All in One Teaching Resources

Prentice Hall Science Explorer

Published by Pearson/Prentice Hall

[Discovery Education Techbook](#)

 Rubicon Copy of Lobes of the Brain DE  

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

The 5 Senses Tab Booklet | Summative | Personal Project

Research and organize information on each of the five senses and how they take in information.

 Rubicon CopyTHE 5 SENSES Tab Booklet


No Standards Assessed

Reflex Arc Model | Summative | Personal Project

Write a short (paragraph) story where information is inputted into the brain, processed and then acted upon.

Draw and label a reflex arc that represents your story.


Describe everything that occurs during the event.

 Rubicon Copy of Reflex Arc Rubric

No Standards Assessed

Grade 7 Science Final Exam | Summative | Standardized Test

Department created assessment of important concepts learned throughout the year.

 Rubicon Copy of Science Final

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Musculoskeletal System (Optional)

Newtown Middle School / Grade 7 / Science

Week 27 - Week 28 | 4 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Jan 26, 2026 by Musco, Susan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

An **OPTIONAL** unit that explores how the skeletal and muscular systems interact with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

This unit is optional because it is not included in the NGSS standards but, if time permits, is valuable to the students' understanding of how the human body works as an interdependent collection of systems.

As this is an **OPTIONAL** unit, there are no assessments and the material is not covered on the final exam.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens:

- Movement, support and protection

Concepts

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Movement results from coordinated interactions among interdependent body systems
2. Interdependent body systems interact to protect vital organs and maintain structural support.
3. The musculoskeletal system relies on the interaction of various tissues and organs to support, protect and facilitate movement.
4. The musculoskeletal system coordinates muscles, bones, and connective tissues to adjust strength, endurance, and flexibility, allowing the body to meet different physical demands and energy needs.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Movement results from coordinated interactions among interdependent body systems.
 - What are the three types of muscle? (F)
 - What are tendons? (F)
 - What are ligaments? (F)
 - What is bone made of? (F)
 - How do muscles and bones work together to facilitate movement? (C)
 - How do muscles work? (C)
2. Interdependent body systems interact to protect vital organs and maintain structural support.
 - How do bones and muscles work together to protect vital organs? (F)
 - Which muscles help protect internal organs? (F)
 - How do fixed joints aid in protection? (F)
 - How do flat bones protect organs? (F)
 - What are the layers of bone? (F)
 - How would damage to one body system affect the body's ability to protect vital organs and maintain structure? (C)

3. The musculoskeletal system depends on the coordinated interaction of bones, muscles, and connective tissues to provide support, protect organs, and enable movement.
 - o What are joints? (F)
 - o What is connective tissue? (F)
 - o What is cartilage?(F)
 - o How does the coordinated interaction of bones, muscles, and connective tissues enable the musculoskeletal system to provide support, protect organs, and facilitate movement?(C)
4. The musculoskeletal system coordinates muscles, bones, and connective tissues to adjust strength, endurance, and flexibility, allowing the body to meet different physical demands and energy needs.
 - o How do muscles grow? (F)
 - o How do you increase bone density? (F)
 - o In what ways do muscles and bones change when the body is exposed to different types of physical activity? (C)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Functions of bones
 Functions of muscles
 Types of joints
 Bone structure and composition
 Interaction between bones and muscles
 Role of tendons and ligaments
 Importance of the skeletal system
 Importance of the muscular system
 Muscle contraction process
 Common musculoskeletal disorders

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Structure, Function, and Information Processing

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS1-3. Use argument supported by evidence for how the body is a system of interacting subsystems composed of groups of cells. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument.

Practice 2. Developing and using models

Modeling in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to developing, using, and revising models to describe, test, and predict more abstract phenomena and design systems.

Develop and/or use a model to predict and/or describe phenomena.

Develop a model to describe unobservable mechanisms.

Practice 4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to extending quantitative analysis to investigations, distinguishing between correlation and causation, and basic statistical techniques of data and error analysis.

Construct, analyze, and/or interpret graphical displays of data and/or large data sets to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.

Practice 6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include constructing explanations and designing solutions supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

Construct an explanation using models or representations.

Practice 8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to evaluating the merit and validity of ideas and methods.

Communicate scientific and/or technical information (e.g. about a proposed object, tool, process, system) in writing and/or through oral presentations.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions. (MS-LS1-3)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)



















[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Muscle Types slide show and graphic organizer for guided notes
Bones, Four parts of Human Bone slideshows and Bones, Joints and Ligaments guided notes.
Muscle/Skeleton Review

-  Rubicon Copy of Type of Muscle Graphic Organizer  
-  Rubicon Copy of Bones, Joints and Ligaments  
-  Rubicon Copy of Muscle Skeleton Review  
-  Rubicon Copy of Muscle Types  
-  Rubicon Copy The Four Parts (Layers) of Human Bone Google Slides Presentation  
-  Rubicon Copy of Bones  

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Muscle, bone, cardiac muscle, smooth muscle, striated muscle, flat bone, long bone, irregular bone, short bone, cartilage, ligament, tendon, contract, relax, bone marrow (red and yellow), compact

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Human Biology Activities Kit
By John R. Roland
Published by Jossey-Bass

bone, pivot joint, hinge joint, ball and socket joint, movable joint, spongy bone, gliding joint fixed joint.

Your Body and How It Works

By Pat and Barb Ward

Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Human Biology and Health Student Textbook and All in One Teaching Resources

Prentice Hall Science Explorer

Published by Pearson/Prentice Hall

[Discovery Education Techbook](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Grade 8 Science

Curriculum Presentation 2026
Presented by: Jennifer Betesh

Grade 8 Science Curriculum Summarized

The Grade 8 Science curriculum is organized around three core disciplines: Biology, Physics, and Astronomy. Biology units emphasize how traits are inherited from parent to offspring, how sexual reproduction increases variation within a species, and how natural selection and adaptations drive evolutionary change over many generations. Instruction is grounded in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and emphasizes inquiry-based learning, where students ask questions, analyze evidence, and construct explanations. Students regularly engage in cooperative group work to investigate real-world phenomena, share ideas, and deepen their understanding through scientific discourse.

Unit 1: Scientific Inquiry

Purpose: To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Lens: Lens: Communication, data collection and analysis, evidence, reasoning, fair tests, variables, independent and dependent variables, controlled variables, observations, inferences and predictions

Concepts: Analyze, Evidence, Reasoning, data collection, graphing, asking questions

Activities:

Observation, Inference
Prediction Activity

Identifying Variables M&M Lab
and Practice Worksheets

Collecting and Graphing Data
Practice

Claim-Evidence-Reasoning
Paragraphs

Unit 1 Generalizations

1. Scientists identify variables and constants in order to develop a testable hypothesis to find solutions to scientific questions.
2. Scientists present data in data table and graphs to help visualize information more clearly and identify trends.
3. The ability to control variables, identify sources of error and conduct multiple trials creates a fair and valid test.

Unit 2: Asexual Reproduction & Genetics

Purpose: To explore the basics of genetics and understand that asexual reproduction results in genetically identical organisms.

Lens: Structure and Function

Concepts: Cell division, reproductive strategies, genetic material, and characteristics

Activities:

- Reproductive strategies activity
- Tour of the Basics
- A Recipe for Traits (Dog DNA activity)
- Color a DNA molecule
- Strawberry DNA Extraction Lab (Partnership with Newtown High School)
- Summative Assessment

Unit 2: Generalizations

Topic Generalizations:

1. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
2. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
3. Asexual reproduction creates offspring with identical genetic information.
4. Genetic material is read and processed by a cell to fabricate proteins which are the building blocks of life.
5. Structures found in cells determine an organism's attributes.
6. Asexual reproductive processes have been adapted by multicellular organisms for other essential life functions.

Unit 3: Sexual Reproduction & Heredity

Purpose: To understand that reproduction is critical to the continuation of a species and that sexual reproduction allows for diversity in a species.

Lens: Stability and change

Concepts: sexual reproduction, diversity, mutations, animal behaviors and plant structures

Activities

- Reproductive Strategies Inquiry Activity
- QFT with “Twins” Phenomena
- Flower Dissection
- Design a Flower Model (optional)
- Heredity and the Environment
- Inventory of My Traits
- Punnett Squares
- Genetics with a Smile
- Monster Invasion

Unit 3: Generalizations

Topic generalizations:

1. Asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information compared to sexual reproduction which results in offspring with genetic variation.
2. Structural changes to genes (mutations) located on chromosomes may transform proteins and in turn, may result in harmful, beneficial, or neutral changes to the structure and function of the organism.
3. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction of animals.
4. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction of plants.
5. Both environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.

Unit 4: Adaptations & Natural Selection

Purpose: To understand what is necessary for the continuation and survival of a species in its environment.

Lens: Change over time

Concepts:

- Structure & function
- Stability & change
- Mutations & adaptations
- Evidence for evolution
- Natural & artificial selection

Activities:

- Stick Bug Lab Activity
- Peppered Moth Lab Activity
- Create a Creature Adaptations Project
- X-Men Mutations Activity
- Evidence for Evolution Stations
- Artificial Selection (Jigsaw Style) Presentation Project

Extension: March Mammal Madness

Unit 4: Generalizations

1. Patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth and provide evidence to show that species have changed over time.
2. Anatomical structures from different species, both current and past, provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
3. Observations of embryological development across multiple different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
4. Variations in genetic information from different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships.
5. Genetic diversity within a species population ensures the probability that some individuals will survive and reproduce in a specific environment.
6. Natural Selection may contribute to changes in the frequency of traits over time.
7. Humans use Artificial Selection to alter/design/change their environment to suit their needs.

Unit 5: Physics (Forces in Motion)

Purpose: -To explore and understand what makes objects move, stop moving or change directions.

-To explore and understand what causes changes in motion and how potential and kinetic energy are related to an object's motion.

Lens: Cause and effect

Concepts:

- Newton's laws of motion
- Gravity
- Inertia
- Forces
- Potential and Kinetic Energy

Activities:

- Speed CPO Ramps Lab
- Distance versus Time Graphing Activities
- Newton's Laws of Motion Stations
- Paper Roller Coaster Problem Based Learning Activity
- Physics Carnival

Unit 5: Generalizations

1. Newton's laws of motion explain what keeps objects at rest and what keeps objects in motion.
2. Use models to demonstrate the concepts of force, acceleration, and potential & kinetic energy.
3. Altering an object's mass and/or speed causes changes to the energy of an object.

Unit 6: Earth in Space

Purpose: To understand the predictable patterns of motion relative to the Earth, Sun, and Moon and how these movements cause the phases of the moon, eclipses, and seasons.

Lens: Patterns and systems

Concepts: eclipses, seasons, phases of the moon, gravity and inertia, orbits

Activities:

- Astronomy Word Sort
- Astronomy Stations - Scale, Orbits and Gravity
- PhET Lab: Gravity & Orbits
- Reason for the Seasons Exploration
- Phases of the moon modeling & webquest
- Astronomy Model Summative Task

Unit 6: Generalizations

1. The interaction/interplay between gravity and the inertia of an object creates the predictable motion of objects in the solar system.
2. The orbital pathways of the planets and moons and the position of the Sun lead to interactions that produce astronomical phenomena.
3. The relative positions of the Earth and the Sun produce climatic variability across the globe.

Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection

How has the curriculum improved from the original version to the this newly revised version?

This revised version of our curriculum has been updated to place the students at the center of their learning. Our new curriculum includes the NGSS standards, inquiry lessons, student-centered activities, as well as a major focus for the year of biology and ending with physics and astronomy. Our physics unit is focused around the idea of building a “paper-roller coaster” which is a highlight of the year when we present them to one another in our “physics carnival.”

Reflecting back on the process, what improvements to the curriculum do you look forward to implementing the most?

While the curriculum has been revised, it is something that we have been working on since the adoption of the NGSS standards in 2018. We constantly work to improve our lessons and units to create driving questions that engage the students, based on their needs and interests. I am most excited to get the students in the driver’s seat and really steer the direction of the unit. They will be coming up with the driving questions that lead us through the unit lessons.



Science Grade 8 (Under Review/Revision)

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Saturday, Feb 7, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Unit Calendar by Year

Unit	Au	Sep					Oct				Nov				Dec				Jan				Feb			Mar				Apr			May			Ju			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	
Scientific Inquiry (The Nature of Science)																																							
Asexual Reproduction & Genetics																																							
Sexual Reproduction and Heredity																																							
Natural Selection & Adaptations																																							
Physics																																							
Astronomy																																							

6 Units found



Unit Plan

Scientific Inquiry (The Nature of Science)

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 2 - Week 3 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Dec 19, 2025 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Communication, data collection and analysis, evidence, reasoning, fair tests, variables, independent and dependent variables, controlled variables, observations, inferences and predictions

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Topic Generalizations

1. Scientists identify variables and constants in order to develop a testable hypothesis to find solutions to scientific questions.
2. Scientists present data in data table and graphs to help visualize information more clearly and identify trends.
3. The ability to control variables, identify sources of error and conduct multiple trials creates a fair and valid test.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

Topic Generalizations

1. Scientists identify variable and constants to design valid investigations that reveal cause and effect relationships.
 - a. What are variables? (F)
 - b. What is an independent variable? (F)
 - c. What is a dependent variable? (F)
 - d. What are constants/controlled variables? (F)
 - e. What is an observation? (F)
 - f. What is a prediction? (F)
 - g. What is an inference? (F)
 - h. How do repeated trials improve the reliability of data? (C)
 - i. Why must we have a common language of units when sharing our data with other scientists? (C)
 - j. Which is more dangerous in science: a poorly chosen independent variable or a forgotten constant? How could each one mislead the world? (P)
 - k. If two variables change at the same time, who (or what) gets the credit for causing the outcome? (P)
2. Scientists present data in data table and graphs to help visualize information more clearly and identify trends.
 - a. When and how are bar and line graphs used? (F)
 - b. How is a data table accurately constructed? (F)
 - c. How is a graph accurately constructed? (F)
 - d. How can we use graphs to visually display our data/findings? (C)
 - e. If a trend exists but you can't see it in your graph, does it still matter? Does the graph fail, or does the scientist? (P)

3. The ability to control variables, identify sources of error and conduct multiple trials creates a fair and valid test.
- How is this scientific process used in everyday life? (C)
 - What is the relationship between the use of constants in an experiment and the validity of that experiment? (C)
 - Why is the ability to accurately analyze data critical in experimentation? (C)
 - Could an experiment with **no** controlled variables ever be considered fair? What would “fair” even mean in that case? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- The independent variable is the manipulated variable in an experiment.
- The dependent variable is the measured variable in an experiment.
- Constants or controlled variables are the variables in a lab that must be kept the same throughout.
- The control is the part of the lab used for comparison.
- Three trials and an average should be done in an experiment to ensure a fair test.
- Bar graphs are used to show comparisons between unrelated variables and line graphs are used to show trends over time.
- The IV goes on the left column of a data table and the DV goes on the right column.
- On a graph, the Y-axis is where the dependent variable is plotted and the X-axis is where the independent variable is plotted.
- Graphing and data table set up rules need to be followed when creating each.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument.
- Ask questions to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models.
- Ask questions to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.
- Ask questions that can be investigated within the scope of the classroom, outdoor environment, and museums and other public facilities with available resources and, when appropriate, frame a hypothesis based on observations and scientific principles.

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Practice identifying variables in experiments using Spongebob worksheets, Simpsons Worksheets,
Create data table and graphs for various data collected or given
Claim, Evidence and Reasoning Paragraph

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

variable, independent variable, dependent variable, constant, controlled variable, hypothesis, data table, graph, observation, inference, prediction, bar graph, line graph, X-axis and Y-axis, phenomenon, model, relationship

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Variety of handouts and practice sheets for identifying variables and making data tables and graphs.

Edpuzzle: Nature of Science
Edpuzzle: Scientific Variables

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

 Copy of Low Heart Rate Lab 2023    Copy of Water Bottle Flip Lab  

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Asexual Reproduction & Genetics

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 4 - Week 8 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 5, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To explore the basics of genetics and understand that asexual reproduction results in genetically identical organisms.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Structure and function

Concepts: Cell division, reproductive strategies, genetic material, and characteristics

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Topic Generalizations:

1. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
2. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
3. Asexual reproduction creates offspring with identical genetic information.
4. Genetic material is read and processed by a cell to fabricate proteins which are the building blocks of life.
5. Structures found in cells determine an organism's attributes.
6. Asexual reproductive processes have been adapted by multicellular organisms for other essential life functions.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
 - a. What are the different reproductive strategies used by animals to pass on traits & create offspring? (F)
 - b. What happens to a species if organisms don't reproduce? (F)
 - c. What is necessary for the continuation of a species? (F)
 - d. How do specialized structures in plants contribute to their reproductive success? (C)
 - e. If a behavior increases reproduction but decreases survival, is it still a "good" strategy? (P)
2. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
 - a. What are the different reproductive strategies used by plants to pass on traits & create offspring? (F)
 - b. How do specialized structures in plants contribute to their reproductive success? (C)
 - c. What happens to a species if organisms don't reproduce? (P)
 - d. What is necessary for the continuation of a species? (P)
3. Asexual reproduction creates offspring with identical genetic information.
 - a. What is asexual reproduction? (F)
 - b. Why do offspring from asexual reproduction have identical genetic information? (F)
 - c. What is the outcome of mitosis? (F)

- d. What are the advantages/disadvantages of asexual reproduction? (C)
 - e. How does the type of reproduction affect the survival and adaptation of species over time? (C)
 - f. How does one cell develop into the trillions of cells in our body? (C)
 - g. Would life evolve if humans reproduced asexually? (P)
4. Genetic material is read and processed by a cell to fabricate proteins which are the building blocks of life.
- a. What is a protein? (F)
 - b. Do plants have DNA? (F)
 - c. How does the structure of DNA allow it to perform its functions? (C)
 - d. What happens when you change the structure of DNA? (C)
 - e. What would happen if you could rewrite the protein-building instructions in your DNA? Would you still be “you”? (P)
 - f. If DNA contains all the instructions for life, why isn't DNA considered alive? (P)
5. Structures found in cells determine an organism's attributes.
- a. What is the difference between genes, chromosomes, DNA and alleles? (F)
 - b. What is a gene? (F)
 - c. What is an allele? (F)
 - d. What is a chromosome? (F)
 - e. How are genes, chromosomes and DNA related to each other (C)?
 - f. What is a trait? (F)
 - g. How are genes expressed as traits? (C)
 - h. What causes humans to look so different? (C)
 - i. If two organisms have nearly identical cell structures, why can their traits be so different? What else might be influencing them? (P)
 - j. Which has more power over an organism's traits—the structures inside its cells, or the environment outside its body? (P)
6. Asexual reproductive processes have been adapted by multicellular organisms for other essential life functions.
- a. What process do multicellular organisms (humans) use that is similar to asexual reproduction? (F)
 - b. What is mitosis used for in humans? (F)
 - c. How can models help us understand the processes of asexual reproduction? (C)
 - d. Which is more important for survival: the ability to reproduce or the ability to repair? What happens when an organism can do one but not the other? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- Explore the process of cell division which results in identical cells/organisms (mitosis) and understand that this process results in somatic (body cells) that are identical to the parent cell and each other.
- Draw a model of how asexual organisms reproduce (mitosis) resulting in identical organisms (not necessary to know specific steps).
- Draw a model of DNA, chromosomes and genes to demonstrate how they are related to one another.
- DNA codes for proteins and proteins make traits.

- To understand that organisms who reproduce asexually do not have genetic diversity.
- Analyze and graph data about how both environmental and genetic factors affect plant growth.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Growth, Development, and Reproduction of Organisms

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS1-4. Use argument based on empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support an explanation for how characteristic animal behaviors and specialized plant structures affect the probability of successful reproduction of animals and plants respectively. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS3-2. Develop and use a model to describe why asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information and sexual reproduction results in offspring with genetic variation. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

1. Patterns – Observed patterns in nature guide organization and classification and prompt questions about relationships and causes underlying them.

- Graphs, charts, and images can be used to identify patterns in data.

6. Structure and Function – The way an object is shaped or structured determines many of its properties and functions.

- Complex and microscopic structures and systems can be visualized, modeled, and used to describe how their function depends on the shapes, composition, and relationships among its parts; therefore, complex natural and designed structures/systems can be analyzed to determine how they function.
- Structures can be designed to serve particular functions by taking into account properties of different materials, and how materials can be shaped and used.

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Crosscutting Concepts

Science is a Way of Knowing

- Science knowledge is cumulative and many people, from many generations and nations, have contributed to science knowledge.

Science is a Human Endeavor

- Men and women from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds work as scientists and engineers.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- All living things are made up of cells, which is the smallest unit that can be said to be alive. An organism may consist of one single cell (unicellular) or many different numbers and types of cells (multicellular). (MS-LS1-1)
- Organisms reproduce, either sexually or asexually, and transfer their genetic information to their offspring. (secondary to MSLS3-2)
- Within cells, special structures are responsible for particular functions, and the cell membrane forms the boundary that controls what enters and leaves the cell. (MS-LS1-2)

LS3: Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits

LS3.A: Inheritance of Traits

- ☑ Genes are located in the chromosomes of cells, with each chromosome pair containing two variants of each of many distinct genes. Each distinct gene chiefly controls the production of specific proteins, which in turn affects the traits of the individual. Changes (mutations) to genes can result in changes to proteins, which can affect the structures and functions of the organism and thereby change traits. (MS-LS3-1)
- ☑ Variations of inherited traits between parent and offspring arise from genetic differences that result from the subset of chromosomes (and therefore genes) inherited. (MS-LS3-2)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)
[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- Asexual summative assessment
- Reproductive strategies activity
- Tour of the Basics
- A Recipe for Traits (Dog DNA activity)
- Color a DNA molecule
- Strawberry DNA Extraction Lab

Unit 2: Asexual Reproduction & Genetics

Copy of A Recipe for Traits (Exploring Dog DNA) 2023

Copy of Tour of the Basics WebQuest (Updated)

Reproductive Strategies

Asexual_Reproduction_Student_Worksheet.pdf

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Asexual reproduction, DNA, genes, chromosomes, protein, offspring mitosis, allele, chromatid, duplicated chromosome, traits, reproduction, genetic variation

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- Discovery Education - Asexual Reproduction and Genetics Units
- [Tour of the Basics](#)
- Amoeba Sisters:
 - [Mitosis](#)
 - [DNA, Chromosomes, Genes, & Traits: An Intro to Heredity](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Asexual Reproduction Jigsaw Project | Summative | Group Project
 Oral Report | Other Visual Assessments | Other written assessments
 Located in Shared Drive.
 No Standards Assessed

Asexual Reproduction Quiz | Summative | Other written assessments

Located in Shared Drive.

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan

Sexual Reproduction and Heredity

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 9 - Week 14 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 5, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To understand that reproduction is critical to the continuation of a species and that sexual reproduction allows for diversity in a species.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Stability and change

Concepts: sexual reproduction, diversity, mutations, animal behaviors and plant structures

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Topic generalizations:

1. Asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information compared to sexual reproduction which results in offspring with genetic variation.
2. Structural changes to genes (mutations) located on chromosomes may transform proteins and in turn, may result in harmful, beneficial, or neutral changes to the structure and function of the organism.
3. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction of animals.
4. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction of plants.
5. Both environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information compared to sexual reproduction which results in offspring with genetic variation.
 - a. What are sex cells and how many chromosomes do they contain? (F)
 - b. What is the result of meiosis? (F)
 - c. What are the major differences between mitosis and meiosis? (F)
 - d. How is gender determined? (F)
 - e. What is a gamete? (F)
 - f. What are the major differences between sexual and asexual reproduction? (F)
 - g. How do gene combinations result in diversity? (C)
 - h. What are the different reproductive strategies used by organisms to pass on traits & create offspring? (F)
 - i. Should humans have the ability to choose gender and/or traits of their children? (P)
 - j. Does genetic diversity always benefit a species? (P)
2. Structural changes to genes (mutations) located on chromosomes may transform proteins and in turn, may result in harmful, beneficial, or neutral changes to the structure and function of the organism.
 - a. What are the three categories of mutations (harmful, beneficial and neutral)? (F)
 - b. How can a mutation affect an organism? (C)
 - c. If a mutation makes an organism stronger, does that mean the "error" was actually an improvement? (P)

d. If mutations shape every species that exists, why do we still think of them as mistakes? (P)

3. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction of animals.

a. How do certain animal behaviors help increase the chances of successful reproduction? (F)

b. How do behaviors like nest building, herding, or vocalizations in animals, play a role in attracting mates, protecting offspring, or reproducing? (F)

c. How does reproduction ensure the continuation of our species? (C)

d. What are advantages/disadvantages in asexual vs. sexual reproduction? (P)

e. If an animal changes its behavior due to the environment, is it adapting for survival, reproduction, or both? (P)

4. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction of plants.

a. What are the major structures/functions of the reproductive parts and how do they help ensure successful reproduction of a species? (F)

b. What is pollination? (F)

c. How do pollinators help aid in the reproduction of plants? (C)

d. How do bright flowers or hard shell seeds in plants help aid in successful transfer of reproductive material? (C)

e. If a plant reproduces successfully without a specialized structure, does that make the structure unnecessary—or just extra insurance? (P)

f. Which is more important for a plant's future: attracting pollinators or protecting its seeds? (P)

g. If plants can't move, how do their structures "decide" the best way to reproduce? (P)

5. Both environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.

a. What is the definition and an example of an environmental factor? (F)

b. What is the definition and an example of a genetic factor? (F)

c. Given a data set, explain how both environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of a plant population. (C)

d. If two genetically identical organisms grow up in very different environments, will they end up the same—or completely different? (P)

d. Which matters more for an organism's growth: the blueprint inside its DNA or the conditions around it (Nature versus Nurture)? (P)

f. Can we really separate nature from nurture, or are they always working together in ways we can't see? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- Explain the similarities and differences in cell division in somatic and germ cells (mitosis and meiosis).
- Use a Punnett square to determine the probability of traits being passed down from parent to offspring.
- Describe how genetic information is organized in genes on chromosomes, and explain sex determination in humans.
- Explain how animal behaviors can affect the successful reproduction of an organism.
- Explain how the reproductive structures of a plant can lead to successful reproduction.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Growth, Development, and Reproduction of Organisms

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS1-4. Use argument based on empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support an explanation for how characteristic animal behaviors and specialized plant structures affect the probability of successful reproduction of animals and plants respectively. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS1-5. Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence for how environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS3-1. Develop and use a model to describe why structural changes to genes (mutations) located on chromosomes may affect proteins and may result in harmful, beneficial, or neutral effects to the structure and function of the organism. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS3-2. Develop and use a model to describe why asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information and sexual reproduction results in offspring with genetic variation. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models.

Practice 2. Developing and using models

Modeling in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to developing, using, and revising models to describe, test, and predict more abstract phenomena and design systems.

- Evaluate limitations of a model for a proposed object or tool.
- Develop or modify a model—based on evidence – to match what happens if a variable or component of a system is changed.
- Develop and/or revise a model to show the relationships among variables, including those that are not observable but predict observable phenomena.
- Develop and/or use a model to predict and/or describe phenomena.
- Develop a model to describe unobservable mechanisms.

Practice 3. Planning and carrying out investigations

Planning and carrying out investigations in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include investigations that use multiple variables and provide evidence to support explanations or solutions.

- Collect data to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence to answer scientific questions or test design solutions under a range of conditions.

Practice 4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to extending quantitative analysis to investigations, distinguishing between correlation and causation, and basic statistical techniques of data and error analysis.

- Construct, analyze, and/or interpret graphical displays of data and/or large data sets to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.
- Use graphical displays (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, and/or tables) of large data sets to identify temporal and spatial relationships.

Practice 6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include constructing explanations and designing solutions supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

- Construct an explanation using models or representations.
- Apply scientific ideas, principles, and/or evidence to construct, revise and/or use an explanation for real-world phenomena, examples, or events.

Practice 8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to evaluating the merit and validity of ideas and methods.

- Critically read scientific texts adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas and/or obtain scientific and/or technical information to describe patterns in and/or evidence about the natural and designed world(s).

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Practices

Scientific Knowledge is Based on Empirical Evidence

- Science knowledge is based upon logical and conceptual connections between evidence and explanations.

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

1. Patterns – Observed patterns in nature guide organization and classification and prompt questions about relationships and causes underlying them.

- Macroscopic patterns are related to the nature of microscopic and atomic-level structure.
- Patterns can be used to identify cause and effect relationships.
- Graphs, charts, and images can be used to identify patterns in data.

6. Structure and Function – The way an object is shaped or structured determines many of its properties and functions.

- Complex and microscopic structures and systems can be visualized, modeled, and used to describe how their function depends on the shapes, composition, and relationships among its parts; therefore, complex natural and designed structures/systems can be analyzed to determine how they function.
- Structures can be designed to serve particular functions by taking into account properties of different materials, and how materials can be shaped and used.

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Crosscutting Concepts

Science is a Way of Knowing

- Science knowledge is cumulative and many people, from many generations and nations, have contributed to science knowledge.

Science is a Human Endeavor

- Men and women from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds work as scientists and engineers.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

LS1.A: Structure and Function

- All living things are made up of cells, which is the smallest unit that can be said to be alive. An organism may consist of one single cell (unicellular) or many different numbers and types of cells (multicellular). (MS-LS1-1)
- Organisms reproduce, either sexually or asexually, and transfer their genetic information to their offspring. (secondary to MS-LS3-2)
- Within cells, special structures are responsible for particular functions, and the cell membrane forms the boundary that controls what enters and leaves the cell. (MS-LS1-2)
- In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions. (MS-LS1-3)

LS1.B: Growth and Development of Organisms

- Animals engage in characteristic behaviors that increase the odds of reproduction. (MS-LS1-4)
- Plants reproduce in a variety of ways, sometimes depending on animal behavior and specialized features for reproduction. (MS-LS1-4)
- Genetic factors as well as local conditions affect the growth of the adult plant. (MS-LS1-5)

LS3: Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits

LS3.A: Inheritance of Traits

- Genes are located in the chromosomes of cells, with each chromosome pair containing two variants of each of many distinct genes. Each distinct gene chiefly controls the production of specific proteins, which in turn affects the traits of the individual. Changes (mutations) to genes can result in changes to proteins, which can affect the structures and functions of the organism and thereby change traits. (MS-LS3-1)
- Variations of inherited traits between parent and offspring arise from genetic differences that result from the subset of chromosomes (and therefore genes) inherited. (MS-LS3-2)

LS3.B: Variation of Traits

- In sexually reproducing organisms, each parent contributes half of the genes acquired (at random) by the offspring. Individuals have two of each chromosome and hence two alleles of each gene, one acquired from each parent. These versions may be identical or may differ from each other. (MS-LS3-2)
- In addition to variations that arise from sexual reproduction, genetic information can be altered because of mutations. Though rare, mutations may result in changes to the structure and function of proteins. Some changes are beneficial, others harmful, and some neutral to the organism. (MS-LS3-1)

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- QFT "Twins Phenomena"
- Reproductive Strategies Inquiry Activity
- Flower Dissection
- Design a Flower Model (optional)
- Heredity and the Environment
- Inventory of My Traits
- Punnett Squares
- Genetics with a Smile
- Monster Invasion

Unit 3: Sexual Reproduction & Heredity

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

meiosis, nucleus, DNA, chromosome, gene, sperm, egg, trait, gamete, punnett square, inherit, inheritance, trait, variation, allele, version, identical, genetic variation, genotype, phenotype, homozygous, heterozygous, dominant, recessive, purebred, hybrid, homologous, sexual reproduction

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- YouTube: [Twins Phenomenon Video](#)
- Discovery Education - Modifying Organisms, Reproduction
- TED ED: [How Mendel's Pea Plants Helped us Understand Genetics](#)
- Amoeba Sisters: [Asexual and Sexual Reproduction](#)
- Amoeba Sisters: DNA, Chromosomes, Genes & Traits, An Introduction to Heredity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8m6hHRlKwY&v=en>

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Reproduction Systems Quiz | Summative | Other written assessments

Located in Shared Drive

No Standards Assessed

Genetics Quiz | Summative | Other written assessments

Located in Shared Drive

No Standards Assessed

Design a flower assessment

Let's revisit the twins phenomena

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

NGSS Interims



Unit Plan

Natural Selection & Adaptations

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 15 - Week 25 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 7, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To understand what is necessary for the continuation and survival of a species in its environment.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Change over time

Concepts:

- Structure & function
- Stability & change
- Mutations & adaptations
- Evidence for evolution
- Natural & artificial selection

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Topic Generalizations:

1. Patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth and provide evidence to show that species have changed over time.
2. Anatomical structures from different species, both current and past, provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
3. Observations of embryological development across multiple different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
4. Variations in genetic information from different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships.
5. Genetic diversity within a species population ensures the probability that some individuals will survive and reproduce in a specific environment.
6. Natural Selection may contribute to changes in the frequency of traits over time.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth and provide evidence to show that species have changed over time.
 - a. What is a fossil? (F)
 - b. How have living things evolved over time? (C)
 - c. How do scientists define and support the theory of evolution? (C)
 - d. What are some examples of the evidence for evolution? (C)
 - e. How and why do traits in a population change over time? (C)
 - f. How does the fossil record provide evidence for evolution through common ancestry? (C)
 - g. If humans left a fossil record 100 million years from now, what would it say about our species' diversity and impact? (P)
 - h. If most species that ever lived are extinct, what does that say about the "success" of life on Earth? (P)
2. Anatomical structures from different species, both current and past, provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
 - a. What is a structural adaptation? What is a behavioral adaptation? (F)
 - b. How do scientists define and support the theory of evolution? (C)

7. Humans use Artificial Selection to alter/design/change their environment to suit their needs.

- c. How do analogous, homologous and vestigial structures provide evidence for evolution through common ancestry? (C)
- d. If extinct species show structures we no longer see today, what does that say about the paths evolution didn't take? (P)
- e. If a structure in one species is used for one purpose and in another species for a different purpose, what does that tell us about evolution's "creativity"? (P)

3. Observations of embryological development across multiple different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).

- a. What is an embryo? (F)
- b. How does comparing embryos at different stages of development from multiple species provide evidence for evolution through common ancestry? (C)
- c. If embryos of vastly different animals are nearly identical at first, who—or what—is designing the differences that appear later? (P)

4. Variations in genetic information from different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships.

- a. How do scientists define and support the theory of evolution? (C)
- b. What is the evidence for evolution? (C)
- c. How do protein structures act as proxy information for DNA sequencing? (C)
- d. How do comparing proteins/genetic information provide evidence for evolution through common ancestry? (C)

5. Genetic diversity within a species population ensures the probability that some individuals will thrive, survive and reproduce in a specific environment.

- a. What is a mutation? (F)
- b. Does only sexual, or does asexual, reproduction allow for genetic diversity? (C)
- c. If all individuals in a population were genetically identical, could life survive major changes—or would diversity be the key to survival? (P)
- d. Is genetic diversity more about survival of the species or survival of the individual? (P)

6. Natural Selection may contribute to changes in the frequency of traits over time.

- a. How is natural selection defined? (F)
- b. What is fitness? (F)
- c. What is the definition of evolution? (F)
- d. What does it mean to evolve? (C)
- e. How do evolution and natural selection account for the variation of life on earth? (C)
- f. How does natural selection affect the evolution of species on earth? (C)
- g. How does the fitness of an organism affect it's ability to reproduce? (C)
- h. How does the environment affect the fitness of organisms with specific structures? (C)
- i. How/why do adaptations spread throughout a species? (C)
- j. How will a species continue to evolve in the future? (P)
- k. Should humans intervene to preserve species that cannot adapt? (P)

7. Humans use Artificial Selection to alter/design/change their environment to suit their needs.
- What is artificial selection? (F)
 - What are some types of artificial selection? (F)
 - How have humans interfered with the natural process of evolution? (P)
 - Should humans alter DNA or should we leave "nature" alone? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- There are three types of mutations - harmful, beneficial and neutral.
- Beneficial adaptations will increase an organism's survival chances and their fitness.
- Harmful adaptations can decrease an organism's chance of survival in an environment.
- Neutral adaptations do not help or hurt an organisms chance of survival.
- Evidence for evolution includes DNA evidence, fossil evidence, anatomical structures and embryological similarities.
- Artificial selection includes genetically modified organisms, cloning, designer babies and selective breeding of plants and animals, among other new technologies as well.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Life Science

MS.Growth, Development, and Reproduction of Organisms

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS4-5. Gather and synthesize information about the technologies that have changed the way humans influence the inheritance of desired traits in organisms. [Show Details](#)

MS.Natural Selection and Adaptations

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-LS4-1. Analyze and interpret data for patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth under the assumption that natural laws operate today as in the past. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS4-6. Use mathematical representations to support explanations of how natural selection may lead to increases and decreases of specific traits in populations over time. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS4-4. Construct an explanation based on evidence that describes how genetic variations of traits in a population increase some individuals' probability of surviving and reproducing in a specific environment. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS4-3. Analyze displays of pictorial data to compare patterns of similarities in the embryological development across multiple species to identify relationships not evident in the fully formed anatomy. [Show Details](#)
- MS-LS4-2. Apply scientific ideas to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossil organisms to infer evolutionary relationships. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument.
- Ask questions to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.
- Ask questions that require sufficient and appropriate empirical evidence to answer.

Practice 2. Developing and using models

Modeling in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to developing, using, and revising models to describe, test, and predict more abstract phenomena and design systems.

- Develop or modify a model—based on evidence – to match what happens if a variable or component of a system is changed.
- Develop a model to describe unobservable mechanisms.

Practice 4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to extending quantitative analysis to investigations, distinguishing between correlation and causation, and basic statistical techniques of data and error analysis.

- Construct, analyze, and/or interpret graphical displays of data and/or large data sets to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.
- Use graphical displays (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, and/or tables) of large data sets to identify temporal and spatial relationships.
- Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for phenomena.

Practice 6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include constructing explanations and designing solutions supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

- Construct an explanation that includes qualitative or quantitative relationships between variables that predict(s) and/or describe(s) phenomena.
- Construct an explanation using models or representations.

Practice 8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to evaluating the merit and validity of ideas and methods.

- Critically read scientific texts adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas and/or obtain scientific and/or technical information to describe patterns in and/or evidence about the natural and designed world(s).

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Practices

Scientific Knowledge is Based on Empirical Evidence

- Science knowledge is based upon logical and conceptual connections between evidence and explanations.

Scientific Knowledge is Open to Revision in Light of New Evidence

- Scientific explanations are subject to revision and improvement in light of new evidence.
- Science findings are frequently revised and/or reinterpreted based on new evidence.

Science Models, Laws, Mechanisms, and Theories Explain Natural Phenomena

- Theories are explanations for observable phenomena.
- Science theories are based on a body of evidence developed over time.
- The term "theory" as used in science is very different from the common use outside of science.
- A hypothesis is used by scientists as an idea that may contribute important new knowledge for the evaluation of a scientific theory.

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

1. Patterns – Observed patterns in nature guide organization and classification and prompt questions about relationships and causes underlying them.

- Macroscopic patterns are related to the nature of microscopic and atomic-level structure.
- Patterns can be used to identify cause and effect relationships.
- Graphs, charts, and images can be used to identify patterns in data.

2. Cause and Effect: Mechanism and Prediction – Events have causes, sometimes simple, sometimes multifaceted. Deciphering causal relationships, and the mechanisms by which they are mediated, is a major activity of science and engineering.

- Relationships can be classified as causal or correlational, and correlation does not necessarily imply causation.
- Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.

3. Scale, Proportion, and Quantity – In considering phenomena, it is critical to recognize what is relevant at different size, time, and energy scales, and to recognize proportional relationships between different quantities as scales change.

- Time, space, and energy phenomena can be observed at various scales using models to study systems that are too large or too small.
- Phenomena that can be observed at one scale may not be observable at another scale.

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Crosscutting Concepts

Science is a Way of Knowing

- Science is both a body of knowledge and the processes and practices used to add to that body of knowledge.
- Science knowledge is cumulative and many people, from many generations and nations, have contributed to science knowledge.
- Science is a way of knowing used by many people, not just scientists.

Scientific Knowledge Assumes an Order and Consistency in Natural Systems

- Science assumes that objects and events in natural systems occur in consistent patterns that are understandable through measurement and observation.

Science is a Human Endeavor

- Men and women from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds work as scientists and engineers.
- Advances in technology influence the progress of science and science has influenced advances in technology.

Science Addresses Questions About the Natural and Material World.

- Scientific knowledge is constrained by human capacity, technology, and materials.
- Science limits its explanations to systems that lend themselves to observation and empirical evidence.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

LS4: Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

LS4.A: Evidence of Common Ancestry and Diversity

- The collection of fossils and their placement in chronological order (e.g., through the location of the sedimentary layers in which they are found or through radioactive dating) is known as the fossil record. It documents the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of many life forms throughout the history of life on Earth. (MS-LS4-1)
- Anatomical similarities and differences between various organisms living today and between them and organisms in the fossil record, enable the reconstruction of evolutionary history and the inference of lines of evolutionary descent. (MS-LS4-2)
- Comparison of the embryological development of different species also reveals similarities that show relationships not evident in the fully-formed anatomy. (MS-LS4-3)

LS4.B: Natural Selection

- Natural selection leads to the predominance of certain traits in a population, and the suppression of others. (MS-LS4-4)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)

[NGSS Resources](#)















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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- QFT for Birds of Paradise phenomenon
- Mutations card sort
- X-Men Activity
- Opposable thumbs activity
- Adaptations stations
- Create-A-Creature
- PHET - Natural Selection Bunny Lab
- Natural Selection Stick Worm Lab
- Woof to Wolf QFT
- Evidence for Evolution Stations
- Artificial Selection Jigsaw Project
- Natural Selection Game
- Peppered Moth Squares Lab (optional)
- Peppered Moth Graph and CER

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

- 1. Mutations  
- 7. Reflection Paragraph  
- 6. Artificial Selection  
- 5. Evolution  
- 4. Natural Selection  
- 3. Create-A-Creature Project  
- 2. Adaptations  

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Unit Vocabulary: adaptations, structural adaptations, behavioral adaptations, physiological adaptations, mutations, homologous structures, analogous structures, vestigial structures, embryo, natural selection, artificial selection, fitness, evolution, DNA evidence, fossil evidence, anatomical structures & embryological similarities, common ancestor

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- [Birds of Paradise](#) video - BBC Planet Earth
- "When Fish First Walked" Reading and Questions
- Discovery Education
- Evolve: Shape from History channel
 - [DVD](#)
 - [DailyMotion](#)
 - [Internet Archive](#)
- Edpuzzle: Structural and Behavioral Adaptations, The Way Plants Defend Themselves
- Amoeba Sisters: [Natural Selection](#)
- Stated Clearly Videos
 - [What is Evolution?](#)
 - [What is the Evidence for Evolution?](#)
- NOVA: What Darwin Never Knew
 - [DVD](#)
 - [YouTube](#)
- [Guess the Embryo PBS](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Artificial Selection Jigsaw Project | Summative | Group Project

No Standards Assessed

Natural Selection & Evolution Quiz | Summative | Other written assessments

Located in Shared Drive

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Interim Assessments:

- MS LS 4-4
- MS LS 4-6

CER Paragraphs



Unit Plan

Physics

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 26 - Week 31 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 5, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To explore and understand what makes objects move, stop moving or change directions.

To explore and understand what causes changes in motion and how potential and kinetic energy are related to an object's motion.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Cause and effect

Concepts:

- Newton's laws of motion
- Gravity
- Inertia
- Forces
- Potential and Kinetic Energy
- Energy transfer in a roller coaster

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Newton's laws of motion explain what keeps objects at rest and what keeps objects in motion.
2. Use models to demonstrate the concepts of force, acceleration, and potential & kinetic energy.
3. Altering an object's mass and/or speed causes changes to the energy of an object.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Newton's Laws of Motion explain the motion of everyday objects.
 - a. How do you calculate speed of an object? (F)
 - b. How can we use a distance versus time graph to show an objects motion? (C)
 - c. What is inertia? (F)
 - d. What is gravity? (F)
 - e. What are Newton's 3 Laws of Motion? (F)
 - f. What factors affect gravity? (F)
 - g. How do mass and distance affect gravity? (C)
 - h. How are Newton's Laws of Motion applied to your everyday life? (C)
 - i. If seatbelts didn't exist, how dangerous would everyday driving be, according to Newton's laws? (C)
 - j. Why is it harder to stop a skateboard going fast than one moving slowly, even if they are the same size? (C)
 - k. Would sports be at all possible if Newton's laws didn't exist? (C)
 - l. Is it possible to move without pushing or pulling something else? (P)

2. Use models to demonstrate the concepts of force, acceleration, and potential & kinetic energy.
 - a. What is the definition of force? (F)
 - b. What is the definition of acceleration? (F)
 - c. What is the definition of potential energy? (F)
 - d. What is the definition of kinetic energy? (F)
 - e. How are force and acceleration related? (C)
 - f. How can we use a graph to show an object's motion? (C)
 - g. Why do some objects move faster than others? (C)
 - h. What causes an object to start moving, stop moving and change direction? (C)
 - i. Where is the most/least potential energy and kinetic energy found on a roller coaster ride? (C)
 - j. How does energy change form during a roller coaster ride? (C)
 - k. Can you ever design the "perfect" roller coaster ride? (P)
3. Changing an object's energy changes its motion and interactions.
 - a. What is the definition of mass? (F)
 - b. What is the definition of speed? (F)
 - c. Is there a relationship between an increase in an object's mass and it's speed? (C)
 - d. If you could change an object's mass or speed at will, could you create unlimited energy—or are there limits to what's possible? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- The interaction of gravity and inertia allows for predictable patterns of motion.
- Motion is dependent on the changing distance between an object and its reference point.
- Speed is a type of motion that can be calculated from word problems and/or graphs.
- A force is a push or a pull that can affect motion.
- Mass and speed effect kinetic energy in a predictable way.
- Newton's Laws of Motion are critical to the understanding of how force and motion are intertwined.
- Potential energy is the stored energy of an object and kinetic energy is the energy of motion.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Physical Science

MS.Forces and Interactions

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-PS2-2. Plan an investigation to provide evidence that the change in an object's motion depends on the sum of the forces on the object and the mass of the object. [Show Details](#)
- MS-PS2-1. Apply Newton's Third Law to design a solution to a problem involving the motion of two colliding objects.* [Show Details](#)

MS.Energy

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-PS3-1. Construct and interpret graphical displays of data to describe the relationships of kinetic energy to the mass of an object and to the speed of an object. [Show Details](#)
- MS-PS3-2. Develop a model to describe that when the arrangement of objects interacting at a distance changes, different amounts of potential energy are stored in the system. [Show Details](#)
- MS-PS3-5. Construct, use, and present arguments to support the claim that when the kinetic energy of an object changes, energy is transferred to or from the object. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models.

Practice 3. Planning and carrying out investigations

Planning and carrying out investigations in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include investigations that use multiple variables and provide evidence to support explanations or solutions.

- Plan an investigation individually and collaboratively, and in the design: identify independent and dependent variables and controls, what tools are needed to do the gathering, how measurements will be recorded, and how many data are needed to support a claim.

Practice 4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to extending quantitative analysis to investigations, distinguishing between correlation and causation, and basic statistical techniques of data and error analysis.

- Construct, analyze, and/or interpret graphical displays of data and/or large data sets to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.
- Use graphical displays (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, and/or tables) of large data sets to identify temporal and spatial relationships.

Practice 5. Using mathematics and computational thinking

Mathematical and computational thinking in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to identifying patterns in large data sets and using mathematical concepts to support explanations and arguments.

- Use digital tools (e.g., computers) to analyze very large data sets for patterns and trends.

Practice 6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to include constructing explanations and designing solutions supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

- Apply scientific ideas or principles to design, construct, and/or test a design of an object, tool, process or system.
- Undertake a design project, engaging in the design cycle, to construct and/or implement a solution that meets specific design criteria and constraints.
- Optimize performance of a design by prioritizing criteria, making tradeoffs, testing, revising, and re-testing.

Connections to the Nature of Science: Most Closely Associated with Practices

Scientific Investigations Use a Variety of Methods

- Science investigations use a variety of methods and tools to make measurements and observations.
- Science investigations are guided by a set of values to ensure accuracy of measurements, observations, and objectivity of findings.

Science Models, Laws, Mechanisms, and Theories Explain Natural Phenomena

- Laws are regularities or mathematical descriptions of natural phenomena.

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

3. Scale, Proportion, and Quantity – In considering phenomena, it is critical to recognize what is relevant at different size, time, and energy scales, and to recognize proportional relationships between different quantities as scales change.

- Proportional relationships (e.g., speed as the ratio of distance traveled to time taken) among different types of quantities provide information about the magnitude of properties and processes.
- Scientific relationships can be represented through the use of algebraic expressions and equations.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

PS2: Motion and Stability: Forces and Interactions

PS2.A: Forces and Motion

- All positions of objects and the directions of forces and motions must be described in an arbitrarily chosen reference frame and arbitrarily chosen units of size. In order to share information with other people, these choices must also be shared. (MSPS2-2)
- The motion of an object is determined by the sum of the forces acting on it; if the total force on the object is not zero, its motion will change. The greater the mass of the object, the greater the force needed to achieve the same change in motion. For any given object, a larger force causes a larger change in motion. (MS-PS2-2)
- For any pair of interacting objects, the force exerted by the first object on the second object is equal in strength to the force that the second object exerts on the first, but in the opposite direction (Newton's third law). (MS-PS2-1)

PS3: Energy

PS3.A: Definitions of Energy

- Motion energy is properly called kinetic energy; it is proportional to the mass of the moving object and grows with the square of its speed. (MS-PS3-1)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)



[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- Measuring speed/motion activities
- Tortoise and Hare Graphing Activity
- Kinetic Energy Graphing (mass and speed as independent variables)
- CPO Ramps for measuring speed activity
- PHET: Energy Skate Park
- [Paper Roller Coaster Project](#) (templates require individual teacher licenses)

Unit 5: Physics  

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

motion, point of reference, speed, constant speed, average speed, position-time graph, slope, force, gravity, inertia, mass, acceleration, balanced/unbalanced forces, net force, kinetic energy, potential energy, friction, Newton's Laws of Motion, Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation, weight

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- Phenomenon - [IIHS Crash Tests with and without Safety Belts](#) or [Roller Coaster: Kingda-Ka Six Flags](#)
- Roller Coaster Videos:
 - [Base & Columns](#)
 - [Beams](#)
 - [Diagonal Supports](#)
 - [Straight Tracks](#)
 - [Shelf](#)
 - [Funnel](#)
 - [Turns](#)
 - [Loop](#)
 - [Half-Pipe](#)
 - [Paper Roller Coaster Instructions Playlist](#)
 - [Ideas 1](#)
 - [Ideas 2](#)
- [Energy in a coaster simulation](#)
- [Paper roller coaster templates](#) (requires individual teacher licenses)
- [PhET Lab: Energy Skate Park](#)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Roller Coaster Challenge | Group Project

Students work in small groups to design and build a roller coaster which is both safe and fun. They have to demonstrate where the laws of physics (Newton's laws, potential and kinetic energy) are occurring on the coaster when finished. They present the coasters to their class mates and their teachers.

No Standards Assessed

Physics Quiz | Summative | Other written assessments

Located in Shared Drive

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.



Unit Plan Astronomy

Newtown Middle School / Grade 8 / Science

Week 32 - Week 38 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 5, 2026 by Betesh, Jennifer

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

To understand the predictable patterns of motion relative to the Earth, Sun, and Moon and how these movements cause the phases of the moon, eclipses, and seasons.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Patterns and systems

Concepts: eclipses, seasons, phases of the moon, gravity and inertia, orbits

Generalizations

Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to
UNDERSTAND *at the end of the unit.*

1. The interaction/interplay between gravity and the inertia of an object creates the predictable motion of objects in the solar system.
2. The orbital pathways of the planets and moons and the position of the Sun lead to interactions that produce astronomical phenomena.
3. The relative positions of the Earth and the Sun produce climatic variability across the globe.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. The interaction/interplay between gravity and the inertia of an object creates the predictable motion of objects in the solar system.
 - a. What variables (gravity & inertia) act to keep the Earth moving around the Sun and the moon moving around the Earth? (F)
 - b. What objects are in our solar system? (F)
 - c. What is the effect of gravity on the orbital movements of planets in the solar system? (C)
 - d. What would happen to our Earth's orbit around the sun if you took away inertia (or gravity)? (C)
 - d. What would life be like if our orbit was closer or farther from the Sun? (P)
2. The orbital pathways of the planets and moons and the position of the Sun lead to interactions that produce astronomical phenomena.
 - a. What causes day and night? (F)
 - b. What causes solar and lunar eclipses? (F)
 - c. What causes the phases of the moon? (F)
 - d. Why do we always see the same side of the moon? (C)
 - e. Can you travel the world so that you are always in daylight? (P)
 - f. What would happen if the moon suddenly disappeared? How would that effect the solar system and life on earth? (P)
3. The relative positions of the Earth and the Sun produce climatic variability across the globe.

- a. What causes seasons? (F)
- b. How does the position and movement of Earth in the solar system affect conditions on our planet? (C)
- c. How does the Earth's position in space affect life on Earth? (P)
- d. Is life (as we know it) possible on other planets - what conditions need to be met to support life, based on our current understanding? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

- The seasons are caused by the tilt of earth's axis as it moves around the sun.
- Day and night are due to earth's rotation - the side of earth facing the sun is day and the side facing away is night.
- Half of the moon is always lit by the sun, but the changing position of the earth, moon and sun cause us to see the different phases of the moon.
- Solar and lunar eclipses are caused by the changing position of the earth, moon and sun.
- As the distance between objects increases, the strength of gravity decreases.
- As the mass of an object increases, the strength of gravity increases.
- Objects in our solar system are the planets and their moons, the sun, asteroids and meteors.
- The earth stays in orbit around the sun (and the moon stays in orbit around the earth) because of gravity and inertia.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NGSS: Science Performance Expectations

NGSS: MS Earth & Space Science

MS.Space Systems

Performance Expectations [Show Details](#)

- MS-ESS1-1. Develop and use a model of the Earth-sun-moon system to describe the cyclic patterns of lunar phases, eclipses of the sun and moon, and seasons. [Show Details](#)
- MS-ESS1-2. Develop and use a model to describe the role of gravity in the motions within galaxies and the solar system. [Show Details](#)
- MS-ESS1-3. Analyze and interpret data to determine scale properties of objects in the solar system. [Show Details](#)

NGSS: Science and Engineering Practices

NGSS: 6-8

Practice 1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)

Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.

- Ask questions that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
- Ask questions to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models.
- Ask questions to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.

Practice 8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to evaluating the merit and validity of ideas and methods.

- Critically read scientific texts adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas and/or obtain scientific and/or technical information to describe patterns in and/or evidence about the natural and designed world(s).

NGSS: Crosscutting Concepts

NGSS: 6-8

Crosscutting Statements

1. Patterns – Observed patterns in nature guide organization and classification and prompt questions about relationships and causes underlying them.

Patterns can be used to identify cause and effect relationships.

Graphs, charts, and images can be used to identify patterns in data.

2. Cause and Effect: Mechanism and Prediction – Events have causes, sometimes simple, sometimes multifaceted. Deciphering causal relationships, and the mechanisms by which they are mediated, is a major activity of science and engineering.

Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.

3. Scale, Proportion, and Quantity – In considering phenomena, it is critical to recognize what is relevant at different size, time, and energy scales, and to recognize proportional relationships between different quantities as scales change.

Time, space, and energy phenomena can be observed at various scales using models to study systems that are too large or too small.

NGSS: Disciplinary Core Ideas

NGSS: 6-8

ESS1: Earth's Place in the Universe

ESS1.A: The Universe and Its Stars

Patterns of the apparent motion of the sun, the moon, and stars in the sky can be observed, described, predicted, and explained with models. (MS-ESS1-1)

Earth and its solar system are part of the Milky Way galaxy, which is one of many galaxies in the universe. (MS-ESS1-2)

ESS1.B: Earth and the Solar System

The solar system consists of the sun and a collection of objects, including planets, their moons, and asteroids that are held in orbit around the sun by its gravitational pull on them. (MS-ESS1-2),(MSESS1-3)

This model of the solar system can explain eclipses of the sun and the moon. Earth's spin axis is fixed in direction over the short-term but tilted relative to its orbit around the sun. The seasons are a result of that tilt and are caused by the differential intensity of sunlight on different areas of Earth across the year. (MS-ESS1-1)

The solar system appears to have formed from a disk of dust and gas, drawn together by gravity. (MS-ESS1-2)

[Interactive version of NGSS](#)



[NGSS Resources](#)

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Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- Astronomy Word Sort
- Astronomy Stations - Scale, Orbits and Gravity
- PhET Lab: Gravity & Orbits
- Reason for the Seasons Exploration
- Phases of the moon modeling & webquest
- Astronomy Model Summative Task

Unit 6: Astronomy  

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Gravity
Inertia
Orbits
Phase
Eclipse (Solar & Lunar)
Seasons
Solar System

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- YouTube: [Our Story in One Minute](#)
- YouTube: Eyewitness Planets
- [PhET Lab: Gravity & Orbits](#)
- Movies
 - Apollo 13
 - Hidden Figures
 - October Sky
 - The Martian

Universe
Galaxy
Tilt
Revolution
Rotation
Axis
Galaxy
Scale Size

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Astronomy Model | Personal Project

No Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

NGSS Interims
