

***The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis**

English Language Arts, 7th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Set during the Civil Rights Movement in America, the novel follows ten-year-old Kenny Watson and his family on their summer vacation to visit their grandmother in Birmingham, Alabama. While on this vacation, Kenny and his family experience the highs of coming together and supporting each other, and the lows of racial injustices towards the black community. This novel balances the humor of the good natured Watsons, while preserving and honoring the events of the 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing.

CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM

The following are some, but not all, of the connections to curriculum for this novel.

- **Unit 2: Issues & Exploration of the World**
 - Essential Question: “What issues are important to an individual and how do we gather resources needed for exploration?”
- **Unit 4: Stories & the Human Spirit**
 - Essential Question: “How do different authors tell stories and portray the human spirit?”

KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly. SL.7.1
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of a text; provide an objective summary of a text. RL.7.2
- Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g. how setting shapes the characters or plot). RL.7.3
- Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details and well-structured events sequences. W.7.3
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings. RL.7.4
- With some guidance and support from adults and peers, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed. W.7.5

- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation. W.7.7
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. W.7.8
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. RL.7.9
- Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research. Language in Writing. W.7.9
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when reading to aid comprehension. RL.7.10
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing. W.7.10
- Demonstrate an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. RL.7.12