

Standards-Based Activities and Extensions for Middle School

Differentiated Lessons for Every Learner

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Table of Contents

Dedication	ix
Acknowledgments.....	xi
Foreword	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Using the Extension Lessons.....	15
Chapter 2: English Language Arts Extension Lessons	
Introduction	39
<i>Language Arts and Elements of Language</i>	
Lesson 2.1: American Studies.....	42
Lesson 2.2: Author Studies	43
Lesson 2.3: Cause and Effect.....	44
Lesson 2.4: Theme	45
Lesson 2.5: Vocabulary in Text.....	46
Lesson 2.6: Persuasive Writing.....	47
<i>Poetry, Literature, and Informational Text</i>	
Lesson 2.7: Poetry Elements	48
Lesson 2.8: Poetic Connections	49
Lesson 2.9: Writing Short Stories.....	50
Lesson 2.10: Short Story Elements.....	51
Lesson 2.11: Response to Literature.....	52
Lesson 2.12: Shakespeare’s Characters.....	53
Lesson 2.13: Biography.....	55
<i>Novel Studies</i>	
Lesson 2.14: Novel Studies	56
Lesson 2.15: Novel Study Exploratory Activities.....	57
Lesson 2.16: Survival Novels.....	59
Lesson 2.17: <i>Chasing Vermeer</i>	60
Lesson 2.18: <i>From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler</i>	61
Lesson 2.19: <i>The Pushcart War</i>	62
Lesson 2.20: <i>Walk Two Moons</i>	63
Lesson 2.21: <i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i>	65

Chapter 3: Social Studies/History Extension Lessons

Introduction 67

World History

Lesson 3.1: Ancient Civilizations 71
 Lesson 3.2: Middle Ages 73
 Lesson 3.3: Feudalism and the Middle Ages 74
 Lesson 3.4: World War I and World War II 76
 Lesson 3.5: The Holocaust 78

United States History

Lesson 3.6: Explorers of the New World 80
 Lesson 3.7: Exploration and Explorers 82
 Lesson 3.8: Puritan Colonization of the New World 84
 Lesson 3.9: Colonies in the New World 86
 Lesson 3.10: Challenges in the New World 88
 Lesson 3.11: John Smith and the 13 Colonies 90
 Lesson 3.12: American Revolution and the Stamp Act 91
 Lesson 3.13: American Revolution: Causal Factors 93
 Lesson 3.14: Civil War 95
 Lesson 3.15: American Wars 96

Social Studies

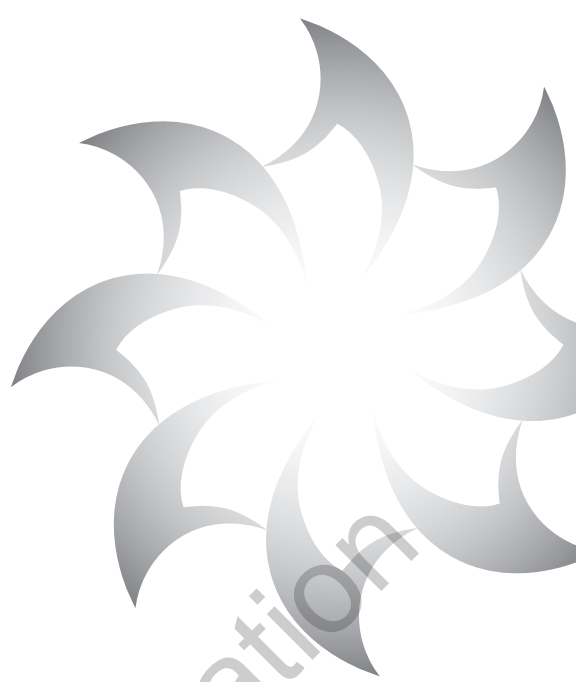
Lesson 3.16: Study of a Decade 98
 Lesson 3.17: World Cultures 100
 Lesson 3.18: Teens in Other Cultures 102
 Lesson 3.19: Discovery and Colonization 104
 Lesson 3.20: Iditarod 105
 Lesson 3.21: Native American Life 107
 Lesson 3.22: Economics 109
 Lesson 3.23: Government 111

Chapter 4: Mathematics Extension Lessons

Introduction 113

Numbers, Operations, and Problem Solving

Lesson 4.1: Computational Thinking 117
 Lesson 4.2: Algebraic Thinking 119
 Lesson 4.3: Fractions 121
 Lesson 4.4: Fermi Questions 123
 Lesson 4.5: Multiple Intelligences Problem Solving 125



Introduction

In this rapidly evolving era, innovative ideas abound and teachers have an abundance of tools at their fingertips. New technologies emerge every day, exponentially expanding the number of available resources. With this expansion, students have more choices in how they pursue and demonstrate their learning than ever before. This is an exciting time to be a teacher!

Methods that have been used for the instruction of gifted and talented students for decades are now being integrated into meaningful learning experiences for all students. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, & Council of Chief State School Officers [NGA & CCSSO], 2010a, 2010b) encourage the use of 21st-century skills, technology integration, and performance-based assessments. These learning experiences emphasize critical and creative thinking and can include integrated units of study. Within this context, there is renewed emphasis on appropriate pacing for students with atypical learning needs. Increasing rigor and challenge for advanced learners can expose all students to these possibilities. These higher expectations have the potential to lead to higher achievement for all, thus raising the bar for all students, regardless of grade level or content.

The time is upon teachers to implement interdisciplinary learning experiences that provide real-world connections and engage students in relevant and meaningful learning opportunities. The extension lessons in this book will help teachers incorporate interdisciplinary learning activities that provide rigor and challenge through content enrichment.

Teachers have long known that gifted students thrive when they have choices in their learning, even more so when their choices include open-ended learning activi-

ties that involve correlating and synthesizing information and using creative processes that encourage the production of original ideas. Isn't this what teachers want for all students? The reality in most classrooms is that there are some students who are ready for higher level of study in some areas, yet are at a more foundational level in other areas. There are also students who are working at a foundational level in all areas. For these students, teachers need to provide a self-reflective process for them to develop necessary skills and learn to think strategically. This will help students take ownership of their learning and strengthen their ability to self-direct.

Historically, the educational process has made students wait until they have the basics before they move on to more complex learning. However, we have seen many situations in which students are much more motivated when they are learning foundational skills in the context of more meaningful scenarios (e.g., when students are engaged in active learning such as building or cooking something, measuring for real-life applications, or solving or studying a real-life situation occurring in their school or community). Many students with learning difficulties also prefer more active learning experiences. Learning the necessary skills within meaningful contexts can provide more successful learning outcomes than experiences that keep these students in entry-level learning activities.

Teachers are expected to provide work at a challenge level for all students in large, mixed-ability classes, while also ensuring that the learning activities address the standards. Teachers need help preparing to teach in this differentiated instructional process. The extension lessons in this book demonstrate how to accomplish this daunting task through sample lessons that describe the process and are aligned to Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels (Hess, 2013).

What Are Extension Lessons and How Were They Designed?

The extension lessons in this book are intended for use in almost any middle school classroom and were designed to address the ability levels of all students. The activities within each lesson were developed according to DOK levels, CCSS, and the national history (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013) and science standards (NGSS Lead States, 2013). Each lesson states the specific standards addressed and lists the extension activities according to DOK level (a CCSS alignment chart is provided on the book's webpage at http://www.prufrock.com/assets/client_pages/differentiated_lessons.aspx). The standards selected are representative of those addressed by the extension activities and are not all-inclusive. By utilizing DOK levels, teachers can guide students to activities that promote productive struggle with the

Sample Lesson

In the sample lesson below, students engage with the poem “Nothing Gold Can Stay” by Robert Frost and explore the use of figurative language and symbolism. This leads them to a video clip from the movie *Up*, “Love Story,” selected based on its lack of dialogue. The story is told completely through visual images. The symbolism is dynamic, allowing students to gain a visual perspective. The two pieces are then tied together and students are asked to determine how each author used literary techniques to move the audience to understanding.

In this example, the teacher has chosen to engage learners with the extension lessons after the lesson. Student performance on class activities and in the Socratic Seminar provides the data used to determine appropriate DOK levels. An extension lesson is then used to expand students’ understandings by providing options of increased complexity.

Consider the extension lesson, “Irony, Ambiguity, and Symbolism.” The extension’s DOK Level 1 (recall) activity asks students to identify the symbolism associated with several holidays of their choice and explain how the symbolism is portrayed in their lives. This activity provides a basic level of complexity while connecting students to the topic being addressed. The DOK Level 3 activity requires that students identify figurative language within a recently read novel and evaluate the author’s purpose in using the particular figurative language style. Additionally, the students demonstrate how the language used advances the theme of the novel. This level of complexity requires a much higher cognitive ability and deeper reasoning skills. By coupling the lessons directly taught within the classroom with extension lesson activities, students are afforded a wider range of experiences through which to deepen their understandings.

ELA Sample Lesson

Objective

Develop an understanding of the impact of imagery in multiple formats.

CCSS ELA Standards

- R.1–7
- R.9–10
- SL.1
- W. 1, 3–5, 8–9

Key Vocabulary

- Visual imagery

Materials

- Poem: “Nothing Gold Can Stay” by Robert Frost
- Video Clip: *Up*, “Love Story”

Text Component

- Teacher reads the poem aloud.
- Second reading: Students read with partners.
- Teacher asks: Is this poem literal?
- Students reread the poem, looking for specific details that demonstrate the symbolism in the poem.
- Pair and share: In predetermined pairs students share their evidence.
- Whole class: Students identify four symbols used in the poem.
- Quick write: Students respond to the following: What point is Frost making? How does he use imagery and symbolism to build meaning? Do you agree with his premise?
- Socratic seminar based on the quick write topic. Students make notes of their evidence prior to the seminar.

Video Component

- Students view the “Love Story” clip from the movie *Up*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTBQYAE-pMK>.
- Second viewing: Students:
 - identify four examples of symbolism;
 - identify four examples of imagery; and
 - with a partner, share their thoughts.
- Identify the role that symbolism plays in the clip. With a partner or table group, identify the symbolism and what is being represented. Student teams will share out loud and discuss.
- Journal: Why do you feel that the screenwriter chose to create this piece without dialogue?

Extension Lesson

As students develop their journal entry, the teacher will work with students individually to guide them to the DOK level of extension appropriate to meet their challenge needs. Students will then be provided time to work on their extension lesson selection.

LESSON 2.10

Short Story Elements

CCSS ELA Standards

- » RL.7.3
- » RL.8.3
- » RL.7.4

Activities

- » Describe and explain the conflict or conflict(s) that drove the plot and the characters to evolve as they did (DOK 1).
- » Create a timeline illustrating the events in the plot. Make annotations showing how the events impacted other events (DOK 1).
- » Choose at least five terms from the list below. Cite an example from the story for each term and describe its impact on the story (DOK 2).

♦ Suspense	♦ Metaphor
♦ Personification	♦ Tone
♦ Point of View	♦ Inevitability
♦ Foreshadowing	♦ Hyperbole
♦ Simile	♦ Pun
♦ Voice	♦ Sensationalism
♦ Coincidence	♦ Allusion
- » Discuss the climax and falling action (denouement) in the story. Provide examples and describe how elements of each action add to the story (DOK 3).
- » Analyze and describe how the setting influences the conflict of the story and contributes to the development of the protagonist (DOK 3).
- » Convince an audience as to how the story's dialogue, events, and interactions reveal aspects of the protagonist or antagonist's character (DOK 3).
- » Create an alternative resolution to the conflict and an ending that resonates with the tone the author used. Discuss the reasoning behind your approach (DOK 4).
- » Analyze how the relationship between the antagonist and protagonist in two stories you've read is impacted by their experiences with one another and how it influences their decisions (DOK 4).

History is all about perspective. It is the ability to discern perspective from bias that enables the learner to make valid judgments regarding historical events. This describes the connection between the implicit and explicit detail recognition. Training students to look closely and critically at the material being studied and then make insightful connections is the role of the history teacher.

In the activities in this chapter, you will notice that we encourage the use of primary source documents. Using primary source documents requires students to use comprehension skills that allow them to read and examine text critically. When using primary source documents, students learn to discriminate between people's biases and perspectives to draw their own conclusions. They need to practice this type of careful analysis to determine and understand causal factors involved in the study of historical content.

The study of historical events allows students to delve into the deeper facets of understanding as they interact with the content. Students must do more than merely explain their thinking and provide examples. They must interpret information, apply principles, and view events through the varied lens of historical perspective. These higher order skills can be practiced and enhanced through activities in the extension lessons in this chapter.

Sample Lesson

In the sample lesson below, Mr. Perkins demonstrates how he incorporates the ELA standards into his history lesson. All students are participating in extension lesson activities in this scenario. In this particular lesson, compacting students out of the full unit could risk denying them the opportunity to delve more deeply into the content. As the unit progresses the teacher may identify aspects of the content in which particular students can demonstrate mastery. When this occurs, the students can be compacted out for the lesson and allowed to spend additional time on their extension lesson selections.

In this chapter's example, you will see Mr. Perkins using the "Conflict" extension lesson. Julia chose a Level 1 extension activity for her project. In this activity, she will study a period of revolution in two different countries. She will study the different viewpoints of the individuals impacted by the conflicts and identify the similarities and differences of these viewpoints.

Hakim selected a Level 3 extension activity. His level of understanding with regard to this topic is significantly more advanced than Julia's and therefore the level of depth and complexity of his task needs to match this understanding. The extension Hakim selected demands that he hypothesize what America's present-day life would be like if the "other side" had prevailed in a particular conflict in wartime. Hakim will need to determine how he will present his findings.

Students vary greatly in their conceptual understanding of historical events. Therefore, it is critical that extension lessons provide students with learning opportunities that address all of the Depth of Knowledge levels to ensure that students will have access to the varied degrees of complexity. Depending upon the specific content, a student may be working at different levels due to his or her prior exposure to the material.

Social Studies Example Lesson

Gifted students often have a strong sense of justice; many frequently view events as “right or wrong” or “black or white,” and think there is no gray area. In this example lesson students are asked to view and read about multiple situations of conflict related to the Westward Expansion and the settlement of the United States. Students will learn through the process that oftentimes there is no “right or wrong.” Students’ conclusions will vary, yet all perspectives must include supporting evidence and/or rationale. As students work through this series of lessons they will be provided with the extension lesson, “Conflict.” In this lesson, the choices presented require students to view events from multiple perspectives and consider diverse social and political issues. The teacher will guide students in exploring specific levels of depth and complexity levels within the extension lesson. Student performance on class activities and in Socratic discussion will provide the data used to determine the DOK level needed to provide appropriate challenge.

Essential Questions

5. What role did the U.S. Army play in western expansion and Native American removal?
6. How did visual images and newspaper accounts shape public opinion?
7. How were Native Americans impacted by ever-encroaching settlements?

Lesson Focus

Train students to become skilled visual viewers.

Objectives

Students will look thoughtfully at provided images, notice details, and infer how these details could shape a viewer’s opinion. Students will closely read provided articles, notice details, and infer how these details could shape a viewer’s opinion.

Standards

- CCRA.R.1
- CCRA.R.2
- CCRA.R.3
- CCRA.R.4

Key Vocabulary

Manifest Destiny, tableaux, visual image