Lesson Guidance 18	
Grade	10
Unit	4
Selected Text(s)	*Sula* by Toni Morrison Chapter 1965 pages 163-174 📘 Sula Guided Notebook 🟧 Sula Playlist
Duration	Approx 1-2 days

Plan with guidance from the **ELA Instructional Expectations Guide**

	Learning Goal(s) *What should students understand about today's selected text?* Students will discuss the motif of an inverted world order in Sula. Students will discuss the author's use of in medias res in the introduction of the novel and evaluate the effectiveness of this technique. Students will create a playlist by selecting 5 songs for a production of *Sula.*
CCSS Alignment	**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own

	clearly and persuasively.
End of lesson task *Formative assessment*	Students will create a 🟨 SULA PLAYLIST by selecting 5 songs for a production of *Sula*. Students will provide the name of the artist/band, the title of the song, and explain why each song connects or relates to the novel.
Knowledge Check *What do students need to know in order to access the text?*	**Background knowledge** ● The year is 1965; Nel is 55 years old ● **Gentrification:** the buying and renovation of houses and business in urban neighborhoods by upper- or middle-income families or individuals, thus improving property values but often displacing low-income families and small businesses ● inversion/inverted world order in *Sula* **Key terms** *(domain specific terms to analyze the text)* ● **motif:** a distinctive repeating feature or idea ● **in medias res:** beginning a story "in the middle of things" **Vocabulary Words** *(words found in the text)* ● **interchangeable:** apparently identical; very similar ● **tranquility:** the quality or state of being calm ● **turbulence:** conflict; confusion ● **rambunctious:** difficult to control or handle; wildly boisterous ● **mortuary:** a funeral home or morgue

Core Instruction
Text-centered questions and ways students will engage with the text

Opening Activity:

A motif in the novel *Sula* is the idea of inversion of an inverted world order. Toni Morrison creates situations in which characters behave differently from what we might expect or hope. As a class, brainstorm instances of an inverted world order in *Sula.* If students have not done so already, they can track the motif of an inverted world order on their 📄 Sula Guided Notebook .

ELD Tasks and Scaffolds

Content Knowledge:

At the beginning of the novel, "The Bottom" is a black community situated atop a hill, above the valley town of Medallion, where the white community lives. Although "The Bottom" is geographically higher than Medallion, socially and economically the black community is considered lower than their white counterparts, as were all black people in the early twentieth century, when the novel begins. Ironically, in the last chapter of the novel– Chapter 1965– the black community will have moved down into the valley, and the white people will have bought property and moved up onto the hilltop.

Use this opportunity to break the word interchangeable into its parts and discuss how the word parts

contribute to its meaning: inter (between), change (exchange or replace) and able (capable of).

Shared Reading:

Read **Chapter 1965 pages 163-174**, pausing to track for understanding and defining vocabulary words as they appear in the text. Students may answer any or all of the following questions:
- Is Nel as responsible for Chicken Little's death as Sula is? If it was an accident, why did they hide it? Why does Eva ask all these years later about it?
- Eva confuses Nel for Sula. Is that intentional on her part? How have these two been "interchangeable" in this novel? How are they distinct from each other?
- What does Nel realize about her reaction to Chicken Little's death? Does this change your opinion of her as a character?
- The final word in this novel is "sorrow". Is this a sad ending? Explain your point of view fully.

Review the definition of the vocabulary words **as they appear in the text**.

ELD Tasks and Scaffolds

Student Discourse:

In an interview years after Toni Morrison wrote the novel *Sula,* Morrison said that she was unhappy with the opening she had chosen for the novel which uses the technique **in medias res** (beginning a story "in the middle of things"). Morrison said she felt like starting with the gentrification of "The Bottom" was like telling the story "from the point of view of a stranger - the "valley man" who might happen to be there on some errand, but who obviously does not live there and to and for whom all this is mightily strange, even exotic. You can see why I despise much of this beginning."[1]
- Ask students what they think about Toni Morrison's decision to begin and end the novel with gentrification.
- Do they agree or disagree with Toni Morrison's sentiment that doing so was like telling the story from a stranger's point of view rather than one of the Black residents of "The Bottom" who were impacted by the gentrification?

Formative Assessment:

Ask students to create a ☐ Sula Playlist by selecting 5 songs for a production of *Sula*. Students will provide the name of the artist/band, the title of the song, and explain why each song connects or relates to the novel.

ELD Tasks and Scaffolds

Optional Extension Activity:

- Students will finish all characters, symbols, motifs, irony and themes in their
  🖹 Sula Guided Notebook .
- Students can re-write the beginning scene of *Sula* (pages 3-6) to make the corrections they feel Toni Morrison would have wanted.

Fluency, Comprehension and Writing Supports

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[1] From page 152 of Unspeakable Things Unspoken: https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_resources/documents/a-to-z/m/morrison90.pdf

Fluency	[Fluency Protocols](#)
Sentence Comprehension	[Juicy Sentence](#) protocol with sample sentence N/A
Writing	[Pattan Writing Scope and Sequence](#) N/A

Additional Supports	
[ELD Practices](#) 📄 **ELD ELA Tasks an…**	[ELD Tasks and Scaffolds](#)
[SpEd Practice](#)	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
[MTSS Practices](#)	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
Enrichment Practices	Practices to promote Tier 1 access