EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 6: Module 2B: Unit 1:
Overview

Unit 1: Reading Closely and Writing to Learn: Adversities in Medieval Times

In this first unit of the module, students build their informational reading skills and background knowledge about medieval times through a guided research project. Through the close reading of a general information article about medieval times, teachers introduce the skills of determining the central idea of a text, determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, and analyzing how particular parts of the text contribute to its overall meaning. While reading these articles, students consider the different adversities faced by people in the Middle Ages. Students then work in small research groups to practice informational reading skills and learn more deeply about the adversities faced by a specific group of people in medieval times.

For their mid-unit assessment, students read new excerpts of informational text, determine the central idea, determine the meaning of words, and analyze how sections of the text contribute to its overall meaning. In the second half of the unit, students use their research materials and the knowledge they've gained to write an essay to inform about one aspect of medieval times. Using a model essay and a series of writing lessons, students choose their most relevant research materials, build paragraphs around quotes from their research texts, draft an introduction and conclusion, and participate in a peer critique. For their end of unit assessment, students submit their final revised essay to inform.

Guiding Questions and Big Ideas
• **How do details of an informational text contribute to its overall meaning?**
• **How does reading from different texts about the same topic build our understanding?**
• **How does social and economic status affect the adversities faced by people in medieval times?**
• *Informational texts help readers answer questions and build knowledge.*
• *Informational reading is reading closely for word choice and detail as well as central ideas and themes.*
• *People of medieval times faced diverse adversities based on their social and economic status.*

Mid-Unit 1 Assessment	**Research Reading: Medieval Times** This assessment centers on standards NYS ELA CCLA RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4, and RI.6.5. Students will read a new informational article about the Middle Ages. They will cite evidence to answer text-dependent questions, write a summary of the article, analyze how ideas are developed, and analyze how a particular sentence or section contributes to the overall meaning of the article.
End of Unit 1 Assessment	**Writing about Medieval Times** This assessment centers on standard NYSP12 ELA CCLS W.6.2, W.6.4, W.6.7, and W.6.9. After researching several aspects of medieval times, students will choose one aspect to write their own informational essay about. They will write in response to this prompt: "Describe three different adversities faced by the particular group you focused on, and an explanation of why they faced those adversities." (This assessment helps students solidify their learning about medieval times from this unit, and prepares them for deeper study, in Unit 2, of the adversities people faced in this time).

Content Connections

This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards as students read literature and informational text about medieval times as well as modern poetry about the adversities people face today. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies Practices and Themes to support potential interdisciplinary connections to this compelling content. These intentional connections are described below.

Big ideas and guiding questions are informed by the New York State Common Core K–8 Social Studies Framework: http://engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/ss-framework-k-8.pdf

Unifying Themes (pages 6–7)

- Theme 1: Individual Development and Cultural Identity: The role of social, political, and cultural interactions supports the development of identity. Personal identity is a function of an individual's culture, time, place, geography, interaction with groups, influences from institutions, and lived experiences.

- Theme 2: Development, Movement, and Interaction of Cultures: Role of diversity within and among cultures; aspects of culture such as belief systems, religious faith, or political ideals as influences on other parts of a culture, such as its institutions or literature, music, and art; cultural diffusion and change over time as facilitating different ideas and beliefs.

- Theme 4: Geography, Humans, and the Environment: The relationship between human populations and the physical world (people, places, and environments).

- Theme 5: Development and Transformation of Social Structures: Role of social class, systems of stratification, social groups, and institutions; role of gender, race, ethnicity, education, class, age, and religion in defining social structures within a culture; social and political inequalities.

Social Studies Practices, The Role of the Individual in Social and Political Participation, Grades 5–8:
- Descriptor 4: Identify, describe, and contrast the role of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies.

Texts
1. Kenneth S. Cooper, "Middle Ages," in the *New Book of Knowledge*, Grolier Online, 2013.
2. "Middle Ages," in *Britannica Student Encyclopedia*.
3. Deborah M. Deliyannis, "Middle Ages," World Book Online InfoFinder.
4. "The Middle Ages for Kids: What Is a Fief?" Mr. Donn's Social Studies Site, http://medievaleurope.mrdonn.org/fiefs.html.
5. "The Middle Ages for Kids: The Manorial System & Common People," Mr. Donn's Social Studies Site, http://medievaleurope.mrdonn.org/commoners.html.
6. Simon Newman, "Serfs in the Middle Ages," The Finer Times, http://www.thefinertimes.com/Middle-Ages/serfs-in-the-middle-ages.html.
7. "The Middle Ages for Kids: Life of the Nobility: Kings, Lords, Ladies, Knights," Mr. Donn's Social Studies Site, http://medievaleurope.mrdonn.org/nobility.html.
8. "Daily Life of a Noble Lord in the Middle Ages," Mr. Donn's Social Studies Site, http://www.middle-ages.org.uk/daily-life-noble-lord-middle-ages.htm.
9. Sharon Fabian, "Lords and Ladies," http://www.mysocialstudiesclass.info/World%20History/High%20Middle%20Ages/Nobility.pdf.

This unit is approximately 2.5 weeks or 13 sessions of instruction.

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
Lesson 1	Launching the Module: Quotes about the Middle Ages	• I can cite text-based evidence to support an analysis of informational text. (RI.6.1) • I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about sixth-grade topics, texts, and issues. (SL.6.1) • I can express my own ideas clearly during discussions. (SL.6.1) • I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases. (L.6.4)	• I can read informational excerpts to make inferences. • I can talk with my peers about an informational excerpt. • I can determine the meaning of unknown words in an informational excerpt. • I can share my knowledge and my questions about medieval times.	• Exit Ticket: 3-2-1	• What I Know, What I Wonder Anchor Chart • Four Corners protocol
Lesson 2	Reading for Gist: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 1	• I can cite text-based evidence to support an analysis of informational text. (RI.6.1) • I can use a variety of strategies to determine word meaning in informational texts. (RI.6.4)	• I can find the gist of Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages." • I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages." • I can identify the adversity faced by specific groups of people in Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages."	• Digging Deeper into the Text: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 1	• Adversity Anchor Chart
Lesson 3	Writing a Summary: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 1	• I can determine the main idea of an informational text based on details in the text. (RI.6.2) • I can summarize an informational text using only information from the text. (RI.6.2) • I can analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits in and contributes to the development of ideas in a text. (RI.6.5)	• I can determine the main idea of Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages." • I can summarize Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages." • I can explain how a section of text contributes to the meaning of the whole of Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages."	• QuickWrite 1 –from homework • Summary Writing graphic organizer for Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages" • Written summary of Excerpt 1 of "Middle Ages"	

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Lesson 4	Reading for Gist: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 2	• I can cite text-based evidence to support an analysis of informational text. (RI.6.1) • I can use a variety of strategies to determine word meaning in informational texts. (RI.6.4)	• I can find the gist of Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages," • I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages." • I can identify the adversity faces by specific groups of people in Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages."	• Digging Deeper into the text: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 2	• Adversity Anchor Chart
Lesson 5	Writing a Summary: "Middle Ages" Excerpt 2	• I can determine the main idea of an informational text based on details in the text. (RI.6.2) • I can summarize an informational text using only information from the text. (RI.6.2) • I can analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits in and contributes to the development of ideas in a text. (RI.6.5)	• I can determine the main idea of Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages." • I can summarize Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages." • I can explain how a section of text contributes to the meaning of the whole of Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages."	• QuickWrite 2 (from homework) • Summary Writing graphic organizer for Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages" • Written summary of Excerpt 2 of "Middle Ages" • Exit Ticket: A Focus Research Group	
Lesson 6	Expert Groups: Research 1	• I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7) • I can use several resources in my research. (W.6.7) • I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)	• I can collaborate to create group norms. • I can identify details in a text that answer my research question. • I can summarize the relevant details for my research.	• Researcher's notebook	

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
Lesson 7	Expert Groups: Research 2	• I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7) • I can use several resources in my research. (W.6.7) • I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)	• I can identify details in a text that answer my research question. • I can summarize the relevant details for my research.	• Researcher's notebook	
Lesson 8	Mid-Unit Assessment: Research	• I can cite text-based evidence to a support an analysis of informational text. (RI.6.1) • I can determine the main ideas of an informational text based on details in the text. (RI.6.2) • I can summarize an informational text suing only information from the text. (RI.6.2) • I can use a variety of strategies to determine word meaning in informational text. (RI.6.4) • I can analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits in and contributes to the development of ideas in a text. (RI.6.5) • I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7) • I can use several sources in my research. (W.6.7) • I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)	• I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in an excerpt of text. • I can explain how a section of text contributes to the meaning of the whole text. • I can identify details in texts that answer my research question. • I can identify the main idea of a text and summarize the relevant details for my research.	• Mid-Unit 1 Assessment	

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Lesson 9	Writing to Inform: Analyzing a Model Using A Rubric	• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2) • I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.6.9)	• I can find the gist of the model essay. • I can use a rubric to score a model essay and identify why the model is a good example.	• Gist annotations on the model essay • Assessing the Model Essay	
Lesson 10	Evaluating Evidence: Adversities Faces in the Middle Ages	• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2) • I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)	• I can evaluate my research to choose the most relevant evidence for my essay. • I can organize the evidence I have chosen into quote sandwiches.	• Homework: Three Adversities (from Lesson 9) • Quote sandwiches for each body paragraph	
Lesson 11	Drafting Body Paragraphs	• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2) • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.6.9)	• I can use my Quote sandwich organizers to draft the body paragraphs of my essay. • I can maintain a formal style in my writing.	• Quote Sandwich graphic organizers (from homework) • Three draft body paragraphs	• Formal Style anchor chart

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Lesson 12	Drafting Introduction and Conclusion	• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2) • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.6.9)	• I can draft the introduction and conclusion of my essay.	• Draft of introductory and concluding paragraphs	
Lesson 13	End of Unit Assessment: Final Essay	• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2) • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.6.9)	• I can write the best draft of my essay. • I can use transitional words and phrases to make my essay flow smoothly. • I can provide constructive feedback to a peer.	• End of Unit 1 Assessment	

Optional: Experts, Fieldwork, and Service

Experts:
- Invite a local expert on medieval times from a college or university to discuss the various social groups and structures students are researching.

Fieldwork:
- Visit a local public library to have a research librarian assist students in finding additional materials about their focus group.
- See if there is a local art museum displaying medieval artifacts, such as tapestries or armor.

Service:
- N/A

Optional: Extensions

- A study of medieval art and religious symbolism.

Preparation and Materials

This unit includes a number of routines, some of which involve stand-alone documents.
In this unit, students are engaged in research in which they explore the adversities faced by a specific group of people in medieval times. To guide students through the research process while still instilling a degree of independence, this unit relies on multiple structures of organization and note-taking.

1. Guided Research

This unit is designed as a guided research project for students. It is meant to provide them with background knowledge and prepare them for the reading of *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!*
- Note that this research is intentionally guided, with quite a bit of scaffolding from the teacher. This meets the sixth-grade demands for W.7: Students "conduct short research projects, drawing on several sources" (W.6.7). This guided research also serves as a scaffold to move students toward the more rigorous seventh-grade standard, which requires that they not only conduct short research projects drawing on several sources, but also generate additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation (W.7.7). Seventh grade is when the CCLS explicitly expects students to conduct their own additional research.

2. Research Folder

The research folder is a tool used to help keep students organized. It should contain several research articles as well as the researcher's notebook. All the articles students are provided for this unit are found as supporting materials in Lesson 6.

Create the research folder before Lesson 6 so it is ready for students to use during this lesson. It should contain:
- All the articles found as supporting materials in Lesson 6 of this unit
- The researcher's task card (see Lesson 6 supporting materials)
- The researcher's notebook (see Lesson 5 supporting materials)

3. Researcher's Notebook

The researcher's notebook (see Lesson 5 supporting materials) is a tool students use to collect bibliographical information and evidence from the articles they read throughout this unit.

The evidence they collect in this resource should be specific to the focus of their inquiry.

4. Research Texts

- The texts for students' guided research were chosen based on the accuracy of the information, the reliability of the source, and the accessibility of the text for sixth-graders.

- Encourage your students to do additional independent research on this topic.

- Collaborate with your school librarian or media specialist to reinforce proper research skills and support additional research.