

## Curriculum Updates ELA

### **I. LGBTQIA+ Possible Connections:**

- **Gilgamesh:** While reading the epic of Gilgamesh students often ask about the relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Although not explicitly mentioned in the version of the text utilized at HMS, other versions state Enkidu and Gilgamesh are romantically linked. du. Gilgamesh ultimately sacrifices himself to be with his companion Enkidu in the afterlife. While reading this text we already talk about the bond between Gilgamesh and Enkidu. However, until recently we strayed away from the questions “Why are Gilgamesh and Enkidu’s bond so strong?” or “What is Gilgamesh’s true motivation to save Enkidu?” or “Why would Gilgamesh rather join Enkidu in the world of the dead instead of remaining on Earth?” These questions will allow us to discuss the deeper meaning of the two’s relationship and can serve as an easy access point to discuss relationships in literature and society.
- **Newsela articles:** Throughout the year students read various Newsela and CommonLit articles to enhance the skills of reading an article determining the main idea, finding key details to support their understanding, and responding to comprehension questions. To support the needs, identities, and interests of all learners we can utilize articles featuring current events regarding social justice movements such as
  - BLM/ Black empowerment
  - LGBTQIA+ advocacy, movements, and empowerment
    - Gender identity
    - Members doing awesome things
    - Normalizing trans
  - Disability representation
  - By utilizing Newsela students are able to read about issues and people who are relevant to their lives, identities, and interests. This will allow students to see more and more perspectives and people in a normalized environment.
- **Brown Girl Dreaming:** Before reading Brown Girl Dreaming students are introduced to the author, Jacqueline Woodson through her introduction video. In the video, she talks about what inspired her to write her book. Woodson states that she wanted to have the story of someone like her represented not only as a black woman but as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. Here we already talk about what identity means to Jacqueline and her family but now we can extend the conversation. Although this novel does not specifically go into her journey in discovering her identity as a lesbian woman, this novel provides several opportunities that can be used as discussion points. Through reading Brown Girl Dreaming students are provided with opportunities to learn about how Jacqueline was able to find herself through her journey of childhood and how that makes her the woman, author, mother, wife and so much more she is today. The conversations through this novel can help students develop a better understanding of people who may be different than themselves or see themselves through Jacqueline’s stories, memories, and experiences.

## II. Cultural Responsiveness

### Diversity of Character

- There are references to different ethnic and cultural traditions, languages, religions, names, and clothing
- Characters of color are the main characters not just sidekicks
- If there is conflict in the storyline, the characters of color are not mostly considered the problem

### Accurate Portrayals

- Characters of color are not assumed to have low family wealth, low education attainment and or low income
- Gender is not central to the storyline. Female characters are in a variety of roles that could also be filled by a male character.
- Social situations and problems are not seen as individual problems but are situated within a societal context
- Characters of diverse cultural backgrounds are not represented stereotypically or presented as too foreign or exotic
- Diverse characters are rooted in their own cultures and are not ambiguous

### Decolonization/Power and Privilege

- The curriculum highlights non-dominant populations and their strengths and assets so that students of diverse races, classes, gender, ability, and sexual orientation can relate and participate fully
- The curriculum communicates an asset-based perspective by representing people of diverse races, classes, genders, abilities, and sexual orientations through their strengths, talents, and knowledge rather than their perceived flaws or deficiencies
- The curriculum does not communicate negativity or hostility towards people of marginalized backgrounds through verbal or nonverbal insults, slights, or snubs.
- Curriculum and instructional activities promote and provoke critical questions about the societal status quo. they present alternative points of view as equally worth considering

### Centering Multiple Perspectives

- The curriculum recognizes the validity and integrity of knowledge systems based in communities of color, collectivist cultures, matriarchal societies, and non-Christian religions.

### Connecting Learning to Real Life and Action

- The curriculum provides avenues for students to connect learning to social, political, or environmental concerns that affect them and their lives and contribute to change
- The curriculum encourages students to take actions that combat inequality or promote equity within the school or local community
- Guidance is provided on being aware of one's biases and the gaps between one's own culture and students' cultures.
- Diverse student identities are seen as assets and strengths that can advance individual and group learning, rather than seen as challenges or difficulties to be overcome

### III. Social Justice Standards

The following Social Justice Standards are addressed in the current Haddonfield 6th grade Social Studies Curriculum

#### Identity

- ID.6-8.1: I know and like who I am and can comfortably talk about my family and myself and describe our various group identities.
- ID.6-8.2: I know about my family history and culture and how I am connected to the collective history and culture of other people in my identity groups.
- ID.6-8.3: I know that overlapping identities combine to make me who I am and that none of my group identities on their own fully defines me or any other person.
- ID.6-8.4: I feel good about my many identities and know they don't make me better than people with other identities.
- ID.6-8.5: I know there are similarities and differences between my home culture and the other environments and cultures I encounter, and I can be myself in a diversity of settings.

#### Diversity

- DI.6-8.6: I interact with people who are similar to and different from me, and I show respect to all people.
- DI.6-8.7: I can accurately and respectfully describe ways that people (including myself ) are similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
- DI.6-8.8: I am curious and want to know more about other people's histories and lived experiences, and I ask questions respectfully and listen carefully and non-judgmentally.
- DI.6-8.9: I know I am connected to other people and can relate to them even when we are different or when we disagree.
- DI.6-8.10: I can explain how the way groups of people are treated today, and the way they have been treated in the past shaped their group identity and culture.

#### Justice

- JU.6-8.11: I relate to people as individuals and not representatives of groups, and I can name some common stereotypes I observe people using.
- JU.6-8.12: I can recognize and describe unfairness and injustice in many forms including attitudes, speech, behaviors, practices, and laws.
- JU.6-8.13: I am aware that biased words and behaviors and unjust practices, laws, and institutions limit the rights and freedoms of people based on their identity groups.
- JU.6-8.14: I know that all people (including myself ) have certain advantages and disadvantages in society based on who they are and where they were born.
- JU.6-8.15: I know about some of the people, groups, and events in social justice history and about the beliefs and ideas that influenced them.

#### Action

- AC.6-8.16: I am concerned about how people (including myself ) are treated and feel for people when they are excluded or mistreated because of their identities.
- AC.6-8.17: I know how to stand up for myself and others when faced with exclusion, prejudice, and injustice.
- AC.6-8.18: I can respectfully tell someone when his or her words or actions are biased or hurtful.

- AC.6-8.19: I will speak up or take action when I see unfairness, even if those around me do not, and I will not let others convince me to go along with injustice.
- AC.6-8.20: I will work with friends, family, and community members to make our world fairer for everyone, and we will plan and coordinate our actions to achieve our goals.

#### **IV. Differentiation/ Accessibility Features**

- **Guided Reading Response Journals:** Each core novel's reading response journal combines various elements of accessibility such as sentence starters, chunking like topics in smaller sections, fill in the blank responses, answer and example modeling, and layout of student production expectations.
- **Guided Graphic Organizers:** Students have access to guided graphic organizers that help plan and organize their writing. Graphic organizers often include a teacher example, student example, and sentence starters. Students are given a variety of graphic organizers throughout the year to help enhance their writing and responses.
- **Access to audiobooks:** In addition to texts being read aloud and discussed in class students will have access to audio versions of each text either through Learning Ally, Novel recordings from YouTube, or teacher recorded videos.
- **Access to Assistive Technology:** Students are provided with a variety of tools to promote their best learning such as access to Google Read Write, Grammarly, FM systems, Google Tasks, access to audiobooks, use of graphic organizers, and more.
- **Access to supplemental materials and videos:** Students are granted access to supplemental notes, materials, and videos to better enhance their understanding of each unit of discovery.
- **Review materials and games:** Students have access to various review materials and games to help them prepare for upcoming assessments both in traditional and creative formats.
- **Study Guides/ Review Sessions:** Students are provided with study guides and some may have the opportunity to review for assessments in both the classroom and small group setting.
- **Choice and Creative Assessments:** Throughout the year students can demonstrate their understanding of various units of study through the use of Choice Boards, Choose Your Own Presentations, and other Creative Assessments
- **Modified Assessments:** Assessments are modified to meet the needs of various learners. Modifications often include but are not limited to: small group testing, reduced answer choices, sentence starters, provision of word banks, access to questions read aloud and clarified enlarged text, and section chunking.
- **Enrichment Opportunities:** Students have access to various enrichment opportunities and resources for each unit of study to further enhance their understanding and make deeper connections to the texts.