

REBECCA PETRUCK



Steering Toward Normal Curriculum Guide
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How To Use This Book

We know you are busy finding resources to meet the needs of your students and support the integration of the Common Core Standards into your classroom. We are too! We are teachers. As we created this curriculum guide, we incorporated strategies we use every day. So what you have is a guide for teaching that is flexible and adaptable to many different types of study.

As always with every text you use with students, spend careful time reading this engaging, touching story written by Rebecca Petruck. It is a coming of age tale of two steers...just kidding....a coming of age tale of a young man trying to find and make peace with how his life situation dramatically changes. He must come to terms with a past about which he knows very little while navigating the tricky waters of middle school, friends and raising a steer for 4-H competition at the state fair. Decide where this novel would fit best in your sequence of instruction. Since the novel adapts to many units of study, identify the standards you want to teach through this book.

The teaching materials in this guide are divided into three sections. **Before Teaching** introduces ways to frontload for the novel. We find frontloading helpful with our students, however, we recognize not all teachers agree with or need to do pre-reading activities in their classrooms. If you do not do pre-reading activities, then move on to **Close Reading** for during reading activities and strategies.

Close Reading divides the novel into three chunks. Each chunk has a set of comprehension questions and a set of text based multiple choice questions aligned to the Common Core Anchor Standards for Reading Literature. Both are meant to be used as formative assessment to gauge your students' understanding and analytical thinking. While using **Close Reading**, use the skill activities found in the **Targeted Exercises** section. This is where we placed the targeted teaching strategies. We use the "Are You Getting It?" questions as the students read. Based on the standards, we select activities from the **Targeted Exercises** to match our teaching targets. By no means would we do every exercise nor do we have students write out the answers to every single comprehension question. Instead we make decisions using the resources that best fit our students' needs. After reading and analyzing each section, then we have our students take the section Multiple Choice Formative Assessment. These scores would inform our instruction for the next section or further units of study.

The summative assessment choices are found in the third section. ***Wrapping It All Up*** gives you options for challenging your students through original products that extend their learning beyond comprehension and into higher order thinking strategies. ***Wrapping It All Up*** includes Common Core standards for Informational, Speaking and Listening, Writing and multimedia text integration.

We do not provide rubrics as we believe these should be designed by you and your students based on what you want them to get out of the assignment. If you are looking for a BIG HUGE test at the end, you won't find it here. We personally think our students take enough HUGE tests to last a lifetime at the end of the year. You can still teach them test preparation using the Multiple Choice Tests for each section as well as teaching them to answer constructed response questions using the open ended questions for discussion. If you have to give a big test, then you can use the Scrapbook Summary for summative assessment. However, it is our hope you will choose to extend your students' learning to show creativity as well as display what they have learned.

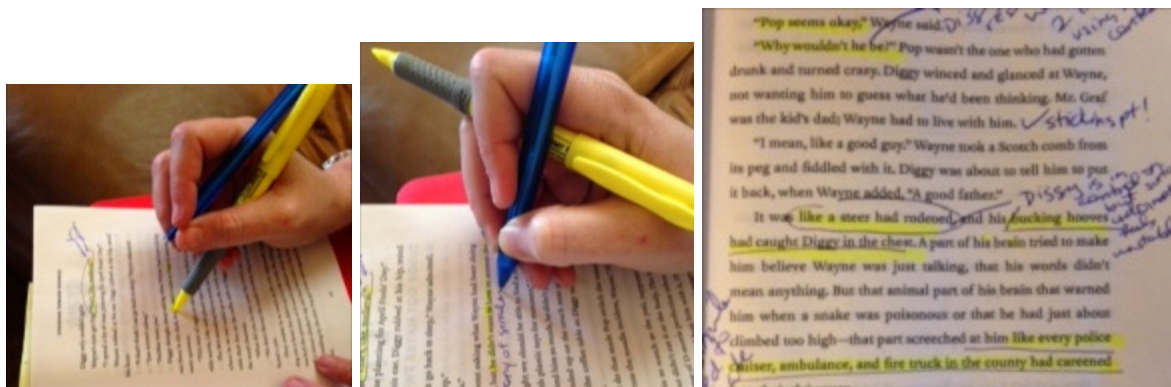
Good luck on this journey of learning with your students! By no means let this limit the activities or discussions in your classroom. Have fun and enjoy the ride.

Sincerely,
Debra and Molli



Suggestions From Our Classrooms

Use this novel study to teach students to annotate the text as they read. Annotation is not highlighting. Highlighting literally colors the words of the text with no specific purpose. Annotations make the *invisible* thoughts of the reader **visible** allowing the teacher to peer into the reader's brain as he/she reads the text. If you are a die hard highlighting proponent, then may we suggest what we invented called the "chopstick" method of annotation where the reader has both a highlighter and a pen in one hand. For anything highlighted, a corresponding written note must accompany it to clarify the thoughts behind the highlighting. All can be done with a simple flip of the writing utensil, and this motion also comes in handy when eating sushi! See below.



If at all possible, have a personal copy of the novel for each child. This will make teaching annotations much easier. If this is not a reality in this budget-crunched world, students can keep an annotation journal (see Appendix A) or use sticky notes to record as they read. These annotations are personal and can include, but are not limited to, the following: their thoughts, conclusions, questions, connections, unfamiliar words, a-ha's and what we like to call **English Geek Out Moments** or **E-GOMs**. **E-GOMs** are where the author uses a specific literary technique or type of figurative language. The **E-GOMs** we have students mark most often are examples of foreshadowing, flashback, symbolism, irony, allusion, simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole and onomatopoeia (just for fun). When students mark these, they also need to be aware of and start to determine why an author would use them. This takes them deep into Anchor Standard 4 focusing on Craft and Structure.

Recommendations Before You Teach

There is currently some debate in the English/Language Arts world on the merits of providing students some background information before reading a piece of literature. There are teachers who line up on both sides of the debate. On one side, there are teachers who argue providing students some knowledge gives them a platform to build meaning without having to sift through unfamiliar details. This point of reference gets them to a deeper meaning more quickly. The polar opposite side feels students must wrestle with a text, uncovering its layers of meaning one at a time and this process makes students question the text rereading for clarification.

We fall in the middle of this debate. We love the idea of students pouring over a text, reading and rereading to uncover its mysteries. However, we teach in a school where more than half of the students receive free or reduced lunch; many of these students have limited experiences outside of their rural North Carolina county. Because of the limited experiences our students have, we find background information to be particularly helpful to connect our students to unfamiliar settings and characters. Once our students make a connection with the literature beforehand, their motivation increases even though the difficulty of struggling through an unfamiliar text increases.

To aid pre-reading, we often find a video clip that goes along with the basic subject matter or setting of a literary work. Sometimes we pair students and give them topics to research and report out to the class so we all can learn something on the topic before we begin reading. While we *have* cut back on the amount of frontloading before reading, the reality is we still teach many reluctant readers. We have come to the conclusion when students learn some background information, it gets them more excited about what they are about to read. We do not give the plot away or teach what they are going to be reading. It is more like priming the pump. This peaking of interest translates into reading more closely and with more excitement.

The following activities are examples of what we would do to set the stage for reading *Steering Toward Normal*. We have 4-H in our schools and a livestock competition at our local county fair. The county fair is still a big deal to our middle school students. Almost every student attends though not all visit the livestock arena. In order to connect our students' personal experience to the book, we survey them electronically prior to the research activity to find out which students show animals, have family members who show animals or have seen a livestock show. Using this information, we equally distribute these students in groups to give each group a resident expert.

Going Steer-Crazy! is completed as a group and reported out to the rest of the class. The teacher compiles the answers either in a form to be shared with the students electronically or on poster paper displayed in the classroom.

In ***Let The Competition Begin***, the class chooses something to judge. Some examples could be steers from pictures, brownies, apples, movie stars, athletes, sports teams, colleges, etc. (No two groups can have the same team, athlete, or college but the whole class must have the same category.) Once all the steps are completed, the class holds its competition and determines its winners.

If you want to make a real world connection, in the 4-H program there are over a hundred categories for competition including art, electronics, poetry, cake decorating and much, much more. Also, 4-H has programs in most communities across the United States and around the globe. If you like, there are many opportunities for your students to research their local 4-H program, invite a 4-H volunteer as a class speaker and/or create a product to enter into your local, regional or state competitions. There are many activity extensions through 4-H that connect to other subjects in the middle school curriculum and provide students with real world experience. Feel free to expand this connection both in your classroom and across the curriculum with before, during and after reading learning extension activities.

Even if you do not generally use pre-reading activities, consider using the ***Book Trailer Foreshadowing*** activity page. We find students in the middle grades often miss foreshadowing in literary works because they are not quite ready to simultaneously immerse themselves in the story and still retain perspective as an outside observer. However, foreshadowing is quite common in students' everyday lives. Movies, television shows, commercials and online videos almost all use music to set the tone, impact the mood and create suspense through foreshadowing. Feel free to assign the students the book trailer activity individually or watch the trailer and discuss the foreshadowing as a class. Either will help students understand this important literary device.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Going STEER-Crazy!!!

The characters you will come to know raise steers to show in a competition at the state fair. These characters are faced with a unique set of personal challenges as they get their animals ready to compete. For our novel study, you might need some background information to help you know a little more about the setting and major plot focus of Rebecca Petruck's novel *Steering Toward Normal*.

1. First, go to the back section of the novel to *In Case You Were Wondering*. Read about 4-H, Ribbons and Livestock Terms. Summarize what you learned in the chart.

4-H	Ribbons	Livestock Terms

2. Next, search online for the criteria for 4-H Livestock Judging in your state. Fill in the chart below as you learn more. Record the URL of the website you researched below.

How are they judged?	Judging Criteria	Ribbons Awarded

Name: _____

Date: _____

Let the Competition Begin

Your class has voted to be judged on _____. Your group has selected _____ to compete in the competition.

1. As a class, convert the chart from part two of ***Going Steer-Crazy!*** to fit your class competition and design all awards to match up with the ribbons awarded in your state.
2. Once the criteria is set, your team must work together to get ready for the competition.
3. Your teacher will devise a program guide from the criteria determined by the class. Your group is responsible for researching and filling in the criteria for your group to be eligible to compete. Your teacher will check on how well your group works together.
4. Your group must have an entry in the class competition. For example, if you are judging brownies, then your group must bring in a brownie. If you are judging a sports team, then your group provides a visual representing team that best matches the criteria.
5. Your teacher will secure impartial judges for the competition. Your teacher will not take part in the judging but will announce the competition and give the results.
6. Students will practice their answers and work together to show their entry in the best possible way according to the practices laid out in the guidelines for your state.
7. Time for the competition. May the best....whatever you show....win!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Book Trailer Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is an important literary device authors use to hint at future events in the plot. Foreshadowing builds suspense because a reader understands something BIG will happen, but the character often does not know what is coming. Foreshadowing in literature can occur through a character's speech, descriptions of the setting, actions of other characters or a change in tone. Foreshadowing also occurs in other works. Videos often create suspense or tension through the use of music or lighting. Think about how movies, television shows and commercials use foreshadowing to create tension in a story.

Imagine this scene: A character creeps down a dark hallway, testing each step as she walks. Her flashlight blinks out and the music swells to an eerie pitch. A low, steady beat gets faster and faster until...the character's little brother jumps from behind a door! The music, sounds and lighting all foreshadowed suspense, but the girl is surprised.

Search for the *Steering Toward Normal* book trailer by Rebecca Petruck on YouTube.com or download the Aurasma App to your mobile device, follow the *Steering Toward Normal* channel and hover over the book's cover to see the trailer come to life. Complete the chart below as you watch the trailer.

<i>How does the book trailer create foreshadowing?</i>	<i>How does the music increase the tension?</i>	<i>What is the impact of the changing tones?</i>

How do the music, visuals and words combine to create foreshadowing of the plot?

Music	Visuals	Words

Recommendations for Close Reading

1. We start by reading the first few chapters together and discussing key plot elements including characters, setting and conflict. We always begin with expecting students to annotate. Modeling this is paramount to student success in a longer literary work. We teach students who like to highlight how to annotate using our chopstick method. We model annotating in a number of ways including thinking out loud, annotating under the document camera and/or through short videos we make of ourselves annotating. In addition, students share their own annotations in small and whole group settings. If students do not have a consumable copy of the book, have them use the **Annotation Journal Template** in the **Targeted Exercises** section.

2. Early on, we require that students fill out the **Keeping Characters Organized** sheet and the **Determining Setting and It's Impact** sheet. Both are found in the **Targeted Exercises** section.

3. Depending on the reading levels of students, we assign nightly reading and require students to fill in the **Are You Getting It?** questions to be sure they are understanding the basic plot and character interactions. We have had some groups read better in class or in pairs. This is dependent on the needs of the students as are the number of questions you assign. We check questions for completion only but share the answers to insure all students are following the storyline. These questions are formative assessment. Many misconceptions are cleared up through this process of daily visiting what is actually happening in the story. Discussion questions can be used in two ways; either for small and whole group discussion or for teaching how to answer open ended questions in writing.

4. The **Targeted Exercises** are for teachers to customize the standards and focus of instruction outside of the plot. Going deeper in the standards to reveal nuances in the text helps students understand why authors make specific choices. For example, foreshadowing gives the reader a prediction about what will happen, but if the clues are missed, the reader will be surprised. These activities are usually graded and require the student to go back in the text for evidence to support answers.

5. Multiple choice text based questions serve as formative assessment to check for standards mastery while reading and each question is aligned to one of the six Common Core Anchor Standards given at the front of this guide. Test preparation skills can also be taught using these sets of questions.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Are You Getting It? - Fall Section

Comprehension Questions

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Directions: Use your novel to answer the following questions in complete sentences.

Chapter 1

1. What is Diggy's relationship with July?
2. Why do Diggy and July meet with Mr. Lenz?
3. What does Diggy name his steer? Why does he choose that name?
4. What is Diggy's goal for his steer and why?

Chapter 2

5. What happened to Wayne's mom?
6. What is the relationship between Diggy and Wayne before Wayne gets dumped at Diggy's house? How does the relationship change?

Chapter 3

7. How did Mark Lawson get his nickname? What is it?
8. What was Mark Lawson's profession?
9. What do Diggy and Wayne have in common?
10. What did Diggy hide in the tree a long time ago?
11. Why does Diggy climb the tree?
12. Why do Diggy and Wayne get in a fight?

Chapter 4

13. Pop tells Wayne, "But you don't have to lie in the road while he finds his way." What literary device is used and what does this mean to Wayne?
14. What is odd about Wayne's sleeping attire?
15. Diggy mentions a tradition that he and Pop have. What is that tradition?

Chapter 5

16. What do you learn about Wayne's dad?
17. What do you learn about Diggy's mom?
18. What do you learn about the steer competition?
19. Diggy does something to Wayne that backfires on him. What happened?

Chapter 6

20. What did Pop learn about Wayne's dad, Harold?
21. What questions does Diggy have about Mrs. Graf?
22. What unusual event does Wayne learn from his dad about his childhood?
23. Why do you think Wayne wanted Diggy in the room during the discussion?

Chapter 7

24. Pop and Diggy talk about Wayne's mom. Summarize that conversation.
25. Who is Mrs. Osborn? What is her relationship to Wayne?
26. Who are Diggy's best friends? What do they have in common?
27. What did Jason and Crystal hear about Diggy?

Chapter 8

28. What happened when the boys got out of school?
29. What do Diggy and Wayne both see from the bus?

Chapter 9

30. Diggy spends time with his steer. What are some of the things he does for his steer? What impact do these activities have on Diggy?
31. What is the dilemma that faces Wayne about staying with any of his mom's family?
32. How does Diggy feel at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 10

33. Why was Diggy so excited about going to his monthly 4-H meeting?
34. How does Crystal take up for Diggy at the 4-H meeting?
35. The author describes Wayne as "trying to save himself." What does that mean?
36. What does Wayne decide to do at this meeting? How does Diggy feel about it?

Chapter 11

37. What is Diggy's plan for Wayne and raising a steer? Does it work?
38. Why does July visit? What bothers Diggy about this visit?
39. What does July help Wayne get at the end of the chapter?
40. July explains to Wayne that Crossbreeds are popular because they exhibit the best qualities of the breeds. How is this symbolic of the boys?

Fall Discussion Questions

1. What role does Joker play in the first eleven chapters? How does Joker impact the relationships between the characters? How does Joker reveal Diggy's internal struggles?
2. How does Mr. Graf's alcoholism impact the plot? What does Mr. Graf need to do to get Wayne to come back and live with him? Will Mr. Graf be able to accomplish his goal? Why might the author include a realistic struggle with addiction in a story written for children and young adults?
3. Give a few examples of how Diggy struggles with the revelation that Wayne is his half brother and that Wayne will stay in Diggy's house for an unknown length of time. Should Diggy try harder to accept Wayne's presence in his life? Why or Why not?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fall Formative Assessment

Using your text, choose the letter that best answers each question or finishes each statement. Write your answer on the line provided.

- _____ 1. Which line from Chapter 1 shows the nature of Diggy's feelings for July?
- A. "Anything less around a calf jittery after his first ride in a trailer would make July think he'd forgotten everything she'd ever taught him."
 - B. "As her truck made the turn into the long driveway, he breathed deeply to chase away the stomach swirlies."
 - C. "July grabbed his shoulder to make him stand still, then scratched his head like it was a steer's rump; breaking up the goop crust."
 - D. "Diggy was so focused on his new calf, it took him a while to feel July looking in on them."
- _____ 2. The author uses all of the following examples to show that Pop is considered trustworthy **except**:
- A. Pop being Diggy's sole parent since Diggy was left on Pop's doorstep.
 - B. Pop opening their home to Wayne during his time of need.
 - C. Pop explaining to Wayne that the kitchen needed repainting.
 - D. Pop being well known in the community by his nickname.
- _____ 3. In Chapter 4, the text says, "Disgruntled moos refuted the declaration." How does this quote connect to the action going on?
- A. It depicts the relationship between Joker and Diggy and Joker protests to being left outside.
 - B. It shows there are multiple steers in the fields surrounding Diggy's house and gives the reader a better sense of setting.
 - C. It reminds the characters that they are not alone and Joker needs to be put back in the barn.
 - D. It seems to be in response to Harold claiming Pop cannot keep Wayne and it makes the reader wonder if Joker actually knows what is actually happening.

_____ 4. What is the impact on the text of the dialogue exchange between Diggy and Wayne concerning the orchid sweatshirt Wayne is wearing as pajamas?

- A. It creates tension and shows how unfeeling Diggy is towards Wayne.
- B. It creates a visual image for the reader of Wayne's pajamas.
- C. It creates dramatic irony because Wayne knows the significance of the shirt.
- D. It creates suspense because the harsh words appear to be sparking a fight.

_____ 5. Based on the context of paragraph 4 on page 35, what is the meaning of the word **rodeoed** in the sentence below?

“It was like a steer had rodeoed, and his bucking hooves had caught Diggy in the chest.”

- A. Unpredictable moving like that of a steer disoriented in the ring
- B. A contest where cowboys display certain skills like cattle rustling and roping
- C. To lay down as a cow that has been tied up during a round up
- D. A lasso technique that restricts a cow's movement but the cowboy can still control the cow's direction

_____ 6. What type of figurative language is found in the sentence below and what is the effect on the meaning?

“Right then, Diggy would have chewed off his own leg to escape.”

- A. Personification that shows Diggy taking on dog-like characteristics
- B. Metaphor that compares Diggy to a dog showing his unpredictability
- C. Hyperbole that vividly describes the extent of how anxious Diggy was
- D. Simile that compares Diggy to a dog showing his feelings

_____ 7. What can be inferred from Diggy's reaction to Pop's frozen peas prank?

- A. Diggy is glad that Pop is trying things they once did together to help get things back to normal.
- B. Diggy resents Pop trying to pretend things are normal and ignoring how messed up things are.
- C. Diggy plots to show Wayne what a normal family does for fun.
- D. Diggy wants to distract Pop from the current problems and start a prank war.

_____ 8. While working with Joker in Chapter 9, Diggy observes, “Being alone was a big adjustment for the calf.” How does this observation impact the meaning?

- A. It creates dramatic irony because Diggy has sympathy for the calf but not for Wayne who is in a similar situation.
- B. It creates a sense of tragedy and loss because the calf is ripped from his family and will eventually be butchered for meat.
- C. It creates humor because Diggy believes the calf has feelings and can long for his family giving the cow human characteristics.
- D. It creates a setup for a flashback because Diggy is going to remember being left alone on Pop’s doorstep.

_____ 9. Pop tells Diggy in Chapter 9, “It’s a father’s job to care for his son...Both of his sons. I don’t know how to do that yet, but I know I have to try...” What conflict does this bring to the surface for Diggy?

- A. Diggy wants to find his own mother but is prevented from doing it because of the focus on Wayne and his problems.
- B. Diggy wants Harold Graf to take responsibility for his son but knows he is also battling his depression and substance abuse.
- C. Diggy resents that everyone is so focused on Wayne and he is jealous of Wayne because Wayne has a large, loving extended family.
- D. Diggy cannot hide from the fact that his family is no longer just the two of them and it makes him angry at Pop for putting him in this situation.

_____ 10. Wayne’s decision to invest in and raise a steer directly impacts Diggy in all the following ways **except**:

- A. Diggy will have to share his time with July because she will be helping Wayne as well.
- B. Diggy resented that Pop would now have two steers to provide feed and shelter for and Joker may not get what he needs.
- C. Diggy has to share something else with Wayne and feels like his life is being taken over by his half brother.
- D. Diggy knew this meant Wayne would be staying longer and he would have to help him train the steer.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Are You Getting It? - Winter and Spring Sections

Comprehension Questions

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Directions: Use your novel to answer the following questions in complete sentences.

Winter

Chapter 12

1. What hobby did Diggy and Pop used to spend hours doing together?
2. What did Diggy begin researching without Pop's knowledge?
3. What did Diggy learn about his own mother from Pop?
4. What were Diggy and Wayne arguing about when they heard the steers?
5. What was wrong with the steers?
6. What surprised Wayne about Diggy's quick actions?
7. What does Diggy name Wayne's steer and why?
8. What the significance of what the veterinarian did to Wayne's steer?
9. What effect did this traumatic event have on the boys' relationship?

Chapter 13

10. What was the accomplishment Harold was proud of?
11. What did Harold bring Wayne and what was the effect on Wayne?
12. What was Diggy's reaction?
13. Who comes to call on Wayne after Thanksgiving dinner?
14. What are Diggy, Pop and Wayne afraid will happen to Harold?

Chapter 14

15. What is the situation between Crystal and Jason?
16. How does Crystal drag Diggy into that situation?
17. Why does Wayne take Diggy to the library and how does Diggy react?
18. Diggy takes refuge by grooming the steers. What effect does this have on him?

Chapter 15

19. Summarize the meaning of the following quote: "Joker would be sold. For steak."
20. How does Diggy feel about that?
21. Pop talks to the boys about Christmas. What are their separate traditions?

22. Diggy has many conflicting emotions concerning *Pop*, *Wayne* and *Diggy's mom*. Find a quote in Chapter 15 for **each** one of these conflicts.

Chapter 16

23. How do the boys get along during Christmas break?
24. What is the significance of Crystal wearing a dress?
25. How does Diggy “help” her? Does it work?

Chapter 17

26. What does Wayne do that makes Diggy angry?
27. Pop tells Diggy they need to give Wayne some leeway. What does that mean?
28. What makes Diggy upset about Pop’s comment?
29. Why do the boys fight?
30. What stops the boys from fighting?
31. What event triggered Harold’s relapse?
32. What does Wayne tell his dad that shocks Diggy?
33. What does Diggy realize from this exchange?

Chapter 18

34. Diggy is worried about how Crystal will act at the meeting. How does it turn out?
35. What does Wayne bring Diggy? How does Diggy react?
36. Diggy describes the objects as everything and nothing. What does this mean?
37. What arrangement did the boys work out about schoolwork?

Spring

Chapter 19

38. Why is April a big deal at Diggy’s house?
39. What news does July bring to the boys?
40. What is alarming about the news?

Chapter 20

41. Who holds the key to success for the prime prank?
42. What is the rumor at school?
43. What does Mr. Graf want with the boys?

Chapter 21

44. What pranks do the boys pull on each other?
45. What secondary prank does Diggy pull to distract Pop from his missing truck?

46. Explain the prank the boys planned for Pop. How does Pop discover the truck is missing?

Chapter 22

47. Who picks up the boys and where are they taken?

48. What happens when they get there?

49. Who was in on the prank?

Chapter 23

50. What had to be done in April to get the steers ready for competition?

51. Why does Mr. Graf come to visit?

52. What is the conflict for Diggy?

53. When Mr. Graf throws the coin what does that symbolize?

Chapter 24

54. What sparks an argument between Diggy and Wayne?

55. How does it end?

Winter and Spring Discussion Questions

1. What role do the pranks play in the story? How do the pranks serve to increase the suspense in the novel? How do the pranks impact the humor?
2. Why are traditions important? How can traditions be both positive and negative? What are some of your family's ongoing, must do traditions? What would you do if you were forced to give them up one year?
3. Why does Wayne continue to search for a connection to Diggy's mom? How does this impact Diggy's internal struggle? How does this impact Diggy's relationships with Pop and Wayne?
4. Pop has always been there for Diggy. But Diggy learns Pop, who he as always admired, has flaws. Is Pop a hero? Why or why not?
5. How does Diggy feel about seeing a picture of his mom for the first time knowing that Pop had yearbooks in the house all this time? How would you feel if you were in Diggy's situation? What reasons could Pop have for not trying to establish a connection between Diggy and his mom?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Winter and Spring Formative Assessment

Using your text, choose the letter that best answers each question or finishes each statement. Write your answer on the line provided.

_____ 1. Which statement below summarizes the discussion Wayne and Diggy have after Pop goes out at the beginning of Chapter 12?

- A. Diggy wants to preserve the pleasant memories he has of his own mother but Wayne is constantly asking him to question those memories.
- B. Wayne grills Diggy about Pop and his habits of going out and then switches to talking about finding Diggy's mom once again.
- C. Diggy interrupts Wayne doing his homework to question him about when he is planning to go back home to his own house.
- D. The boys get into an argument about whose steer will win the competition.

_____ 2. How does the dog attack affect the conflict between the two boys?

- A. It has no impact and the boys continue to fight and argue as they have from the time Wayne was dropped off by Mr. Graf.
- B. It deepens Diggy's resolve to remain unsympathetic towards Wayne because Diggy is angered even more when July comes and hugs Wayne.
- C. It shows Diggy how inexperienced Wayne is about country life and he vows to help him better adapt to his environment.
- D. It serves to create an unspoken truce as both boys have to work together to save the cows from the dogs and Diggy genuinely feels bad for Fang's injury.

_____ 3. In Chapter 13, Thanksgiving Day is described as a "weird kind of normal" for Diggy. What does this mean?

- A. It means that Diggy was uncomfortable but had to pretend that things were okay for Wayne's sake.
- B. It means that Pop tried too hard to make Wayne's holiday like when his mom was alive and it made Diggy feel uneasy.
- C. It means that Diggy had grown accustomed to things being different.
- D. It means that Mr. Graf would be a regular guest in their home.

- _____ 4. What is the significance of Wayne showing Diggy the old yearbooks?
- A. It was the first time Diggy had seen what his mom looked like and it stirred up conflict in him.
 - B. It made Diggy want to find his mom or at the very least ask Pop more questions about her.
 - C. It gave Wayne intense satisfaction to see Diggy visibly upset and he was pleased that he accomplished what he set out to do.
 - D. It started yet another fist fight between the boys and the librarian had to break it up.
- _____ 5. What earlier incident foreshadowed Wayne finding Diggy's mom in the yearbooks?
- A. Mrs. Vogl's visit after the Thanksgiving meal
 - B. The dogs attacking the cows
 - C. July hugging Wayne closely
 - D. Mr. Graf giving Wayne a picture
- _____ 6. When talking about Christmas traditions with Pop and Wayne, Diggy says, "We would have a pretty clear view from your window to watch for reindeer." What does this reveal about Diggy?
- A. Diggy is really telling Wayne that he still believes in Santa Claus.
 - B. Diggy is trying to convey to Wayne that he is willing to try some of his traditions for Christmas.
 - C. Diggy is letting Wayne know that they will not be leaving the house on Christmas Eve despite Wayne telling them his traditions.
 - D. Diggy is trying to put an end to the uncomfortable conversation by lying to Wayne in front of Pop.

_____ 7. When Mr. Graf relapses and runs his truck in the ditch, Pop tells him, “You dumped him with me. If you want him back, you gotta keep working the steps.” How does this comment about Wayne create conflict in Diggy?

- A. Diggy is renewed in his desire for Wayne to go back home and he resists agreeing with Pop openly.
- B. Diggy knows that Mr. Graf has relapsed and this statement strengthens his anger because he knows Wayne will have to stay indefinitely.
- C. Diggy is haunted by being dumped off himself and now he wonders if Pop felt the same way about him and how he came to live with him.
- D. Diggy longs to tell Wayne how sorry he is that his dad keeps messing up but Diggy is scared of how angry Pop has become.

_____ 8. It can be inferred that all of the following characters were in on Pop’s April Fool’s Day prank **except**:

- A. Wayne
- B. July
- C. Crystal
- D. The police

_____ 9. In Chapter 22, what is the effect created by knowing about the prank Diggy and Wayne arranged to “steal” Pop’s truck?

- A. This knowledge creates humor because the reader knows where the truck is.
- B. This knowledge creates suspense because the reader knows that Graf and his friend were the unpredictable element in the prank.
- C. This knowledge creates tragedy because the reader now understands that one of the boys has been stealing Pop’s truck and shaving steers.
- D. This knowledge creates a sense of sympathy because the reader realizes the boys are being framed for a crime they could not have committed.

_____ 10. Which quote states the central idea of Chapter 24?

- A. “Whoah. You know, you only make it worse when you get mad.”
- B. “Just stay away from her, and stay away from me.”
- C. “I’m actually doing something to find her.”
- D. “....you only care about finding *my* mom when *your* dad screws up.”

Name: _____

Date: _____

Are You Getting It?- Summer and Minnesota State Fair Sections

Comprehension Questions

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Directions: Use your novel to answer the following questions in complete sentences.

Summer

Chapter 25

1. Why does Pop tell Diggy that they will need to be more patient with Wayne?
2. Why does the idea of July's party make Diggy sad?
3. What is Diggy's perfect birthday gift for July?
4. Who do the boys dedicate the launch to?

Chapter 26

5. What went wrong with Diggy's *perfect* gift?
6. Wayne's Grandma becomes very upset by the wayward rocket. Pop reveals the real reason. What is it?
7. What happens when Diggy meets Trevor?
8. What does July realize? How does Diggy respond?
9. What was Wayne's gift to July?
10. How does Diggy make up with July?
11. Diggy and Wayne end up fighting again. Summarize the argument.

Chapter 27

12. Why is Diggy glad that Pop is going out?
13. Why is Wayne so worried about Pop going out?
14. What does Wayne do after Pop leaves?
15. Both boys are mad for different reasons. Why are they both mad?
16. Diggy and Wayne say hurtful but honest things to each other. What is the most honest statement said by **each** boy and give your reasons why it is so hurtful?

Chapter 28

17. What happened when Wayne called his grandma to come and get him?

Chapter 29

18. Diggy asks Pop some hard questions about his mom. One question was about his parents' break up. What does he find out?
19. How did Diggy's mom know that Diggy was Pop's child?
20. When Pop went to look for Diggy's mom, what happened?
21. Diggy feels differently about his mom after talking to Pop. When Diggy looks at the yearbook what does he feel?
22. What was the punishment Pop gave the boys and what was his reason for it?
23. How does Diggy's mood affect Joker?
24. For a time, the boys appeared to switch roles. What does this mean?
25. What brought Diggy out of his nervous state of mind?
26. Why does Diggy try to help settle Wayne's nerves? Does it work?
27. What effect does being at the fair have on Diggy?
28. What is wrong with July?
29. What did Mr. Graf reveal while they were searching for food?
30. What happened to Fang?
31. What was the outcome of the competition?

Chapter 30

32. What two reasons does Wayne give Diggy for why he stayed and didn't move in with his grandma?
33. What prank do Pop and Diggy pull on Diggy's birthday?
34. What is the significance of the card Wayne gave Diggy for his birthday?

The Minnesota State Fair

Chapter 31

35. Compare and contrast Wayne and Diggy at the beginning of this chapter.
36. What do Jason and Crystal do that is very unusual?

Chapter 32

37. Diggy has a different reaction to Pop soothing Wayne. What is it?
38. Who did Diggy find in the stands prior to the competition starting?
39. What big news did Wayne reveal to Diggy? How did Diggy respond?

Chapter 33

40. What ruling does the 4-H administrator suggest?
41. Wayne comes to Diggy's defense. What argument does he use?
42. What is the ruling?
43. What does Pop want Diggy to do?

44. What happens in the ring? What does Joker do?
45. What does Diggy realize as he sees Joker carrying on in the ring?

Chapter 34

46. What happens at the packer's truck?
47. How do the steers react to walking the ramp?
48. The conversation after the boys get themselves together focuses on how hard it is to let the steers go. What do they end up talking about?
49. How does Diggy react to the news that Wayne is moving out?
50. What does Diggy do when he finally acknowledges that Wayne is his brother?
51. The boys realize they are both lucky. Why?

Summer and Minnesota State Fair Discussion Questions

1. As Diggy processed what Pop told him about his mom, he thinks, "A drowning person couldn't keep another person afloat." Is this true? Does this fit other characters in the novel?
2. What constitutes a *normal* family?
3. Is there a hero in this story? Who is it?
4. Who is more sympathetic as a character, Wayne or Diggy? Who has more of a right to be indignant?
5. What do you think is the main theme of this novel and what evidence is there to support your theme?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Summer and Minnesota State Fair Formative Assessment

Using your text, choose the letter that best answers each question or finishes each statement. Write your answer on the line provided.

- _____ 1. What effect does the irony of the birthday cards add to the story?
- A. It adds humor because two half brothers who fight all the time end up separately buying the same birthday card.
 - B. It adds tension because this will be one more thing the boys will have to disagree about.
 - C. It adds description to the party and hints at July's reaction to the cards.
 - D. It adds tragedy because once again Diggy must share the spotlight with Wayne even though he didn't know he had picked out the same card.
- _____ 2. Diggy tells Wayne in Chapter 27, "I know how lucky you are." What does he mean by this?
- A. Diggy is being sarcastic and actually insulting Wayne and the pitiful situation he is in.
 - B. Diggy believes Wayne is fortunate that he had such a great mom and even though she is dead, at least Wayne had her for fourteen years.
 - C. Diggy thinks Wayne is blessed because he has grandparents who love him that are literally fighting over taking care of him.
 - D. Diggy is trying to convince Wayne to take the tractor back so he is using flattery to get him to change his mind.
- _____ 3. What is ironic about the conversation Diggy has with Crystal at the fair in Chapter 29?
- A. She is talking to him about Jason but he wishes she was talking about him.
 - B. He goes into the girls' bathroom and doesn't realize it.
 - C. He consoles her with a simple solution about love when he has a situation in his life with a half brother just as simple.
 - D. Diggy wants to be with Joker but is stuck explaining love to Crystal.

- _____ 4. What does Diggy realize after the county fair competition is over about the grooming incident with Fang?
- A. Diggy realizes July's quick thinking is what saved Wayne in the competition.
 - B. Diggy realizes that they did not violate the rules when grooming Fang.
 - C. Diggy realizes if Fang had not fallen that he probably would have won.
 - D. Diggy realizes by helping Wayne groom Fang Diggy gave Wayne false hope.
- _____ 5. What Chapter 30 detail is most important to include in a chapter summary?
- A. Diggy turned fourteen and for a little while was as old as Wayne.
 - B. July, Crystal, Jason and Mr. Graf all came over for Diggy's birthday.
 - C. Pop grilled while Diggy teased about launching the rocket.
 - D. Wayne gave Diggy a card with the location of where his mom used to work.
- _____ 6. What can you infer from Jason and Crystal's conversation with Wayne in Chapter 31?
- A. They finally understand that Wayne has been through an awful ordeal and he needs the support of everyone including his half brother.
 - B. They are always protecting Diggy and they think they can psych Wayne out from competing by talking to him about his mom.
 - C. They want to keep Wayne away from Diggy so they talk to him about his mom to make him leave.
 - D. Jason felt like he needed to talk to Wayne because he thought they had something in common by losing someone important to them.
- _____ 7. What does Wayne trying to contact Diggy's mom reveal about Wayne?
- A. Wayne wants Diggy to have the mom that he had and thinks she will come back if she knows Diggy wants to see her.
 - B. Wayne has such a hatred and resentment for Diggy that he will stop at nothing to shake his confidence going into this competition.
 - C. Wayne subconsciously thinks that bringing Diggy and his mom together will somehow bring his mom back.
 - D. Wayne is trying to get Pop back together with the mother of his son so Pop won't make any more mistakes by dating other women.

- _____ 8. At the state competition, Diggy observes several times that Wayne is extremely nervous. He remarks that Wayne was staring at the "...passing crowd as if they held the meaning of life.." What is the effect of this reference to Wayne's nervousness?
- A. It creates suspense with no logical reason for it.
 - B. It foreshadows Wayne's admission about contacting Diggy's mom.
 - C. It creates humor because Diggy is completely the opposite and very calm.
 - D. It personifies the crowd and gives them a single human characteristic.
- _____ 9. How does the setting of the state steer competition contribute to the theme?
- A. Winning the competition has been what Diggy has been working toward for the whole year but really he has been coming to terms with having a brother and in the end the brother is what matters.
 - B. The steer competition is where all of the spectators come to see the work of the handlers and their steers just as all of Diggy's and Wayne's family have come to see them compete.
 - C. Because July is at the competition and there to help him win, Diggy finally realizes that she does not love him as a boyfriend and that is the way it should be because of their ages.
 - D. The competition provides a way for the boys to bond and help each other show their steers and bring all of their family members closer together.
- _____ 10. What event finally helps Wayne come to terms with his mom's death?
- A. The 4-H administrator ruling that Diggy could not compete
 - B. Diggy punching him in the nose
 - C. Deciding to go back with Mr. Graf
 - D. Seeing the value of raising a steer even though it will be sold for meat

TARGETED EXERCISES

Annotation Journal

FOR _____

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

page #	Actual Word, Phrase, Action, or Event	Significance

Name: _____

Date: _____

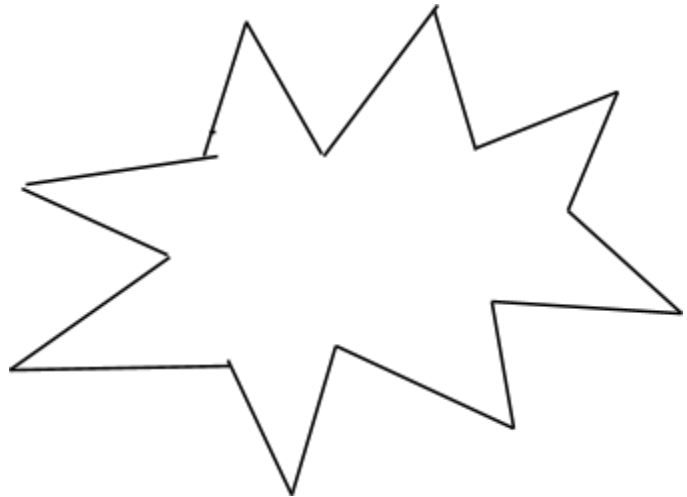
Determining Setting and Its Impact

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Fill in the following:	How do you know? (Quotes from the Text)
Setting: Place	
Setting: Time (year, day, season, etc.)	
Setting: Weather	
Setting: Social Conditions	

***Write the main conflict in the POW bubble. Sketch a symbol of one aspect of the setting that has the greatest impact on the conflict and explain.**

What is the impact of the setting on the conflict?



Setting Symbol

Conflict

Name: _____

Date: _____

Moo! It's Figurative Language

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

TYPES of Figurative Language/Literary Devices: Hyperbole, Simile, Metaphor, Alliteration, Personification, Onomatopoeia, Idiom, Allusion, Imagery

IMPACT STARTERS (explanation must be specific to the example):

- 1) To add humor or suspense
- 2) To make descriptions more vivid
- 3) To emphasize ideas or concepts

page #	Lines from the Text	Type	What does it mean?	What is the Impact?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Conflict and Point of View

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Types of Conflict: Person vs. Person, Person vs. Society, Person vs. Self, Person vs. Nature, Person vs. Supernatural/Deity, Person vs. Technology

Character and His/Her Point of View of the Conflict	Type of Conflict and How it is Seen in the Story	Opposing Character and His/Her Point of View of the Conflict

Character and His/Her Point of View of the Conflict	Type of Conflict and How it is Seen in the Story	Opposing Character and His/Her Point of View of the Conflict

Name: _____

Date: _____

Character Traits and Motivation

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

+

Character Traits

--

brilliant	anxious
confident	inconsiderate
daring	obnoxious
dutiful	proud
innocent	selfish

Seldom are people all bad or all good in their words or actions. What you see or hear isn't always the whole picture. You must look past outward words and actions and dig below the surface for the true motivation. You have to examine a character's motivation before deciding if the trait is true or only induced by a situation.

Character and Action/Dialogue	Trait Displayed	Motivation	True or Situational

Character and Action/Dialogue	Trait Displayed	Motivation	True or Situational

Name: _____

Date: _____

Making Sense of Irony

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Define the three types of irony:

1. **Situational Irony-**

2. **Dramatic Irony-**

3. **Verbal Irony-**

Authors use irony to create a specific effect in the text. Authors use irony to add humor, tragedy or suspense to the plot. If you can identify the type of irony and explain why it is ironic, you can understand the impact on the text.

Event in the text	Type of Irony	Why is it ironic?	Impact: What does it add and why?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Tracing the Theme

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Theme is the universal message about life revealed in a text. It *can* be stated, but more often themes are implied. Most literary works have more than one theme, but you can find the main theme by looking for clues. Ask yourself:

1. **Characters:** What do the characters learn about the world? How do the characters grow, mature or change?

2. **Pivotal Moments:** What are the crucial scenes in the story? What do these scenes say about the human condition?

3. **Resolution:** How are the conflicts resolved? Do the characters respond appropriately to the resolution?

4. **Title:** What does the title have to do with the struggle found in the book? How does it fit the story?

Once you have answered these questions, write your theme sentence for the by answering the question: **What is the author trying to say to all people through the characters of this story?** Include the title and author in your theme sentence.

The theme of *Steering Toward Normal* by Rebecca Petruck is _____

I can support my statement of the theme with the example of _____

Recommendations for Wrapping It All Up

We have found that our students enjoy a summative assessment project a lot more when they have choices about the topics and products produced. If you need to give them a comprehensive summative assessment to make sure they understood the literary concepts taught, then use **Scrapbook Summary**. If you want engagement, the key is matching their interests to the rigor needed to show mastery and extended thinking. Therefore, all choices must marry analysis of the novel with newly synthesized information. We suggest starting small and allowing students a choice of two or three options before offering more choices. In a digital world, projects should include both pencil/paper and digital options.

Common Core Alignment

If you choose to offer the research options, then you will need to teach/review research skills with your students including finding credible sources, citing, summarizing and avoiding plagiarism. Those skills are not provided in this guide. In addition, these options should be a part of a robust classroom where students write regularly and are familiar with the writing process. These projects are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, Speaking and Listening taken from www.corestandards.org.

Text Types and Purposes - 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing - 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge - 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing - 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Comprehension and Collaboration - 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas - 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Scrapbook Summary
Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Fill in the following:	How do you know? (Text Evidence)
Setting: Place	
Setting: Time Period	
Setting: Weather	
Setting: Social Conditions	
Plot: Inciting Incident	
Conflict: External (circle one) Person vs. Person Person vs. Nature Person vs. Society Person vs. Supernatural/Deity Person vs. Technology	
Conflict: Internal	
P.O.V.: First, Second, Third-Omniscient or Third-Limited	
Theme: (one sentence)	

Character Name	Role in the Story

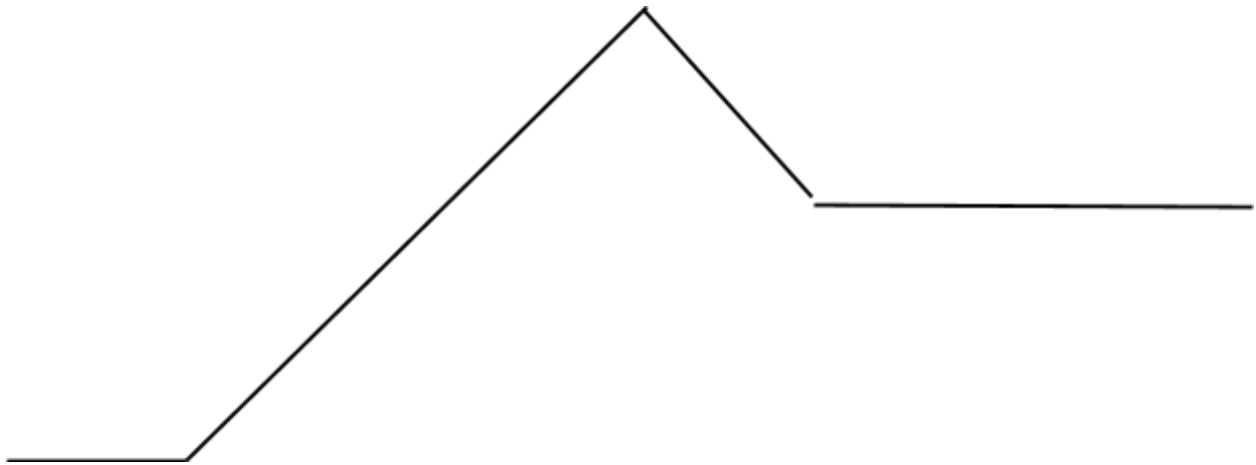
Event that Foreshadows		Later Event
	<p data-bbox="678 867 982 1031">This event gives the reader some clue that another similar event is coming.</p> <p data-bbox="797 1079 854 1108">---></p>	

Significant Example of Figurative Language	Type	What does it mean?	What is the Impact?

**Label the diagram with the parts of the plot:
(not listed in order)**

*Climax, Conflict, Denouement, Exposition, Falling Action,
Inciting Incident, Resolution and Rising Action*

Complete the Plot Diagram using significant events from the text.



Example of Irony from the Text	Type of Irony	Why is this ironic?	What effect does the irony have on the text?

I Have to Know More!

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Research Project:

1. Using an aspect of the novel that peaks your interest, write a research question that will lead you to extend your knowledge of a topic addressed in the story.
2. Research your question using credible print sources, digital media and/or interviews. Use the **I Have to Know More! Research Guide** to help focus and organize your research.
3. Develop a thesis statement incorporating new knowledge to support your research.
4. Apply what you learn to create a product (video, poster, model or other approved media) that teaches your class more about a topic addressed in the novel.
5. Create a method for your audience to show what they learned.

Here is an example of how you might pose a research question, search for resources, craft a thesis statement, create a product and make an assessment:

Research Topic: Science of Rockets

Research Question: How do rockets work?

Credible Source List: Websites and videos from NASA, National Geographic, European Space Agency, TedEd and the Smithsonian Institute

Fact Finding Mission: How do rockets overcome gravity? What powers a rocket? How are rockets built? How are rockets different than airplanes?

Thesis Statement: Rockets work by expelling hot gasses to overcome gravity and shoot into the air.

Product: Create video and article links on Blendspace.com to share with the class explaining how rockets work.

Assessment: Make a four question quiz about the topic and ask people to summarize what they learned in a comment post.

Other possible topics to research:

1. Stages of Grief
2. Families Coping with Addiction
3. Competitions at the Local/State Fair
4. Getting Involved in 4-H Programs
5. Great Pranks Throughout History
6. Science of Pranks
7. Animals and Emotion
8. Human/Animal Bonds

Name: _____

Date: _____

I Have to Know More! Research Guide

Research Topic: _____

Research Question: What is your research question? (Keep your question focused.)

Credible Source List: Where will you look for credible sources? (List at least THREE good sources. Remember, the internet is a great resource, but include print media and personal interviews when appropriate.)

a)

b)

c)

Fact Finding Mission: What do you learn about your topic question from your sources? (Rephrase the facts you uncover as more questions. Ask at least FOUR more questions you can answer with facts from your sources. Be sure all questions and facts explain more about your main research topic question.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

Thesis Statement: What is your thesis statement? (Answer your main research question with facts from your sources in one complete sentence.)

Product: Outline or sketch your research product. (For example, if you create a digital poster, which websites will you include? What will be your title? Will you include pictures? Will you cite your resources in a works cited page?)

My research product will teach _____
(topic/thesis) to my audience through _____ (poster,
video, etc.). I will include _____,
and _____.

Assessment: Plan a way for your audience to interact with your topic and show what they learned. You can make a quiz, ask people to leave a comment on your video or digital poster, take a survey and post the data in a graph, have people draw a diagram or let your audience leave a video post in response to your product. There are lots of ways to demonstrate learning! Be creative and have fun!

I will know my audience understood the topic because they will _____
_____.

Learning Extension Projects

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

1. What's On Your Playlist/DVR?

Create a character playlist for music or videos for five different characters in the novel. Each character's play list must consist of five songs by title and artist or videos by title and main characters.

Select three songs or videos from one character's playlist. Use the guide to explain the reasons why you connect that character to the songs or videos you chose.

If completing a song playlist, supply a description of the song and a section of the lyrics along with a justification for each song. Use textual evidence to support your assigning the song to the character. For example, if you choose a song for Diggy, you must explain why Diggy would connect to that song. You must use an example or quotation from the novel to support your answer.

If completing a video playlist, supply descriptions of the main characters and basic video premises along with justification and textual evidence to support your assigning the video to the character. For example, if you choose a television show for Wayne, you must explain why Wayne would watch the show or connect to a certain character. You must use an example or quotation from the novel to support your answer.

2. Multiple Messages

Find a novel, short story, picture book or poem with a similar theme. (You must get the work approved by your teacher.) Read the work and make annotations.

Compare and contrast at least three aspects of the two works in three well developed paragraphs. (Include either two comparisons and one contrast or two contrasts and one comparison.)

In the first and second paragraphs, explain how the works are similar and different. Are the characters alike? Are the settings or situations different?

In the third paragraph, explain how the theme is similar.

Include a fourth paragraph explaining why the theme is, or is not, an important message to the reader.

Create a visual to accompany your paragraphs. The visual could explain the theme or could be a symbol of the theme.

3. Text Reformulation

Rewrite the novel as either a series of ten narrative poems or as two picture books told from different points of view.

Poems: You must write ten poems retelling different scenes the novel. Each poem must be at least fifteen to twenty lines long. At least two poems must use a defined rhyme scheme. All poems must contain at least two examples of figurative language such as simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, etc. The poems must show at least two different points of view, but can show as many as ten. For instance, one poem could be written from Diggy's first person viewpoint while another can be written from July's third person view. State the point of view under the title of each poem.

Picture Books: Your picture books should include a title and a specific audience. Each book must summarize one scene in the novel, or even most of the plot, but each book should only include one point of view. For instance, one picture book could be from Diggy's point of view while another could be from Pop's viewpoint. Picture books are generally thirty pages long, but may have only a sentence, or even just a few words, on each page. Each picture book should include two examples of figurative language such as simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, etc. Choose one picture book to illustrate. Include fifteen illustrations, one for each spread (two pages), of the book.

4. All That Drama!

Take three key scenes from the beginning, middle and end of the novel. Rewrite the scenes for dramatic presentation. (Feel free to use dialogue from the novel, but always cite your source.) Include a narrator to connect the three scenes and explain their significance. Act out the scenes with props, sound effects and lighting if possible. Perform the scenes for you class or record the dramatic presentation on video.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What's On Your Playlist?

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Characters	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Title:					
Title:					
Title:					
Title:					
Title:					

Name: _____

Date: _____

Character: _____ Playlist Title: _____

1. Title/Artist: _____

Summary/Lyrics: _____

Justification: _____

2. Title/Artist: _____

Summary/Lyrics: _____

Justification: _____

3. Title/Artist: _____

Summary/Lyrics: _____

Justification: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Multiple Messages

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Title of the Work: _____

Genre of the Work: _____

Theme of the Work: _____

Compare and Contrast Planning Chart:

Compare/Contrast 1 (_____)	Compare/Contrast 2 (_____)	Compare/Contrast 3 (Theme Paragraph)

Thinking About Theme Chart:

Why is the theme an important or not an important message to the reader? (Fourth Paragraph)	Theme Visual/Symbol:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Text Reformulation

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Poem Planning Chart:

Title:	Title:	Title:	Title:	Title:
Viewpoint Character:	Viewpoint Character:	Viewpoint Character:	Viewpoint Character:	Viewpoint Character:
Scene Outline:	Scene Outline:	Scene Outline:	Scene Outline:	Scene Outline:
Figurative Language 1:	Figurative Language 1:	Figurative Language 1:	Figurative Language 1:	Figurative Language 1:
Figurative Language 2:	Figurative Language 2:	Figurative Language 2:	Figurative Language 2:	Figurative Language 2:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Text Reformulation

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Picture Book Planning Chart:

Picture Book 1	Picture Book 2
Title:	Title:
Audience:	Audience:
Viewpoint Character:	Viewpoint Character:
Scene/Plot Outline:	Scene/Plot Outline:
Figurative Language 1:	Figurative Language 1:
Figurative Language 2:	Figurative Language 2:

Name: _____

Date: _____

All That Drama! Planning Chart

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

	Scene 1:	Scene 2:	Scene 3:
Narrator's Introduction:	Summary:	Summary:	Summary:
Narrator's Transition:	Characters:	Characters:	Characters:
Narrator's Transition:	Key Dialogue:	Key Dialogue:	Key Dialogue:
Narrator's Transition:	Props/Stage Directions:	Props/Stage Directions:	Props/Stage Directions:

Writing Response Projects

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Book Review - Examples and activity sheet follows this section.

1. Read and annotate the book review written by Michelle, an 8th grader. Follow the guidelines to analyze her review. What did Michelle do well? How could she improve? Think about these questions as you prepare to write your own review.

In your own book review, follow the guide sheet to help you plan. The first part of any book review is an objective summary, meaning facts without personal opinion. Include important info about the characters, setting, plot, conflict and theme. Trace the plot development throughout the book. Beware of spoilers! Don't reveal too much plot.

In the second part of the book review, subjectively critique the novel by giving your opinion. For example, explain why a certain section excited you or made you feel nervous. Explain what interested you most about the characters and plot or explain what interested you least. In closing, state your overall opinion about the novel and provide a recommendation on whether others should read the book. You may even choose to rate the novel on a scale of one to ten or with one to five stars.

Figurative Language Fun - Activity sheet follows this section.

2. The author incorporates many examples of figurative language including simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, idiom and onomatopoeia. Choose a chapter of the book to analyze the author's use of figurative language. Who is the speaker and how does the author incorporate figurative language into the dialogue? What is the impact of that figurative language on the meaning of the text? How does the figurative language support theme development throughout the novel?

Symbol Signposts - Activity sheet follows this section.

3. Some symbols are easy to find. A heart means love. A broken heart means sorrow. But often symbols are more abstract and specific to a literary work. Sometimes symbols mean different things in different works. Symbols even change meaning inside of a work. For example, in the story of Icarus, wings represented freedom, but when Icarus flew too close to the sun, the wings' meaning changed.

Identify three symbols in the novel. Think about important images or objects that connect characters. For instance, Mr. Graf's coin is an object, but also a symbol of his connection to Wayne and his struggles with addiction. After you choose your three symbols, explain how the author uses those symbols to connect characters. How do the symbols develop the theme in the novel? How do you know the symbol represents something specific? Support your answer with evidence from the text. Use paraphrases and quotes with page numbers in your examples.

Rules of the (Rural) Road - Activity sheet follows this section.

4. Diggy and Wayne live in a rural area surrounded by farms. This is very different from growing up in a suburban neighborhood or a city. The setting plays an important role in the novel because it affects how characters interact and relate to one another. Also, if the setting were different, it would change the plot and theme. Analyze the impact of the setting on the characters, plot and theme of the novel. How does the setting shape the characters and advance the plot? Support your answer with textual evidence. Use paraphrases and quotes with page numbers in your examples.

Changing Characters - Activity sheet follows this section.

5. One important aspect of a dynamic character is character growth. If a character is the same at the end of the book as he was in the beginning, that character may be a flat character or may be a stereotype. Dynamic characters **MUST** change over the course of a novel. In this novel, what character changed the most? Why did this character change? What events or actions caused the character to change? Show how your chosen character changed throughout the novel. Explain what caused that change using evidence from the text including examples, paraphrases and quotes. When you have described your chosen character's changes, compare your character's journey with another character in the novel. Explain why your chosen character made the most profound change.

Hero Hall of Fame - Activity sheet follows this section.

6. Heroes come in all shapes and sizes. Heroes do great things, but also accomplish small tasks with greatness. Think about what makes a hero. You may need to do some research. Define the characteristics of a hero and decide which character, if any, from the novel should be considered a hero. (Remember! Animals can be heroes too!) Support your choice using the criteria you set forth and evidence from the text.

Personal Narrative - Activity sheet follows this section.

7. Do you connect with something in this book on a personal level? Have you ever learned a family secret? Do you know someone who struggles with substance abuse or addiction? Have you ever had to work with someone you did not want to work with but later learned to trust each other and become friends? Your personal experiences are excellent sources for narrative essays! Use the essay guideline to help you analyze an example essay, then plan and write your own personal narrative on a topic or event from your life.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Book Review Analysis Questions

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

1. Michelle opens her book review with a separate sentence for the title, author and genre. Write a sentence below demonstrating how Michelle could have incorporated this information into the opening paragraph.

2. Reread Michelle’s summary. Notice how she introduces the setting, plot and each important character with a description. Complete the chart based on the summary.

Main Characters	Setting	Plot Points	Minor Characters
1.	1.	1. (steers)	1.
2.		2. (family)	2.
			3.
			4.

3. Reread Michelle’s opinion paragraph. In addition to direct description, “the story is heartfelt and realistically true,” Michelle includes figurative language to describe the novel. Quote two examples of figurative language in the last paragraph and label.

a) _____

b) _____

4. Michelle varies her sentence structure throughout the review. List three examples of different ways Michelle keeps the reader interested using a variety of sentences.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

5. Michelle’s review is well crafted, but how could it be improved? What changes would you make to the review to make it better? List two comments below that would, in your opinion, improve the book review.

a) _____

b) _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Book Review

by Michelle, 8th Grade Student

Title/Genre/Author:

Steering Towards Normal is a realistic fiction novel by Rebecca Putruck.

Objective Summary:

Diggy's life has never been normal, but he is content with his father, Pop, in Minnesota raising steers through 4-H to compete in the state fair every year. Events change drastically when a classmate, Wayne, is left at Diggy's house. Wayne's mom has recently passed away and Wayne's dad, an alcoholic, drops Wayne off with a only suitcase. The reason? Wayne is actually Pop's biological son, a fact everyone found out only after Wayne's mom died.

Wayne, Diggy's new found half-brother, is broken and will do anything to fill the void that has been created in his life. Wayne raises a steer just like Diggy, and also tries to find Diggy's mom who left him when he was only a baby. Both boys must learn to love and forgive each other as they must also forgive fathers' mistakes. Will they come through?

Subjective Opinion:

Steering Towards Normal is rollercoaster of laughs and errors. The reader goes along on a journey with Wayne and Diggy, a journey which no real child should have to go through. The story is heartfelt and realistically true. As readers, we learn sometimes we make mistakes that should never have happened, but those mistakes don't mean we have to always regret the past. We learn to forgive indifferences and to love what we think to be the unloveable. From pranks to brotherly fist fights we understand through it all nothing cures a broken heart more than a family. This book is truly a number one novel. I recommend it to all, especially those who love a good laugh, because this book rates an eleven out of ten!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Book Review Planning Guide

Title: _____ Author: _____

Genre: _____

What other information can you include about the title, author or genre? For instance, this is Rebecca Petruck's debut novel. How does the genre help readers understand the setting? What information does the title provide readers?

Objective Summary: *Who are the main characters? Where is the novel set? What important events happen in the first few chapters? What is significant about how the characters react? Why is this information important for the readers to know?*

Subjective Opinion: *How can you summarize your opinion in this paragraph's topic sentence? (Don't forget to restate the title!) How do you feel about the novel's premise? Is it believable? Does it work? Will people enjoy or connect to the book? What can people learn from the book? How would you rate the book? Would you recommend it to others?*

Writing Revision:

After writing and rereading your book review, what areas do you need to improve? Do you vary your sentence structure? Do you provide adequate descriptions? Have someone who has not read the book read and comment on your review.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Figurative Language Fun

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Chapter _____	Figurative Language 1	Figurative Language 2	Figurative Language 3	Figurative Language 4	Figurative Language 5
Paraphrase or Quote:					
Page Number:					
Type of Figurative Language:					
Speaker:					
Impact on the Meaning of the Text:					
Impact on Theme:					

Name: _____

Date: _____

Symbol Signposts

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

	Symbol 1	Symbol 2	Symbol 3
Symbol: (include an image)			
Symbol's Meaning:			
Character Connections:			
Theme Connections:			
Textual Evidence: (quotes and page numbers)			

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rules of the (Rural) Roads

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

How does the setting impact the other story elements?

Setting:	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Description of the setting:	The setting is a farm in Minnesota. The winter is cold and there is lots of snow. People live far away from towns.	If the setting were in a neighborhood, it would look like...	If the setting were in a city, it would look like...
Impact on Plot:	Since the setting is a farm, Diggy can raise his steer Joker. It would be hard to raise a steer off of a farm. Also, living outside of town means the boys have to spend time with each other. They cannot walk to stores or a friend's house without a vehicle.		
Impact on Theme:	Living in the country changes the theme because...		

Impact of the Setting:

How does the setting impact the characters, plot and theme of this novel? Based on the chart, how would changing the setting change the other story elements? Write your answer in a paragraph. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Changing Characters

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Character: _____

Actions or Events that Led to Change:	Impact of the Change:
1)	1)
Textual Evidence:	Textual Evidence:
2)	2)
Textual Evidence:	Textual Evidence:
3)	3)
Textual Evidence:	Textual Evidence:

Prompt: Write a paragraph tracing the development of the character's change throughout the novel. Support your assertions with evidence from the text. Use the sentence starters to help you get begin. Remember to compare your character to another character in the novel.

In the novel *Steering Toward Normal* by Rebecca Petruck, the character that changed the most was _____ because _____, _____ and _____. The first action/event that led to _____ changing was _____. The quote, " _____ " on page _____ supports this statement. _____ also changed when . . .

Name: _____

Date: _____

Hero Hall of Fame

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Definition of a Hero: (Paraphrase in your own words)

Source 1: _____

Source 2: _____

Hero Character from the Novel:	Criteria 1:	Criteria 2:	Criteria 3:
How Character Fits Criteria:			
Textual Evidence for Hero Character:			

Name: _____

Date: _____

Personal Narrative Analysis Questions

Steering Toward Normal by Rebecca Petruck

Read and annotate the personal narrative essay Lindsey wrote about her experiences with the 4-H program. As you analyze her narrative essay, think about what she did well and what she could improve.

1. How does Lindsey's opening paragraph establish the tone for her narrative?

2. What claim does Lindsey make in her opening paragraph?

3. How does Lindsey's title relate to her narrative topic?

4. Reread Lindsey's opening paragraph. Her first sentence or hook is a simple statement about the importance of 4-H in her life. How could she improve her hook?

5. What is the topic sentence of Lindsey's second paragraph and how does she elaborate on the topic throughout the paragraph?

6. How do the personal examples in the third paragraph impact the topic sentence?

7. Lindsey addresses concerns from critics in her fourth paragraph. How does she provide evidence in support of her claim?

8. How could Lindsey improve her closing paragraph summary?

9. What suggestion would you have for Lindsey if she asked you to proofread her essay? _____

The Importance of the Clover

by Lindsey, 8th Grade Student

The 4-H program plays an important part in my life. I have competed under the symbol of the 4-H clover since the second grade. The 4-H program helps children and teens learn many great leadership skills and teaches responsibility. It is an excellent pass time, even if some people disagree. I have enjoyed working with 4-H and will continue to be involved throughout my life.

My experiences with 4-H are ones I will treasure for the rest of my life. Some people show goats, hogs or steers. Some participate in competitions like baking, quilting or art. For me, the fun is in showing my rabbits. I choose to be involved in shows where I do not have to sell my rabbits for meat. My competitions are judged on who has the most knowledge about their animals and who is taking the best care of their animals. I enter many different weight classes with rabbits of different sizes so I can show off my stock.

Raising and showing my rabbits has taught me many forms of responsibility, especially when I have to go feed bunnies in the middle of a downpour or wake up many times a night to nurse a sick baby rabbit. Through 4-H shows, I also learn leadership skills by helping younger contestants with their animals and teaching them about the different parts of caring for their rabbits.

Some people disagree with the idea of 4-H because kids usually end up selling their livestock for slaughter. Not all animals are sold for slaughter, like the rabbits for example, but even when animals like steers are sold for meat, kids who are in 4-H learn the value of life when they have to sell their animals. They realize the importance in their choices and have a better respect for the lives of their animals and for the process behind creating food for people. The 4-H programs are not for everyone, but those who are involved really have time well spent.

I hope to continue to be involved in 4-H throughout my life, possibly judging animals and their handlers. 4-H teaches kids many life lessons and skills, and even if some people do not agree, it is a great organization because it helps kids develop their skills of responsibility and understand the value of their choices.

Answer Keys

Fall - Are You Getting It?

Chapter 1

1. Page 5: July is like Diggy's mentor but overtime he has developed a crush on her.
2. Page 6: Mr. Lenz gives Diggy a calf so that he can raise it for 4-H.
3. Page 7: Diggy's steer poops on Diggy's shoe and Diggy laughed saying, "Crap, you're a real joker, aren't you?" That is why Diggy names the steer Joker.
4. Page 8: Diggy wants to win the state fair contest with his steer because it is up to him to do so now that July is leaving.

Chapter 2

5. Page 15: Wayne's mom mostly likely died from something to do with bone disease or cancer because Wayne says, "We looked for a marrow donor, but it was too late."
6. Page 13-15: Before Diggy and Wayne were acquaintances at school, but they were not really friends. When Wayne is dumped at Diggy's house with a suitcase, Wayne says, "He says *you're* my dad, and I have to live here now." This means Wayne is really Diggy's half brother.

Chapter 3

7. Page 16: Mark Lawson is Diggy's dad. His nickname is Pop because when Mark was a teenager, he had a hard time driving a tractor with a clutch. "They told Mark over and over he had to 'pop' it. It was a joke at first...but after a while it had stuck."
8. Page 16: Mark was an engineer.
9. Page 21: Wayne's jawline is square and sturdy like Diggy's and Pop's and occasionally juts out. This is because Wayne and Diggy are both Pop's sons.
10. Page 22: It was Diggy's "mom's" box. It was full of stuff about her.
11. Page 23: The tree had been Diggy's "best friend" for a long time and he could not remember the last time he climbed it, so he basically climbs it for comfort and because he needs friendship.
12. Page 23-26: The boys fight because of the differences they have and neither one wants the other there because they feel like they are taking someone else's spot.

Chapter 4

13. Page 30: Pop is telling Wayne that he does not need to wait for his dad to fix things; that they could fix them together. The literary device is an idiom and this means don't lay around and waste time, i.e. get up and get going.

14. Page 31-32: Wayne wears a "pink lady slipper orchid sweatshirt" because it was his mom's.

15. Page 33: Diggy and Pop have a "traditional April Fool's day where they do massive pranks."

Chapter 5

16. Page 38: Wayne says that his dad was a really bad alcoholic and that when his dad would get home most nights he could not remember where he was. He also had a bad temper.

17. Page 39: Diggy's mom left town on a tractor after leaving Diggy on Pop's doorstep.

18. Page 41: The person with the winning steer wins Grand Champ wins \$12,000.

19. Page 42: Diggy lunges for Wayne, who sidesteps, and Diggy lands in cow dung.

Chapter 6

20. Page 46: Pop learns that Harold, Wayne's father, goes out every night drinking and does not take care of Wayne. "He is back to his wild days."

21. Page 46-47: Diggy wonders why Mrs. Graf married Mr. Graf and concludes Mr. Graf must not have always been, "a total jerk."

22. Page 53-54: One night Mrs. Graf asked Mr. Graf to help Wayne sleep. Harold decided he would use beer to knock his son out.

23. Page 53-57: Wayne wanted Diggy to see how chaotic and unstable his life currently was, proving how much he needed a stable life with Diggy.

Chapter 7

24. Page 58-59: Diggy's conversation with Pop is about if he knew about Wayne and if he cared for Mrs. Graf.

25. Page 60: Mrs. Osborn is Diggy's bus driver but is Wayne's aunt.

26. Page 61: Jason and Crystal go to 4-H.

27. Page 61: Jason and Crystal hear that Wayne Graf spent the night at Diggy's place.

Chapter 8

28. Page 66-69: After school, Wayne's father and grandparents were waiting to take Wayne away. When Mrs. Osborn, his aunt, told him to hop on the bus, Mrs. Osborn left all of the other kids and took Diggy and Wayne to Diggy's house.

29. Page 70: Diggy and Wayne see Wayne's father's truck in a ditch. Mr. Graf is climbing out.

Chapter 9

30. Page 72-73: Diggy brushes Joker's hair methodically and he washes and blow-drys him. Working with Joker helps increase both Diggy's and Joker's patience and calm.

31. Page 74: If Wayne goes with his mom's family, Wayne would be giving up being able to see his father ever again.

32. Page 76: At the end of Chapter 9, Diggy feels like the "odd man out."

Chapter 10

33. Page 77: Diggy is excited to go to the 4-H meeting because he is ready for a distraction and he wants to see July.

34. Page 78: Crystal walks up to Wayne's face and says, "I'm sorry your mom died and your dad's...you know...But you don't get to take over Diggy's life to make yourself feel better."

35. Page 79: Wayne's world is falling apart and he is breaking. The only place he can find comfort is with Pop, even if Diggy does not want him at his house.

36. Page 81-82: Wayne decides that he wants to get a steer. Diggy begins to feel glad because he knows Wayne will never make it.

Chapter 11

37. Page 84: Diggy said to "prepare" Wayne for his steer, he should take care of Joker to help Wayne realize that he won't want one, but that does not work.

38. Page 91-92: July brings her mom's casserole dishes and poppy-seed bars to Wayne before taking Wayne and Diggy to pick out Wayne's steer. This bothers Diggy because July is no longer paying him any attention.

39. Page 94: By the end of the chapter, July helps Wayne pick out a steer that can most likely help him win the competition.

40. Page 93-94: The boys are "crossbreeds" also, since they show the best of both worlds and the best traits.

Winter and Spring - Are You Getting It?

Winter - Chapter 12

1. Page 98-99: Diggy and Pop spent time together building rockets.
2. Page 99: Diggy looks up ways to build a very big and dangerous rocket.
3. Page 102: Diggy learned that his mother left Pop, not the other way around.
4. Page 105-106: Wayne and Diggy argue about Diggy's mom still being alive.
5. Page 107: A dog attacked the steers and the boys.
6. Page 107: Diggy surprised Wayne by immediately going to the steers and pushing and yelling at the dog to go away.
7. Page 110: Diggy names Wayne's steer Fang because it looks like the dog left vampire marks on the steer's neck.
8. Page 114: The veterinarian shaves Wayne's steer. It is significant because the hair might not grow back in time or in the right direction for the competition.
9. Page 114-115: The traumatic event brings the boys closer. Diggy starts to allow Wayne to come closer into the family by teaching Wayne how to play pranks.

Chapter 13

10. Page 120: Mr. Graf had gone thirty days without alcohol use. He told Wayne, "I got my thirty-day coin this week. From AA." AA stands for Alcoholics Anonymous, a group that helps people stop drinking.
11. Page 120: Harold brings a picture of his wife and Wayne. The picture brings Wayne to tears and he then runs off to his room.
12. Page 122: Diggy is shocked and tries to prevent himself from thinking about his own mother.
13. Page 122-124: All of Wayne's family arrives to get Wayne, but Pop and Mr. Graft tell them to back off. Wayne tells them to leave also.
14. Page 125: Diggy, Pop, and Wayne are afraid Harold will have a "setback," meaning he might break his streak of not using alcohol. They are afraid if Harold begins drinking heavily he will seriously hurt himself.

Chapter 14

15. Page 126-127: Crystal likes Jason, but she's acting "weird" around Diggy.
16. Page 127: Crystal drags Diggy into the situation by cornering him and asking him out on a date to make Jason jealous.
17. Page 130: In the library, Wayne shows Diggy an old yearbook with pictures of Diggy's mom when she was in high school. Diggy says, "I told you not to!" and goes into a rage.
18. Page 135-136: When Diggy is grooming the steers he calms down a little bit, but he still thinks about why his mom left him as a baby.
21. Pop talks to the boys about Christmas. What are their separate traditions?

Chapter 15

19. Page 139: The quote means that after the competition, Joker would be auctioned off and killed.
20. Page 139: It always burdens Diggy because he gets so close to his steers and then when he sells them, it feels like he is betraying them.
21. Page 141-145: Since Diggy was ten, Diggy and Pop would drive into the city, find a restaurant that was open for business on Christmas and watch a movie. They exchanged small presents and laugh a lot. Wayne and his mom went to church on Christmas Eve. After church, they would go to a bridge, watch the stars and look for Santa while Mr. Graf stayed home wrapping the presents.
22. *Pop* - Page 141: "It was weird how Pop could make Diggy feel bad but then make him feel better at the same time, just by being there and trying to think ahead about stuff like this."
- Wayne* - Page 142: "Wayne slanted a glance at Diggy, but Diggy didn't have any energy for him."
- Diggy's Mom* - Page 140: "Diggy pulled away. Feeling foreheads was the kind of things moms did, but Pop had been stuck doing it all this time. Because Diggy's mom had never come back."

Chapter 16

23. Page 148-149: The boys work with their steers together, trade pranks with each other and with Pop and work a little on Diggy's rockets.
24. Page 150: Crystal wears a dress because she believes Jason doesn't think of her as a girl. She says, "I need to make changes if I want to fix that."
25. Page 152: Diggy thought he helped Crystal by saying out loud she looked nice that day. It doesn't work because Crystal tells him to shut up and goes to the library.

Chapter 17

26. Page 153: Wayne searches for Diggy's mom even after Diggy tells him not to.
27. Page 156: Wayne needs time and space to grieve because everything is falling apart around him and he does not know how to cope.
28. Page 156: Diggy resents Pop's comment because Diggy is also having a hard time coping with finding out he has a brother unknown to anyone for 14 years.
29. Page 157: The boys fight because Wayne keeps telling Diggy he needs to call his mom.
30. Page 159-160: The boys see Mr. Graf's truck in the ditch.
31. Page 162: Harold had a relapse because it was Mrs. Graf's birthday.
32. Page 168: Wayne says, "Yeah, like the steps are working out for you." Diggy thinks Wayne "might as well have smacked his dad; his words had the same effect."
33. Page 169: Diggy realizes he has the better end of the deal where as Wayne has nothing but pain.

Chapter 18

34. Page 170-171: Crystal ends up wrapped up in her new boyfriend Chad. The usual conversations turn from 4-H animals and jokes to talk about junk-drawer robots. It isn't until after the meeting Diggy realizes he missed his chance to talk with July, but Wayne did talk with her.
35. Page 172: Wayne brings Diggy his "mom's" box. This rises Diggy's temper because the box is not Wayne's property.

36. Page 173: The three objects are all Diggy has of his mother, a woman he cannot remember, so the objects represent his only connection with his mom. At the same time, the three small things cannot fill the void his mother's abandonment created in Diggy's life, so they mean nothing in the end.

37. Page 176-177: Wayne and Diggy have the same homework so they decide they will each take every other problem. This way they can get the work done with more correct answers and also do less work

Spring - Chapter 19

38. Page 180: April Fools' Day is important at Diggy's house because it's the ultimate day of pranks.

39. Page 182-183: July tells Diggy and Wayne that two boys were seen in a car like Pop's in Goodhue County. She said they had shaved a couple of steers.

40. Page 183: July's news is alarming because the boys' description matches Diggy and Wayne. The police even called Pop about the incident.

Chapter 20

41. Page 187: Mr. Graf, Wayne's dad, is necessary to pull off the prime prank.

42. Page 188: The rumor is that at the boys, Diggy and Wayne, shaved the steers. Crystal believes they are being set up.

43. Page 192: Harold wants the boys to be honest and tell him if they shaved the steers or not.

Chapter 21

44. Page 195-196: Diggy has Wayne walk into Saran Wrap stretched across his door and Wayne does the "Kool-Aid Trick" on Diggy's hair and face.

45. Page 196: Diggy puts fingernail polish on Pop's soap bar.

46. Page 198: The boys had Mr. Graf's friend tow Pop's truck away, but Pop gets a phone call that his truck was found in a ditch where more steers had been shaved.

Chapter 22

47. Page 201-202: Brandon, a police officer, gives the boys a ride downtown.

48. Page 203: The boys are surprised to realize the whole charade was a prank.

49. Page 204: Everyone was in on the prank including Pop, July, Mr. Graf, Crystal and the police.

Chapter 23

50. Page 205: The boys began feeding their steers the last of their rations at a faster pace.

51. Page 208: Mr. Graf wants to ask Wayne when is he coming home.

52. Page 209: Diggy has begun to like having Wayne around, but he also believes Wayne should go home with his dad so Diggy can go on with his normal life. Diggy is caught in the middle of things.

53. 209: Mr. Graf throws his coin to symbolize he is through with it because it wouldn't bring him his son back.

Chapter 24

54: Page 212: Wayne believes Pop is or will go out sooner or later and is afraid of what will happen, but Diggy knows and believes nothing will happen because he trusts Pop. Wayne also has been calling Diggy's grandparents on his mom's side without telling Diggy about it.

55. Page 214: Diggy tells Wayne to stay out of his life and to leave him alone because doesn't want Wayne there anymore.

Summer and Minnesota State Fair - Are You Getting It?

Summer - Chapter 25

1. Page 220: Pop tells Diggy they have to be patient with Wayne because his life still has not gone back to normal. His steer will go to slaughter and the one year anniversary of his mom's death is coming up.
2. Page 220: Even though it was her birthday, it was also her graduation party. This meant she would soon be leaving, and he wouldn't be able to see her as much.
3. Page 222: He would launch a level three, two-stage model rocket at her party in front of everyone. The rocket would supposedly ride straight up and spew confetti after the parachute opens (page 232). He wants a unique present for her that no one else could give her (page 228).
4. Page 229: They dedicate the rocket to Wayne's mom, Mrs. Graf.

Chapter 26

5. Page 231-232: The launch is ruined because he forgets an important piece. The rocket goes off course and heads towards July's house. Fortunately, the parachute opens and the rocket lands safely on the sidewalk leading to the house. It causes a commotion at the party.
6. Page 234: Pop tells Diggy that she was in Germany during World War II and the wayward rocket probably reminds her of the bombs.
7. Page 235: Diggy is shocked and realizes the nature of their relationship. Trevor and July like each other and Diggy is angry because he wants July to like him that way.
8. Page 235-236: July realizes Diggy likes her and she hugs him. She tells him she cares about him, but Diggy tells her it doesn't matter and walks away, head down.
9. Page 236: Wayne gives July a snake skin he finds, but gives her the same card as Diggy gives her.
10. Page 237: Diggy goes back to wish July a happy birthday. She brushes the hair off his forehead. He messes it up again and they both smile.
11. Page 239: When they are talking about Wayne's mom, Diggy realizes Wayne is still researching Diggy's mom with the yearbooks.

Chapter 27

12. Page 242: Diggy is happy Pop is going out because that means Pop can have fun and hopefully get rid of some of his tension and anger at Diggy for the rocket incident.

13. Page 242-243: Wayne believes if Pop goes out he will drink too much, like his father does, and maybe he will get another woman pregnant.

14. Page 245: Wayne decides he is going to follow Pop on the tractor to make sure Pop is not making any more “mistakes” with other women.

15. Page 246: Wayne is mad because Pop goes out and because he calls the boys “mistakes” in the argument. Diggy is mad at Pop for all he is having to put up with because of Wayne, but more importantly he is angry and wondering if Pop ever tried to be a family with his mom.

16. *Answers will vary.* Possible answers: Page 250-251: Diggy tells Wayne his mom was a liar, which hurts Wayne because he wants to believe his mom was perfect. Wayne then yells at Diggy saying at least his mom kept him. This hurts Diggy because it's something he tries to keep locked away because she never intends to come back.

Chapter 28

17. Page 253-254: Pop convinces Wayne's grandma to leave him because he must face hard things and work them out.

Chapter 29

18. Page 257: He learns that Pop and his mom broke up before Pop finds out she was pregnant with Diggy. She immediately starts dating Mr. Graf and when Pop finds out she is pregnant, he assumes the baby's is Graf's and so does Diggy's mom.

19. Page 257: She sees the baby's orange hair and knows Diggy is Pop's child.

20. Page 257-258: Pop finds Diggy's mom after she drops Diggy off, but she is not receptive to him. She is angry and scared herself. She knows she is not in the right state of mind to care for a baby. She trusts Pop to do that.

21. Page 258: When Diggy looks at the yearbook he feels sorry for her because in her photo, in her eyes and smile, it looks like she has a promising future.

22. Page 259: He makes them paint the kitchen twice, together, to make them friendly again.

23. Page 260: Joker senses Diggy's nervousness and he is uncooperative, even acting out some.
24. Page 261: Wayne seems to be calm whereas Diggy appears more reckless and nervous about the fair.
25. Page 261: Once the trailer pulls in to take the steers, Diggy realizes he is the experienced one with the better end of the deal and Wayne's nerves leave him.
26. Page 261: Diggy tries to calm Wayne down because he realizes how hard Wayne has worked to get to this point and Fang deserves for Wayne to be in his right mind. Unfortunately, this doesn't work and Wayne is more of a mess when they arrive at the fair.
27. Page 262: Being at the fair brings Diggy to life. He is now at the end of the road and knows all his hard work will pay off.
28. Page 267: July knows this is her last year and soon she'll have to leave. She is not competing for the first time and taking on the role of coach.
29. Page 268-269: Graf tells them a random fact about a food that won Best Taste at the Texas State Fair and then admits that he has been researching the fairs since Wayne started training Fang.
30. Page 270-272: Fang's hair becomes messed up and he needs regrooming. The fair rules state only family can help with this. Wayne, Diggy, Pop and Graf help get Fang straight.
31. Page 273: Joker and Fang win blue ribbons and trips to the state meet. However, Joker also wins the purple ribbon meaning "Grand Champion."

Chapter 30

32. Page 276: Wayne tells Diggy he had to work on their relationship and finish with Fang for the state fair.
33. Page 277: Pop and Diggy launch the rocket from July's birthday party making everyone think it was going to go off course again.

34. Page 277: It's from "The Flamingo" where Wayne thinks Diggy's mom works.

Minnesota State Fair - Chapter 31

35. Page 284-285: Diggy is calm and smiling while Wayne is nervous and appears angry.

36. Page 289: They didn't sit with Diggy at lunch and instead sat next to Wayne.

Chapter 32

37. Page 295: Diggy is not jealous that Pop soothes Wayne and is actually glad that there is someone else besides him to do it.

38. Page 298-299: He finds Pop's parents which are Diggy's grandparents.

39. Page 301: Wayne tells Diggy he has left his mom a message about the fair and that they should look for her there. Diggy punches him.

Chapter 33

40. Page 303: The 4-H administrator suggests Diggy compete but cannot win.

41. Page 303: Wayne says that brothers fight and that he is guilty for provoking him by doing something bad.

42. Page 304: Neither boy can win the competition but both can still compete.

43. Page 306: He asks Diggy not to hold grudge and focus for Joker's sake.

44. Page 309: Joker rodeos or goes wild because he is just acting out Diggy's feelings.

45. Page 309-310: He realizes that Wayne is rushing to help and just how perfect his prize steer was for acting the way Diggy's was feeling.

Chapter 34

46. Page 311-312: Wayne and Diggy talk about Diggy's mom and Diggy helps Wayne see that bringing Diggy and his mom together won't bring Wayne's mom back.

47. Page 312-313: They walk the ramp with no anxiety whatsoever.

48. Page 314-315: They talk about raising steers the next season and that Wayne will be moving back with Mr. Graf.

49. Page 316: Hearing the news upsets him until he realizes Wayne will still be a part of his life raising his steer alongside him at Pop's place.

50. Page 316: He hugs him and jokes with him. Wayne apologizes to Diggy for what he said at the tractor.

51. Page 317: Wayne realizes he is lucky to have had his mom as long as he did. Wayne and Diggy both realize they will have each other and Pop.

Formative Assessment Answer Key with Alignment

Fall Quiz

1. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 1
2. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 2
3. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
4. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
5. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 4
6. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 4
7. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 1
8. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
9. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
10. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3

Winter and Spring Quiz

1. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 2
2. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
3. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 4
4. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
5. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 5
6. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
7. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
8. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 1
9. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
10. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 2

Summer and Minnesota State Fair Quiz

1. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
2. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 4
3. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6
4. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
5. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 2
6. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 1
7. C ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 1
8. B ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 3
9. A ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 2
10. D ~ aligned with Reading Literature Standard 6

Acknowledgements

We founded Educators R&R because we understand teachers do more than relay content to eager minds. We understand teachers build skills, instill motivation, listen with the heart, direct character, mentor children into adulthood...and, yes, teach content too. We understand failed lessons and difficult classes, but we also understand the joy behind hearing those magic words, “Oh! Now I get it!” and “I never thought about it that way before!”

At Educators R&R, we are teachers who strive to help other teachers make connections for students. Our curriculum guides come from real classroom experience. We integrate personal experience, best practices and educational research as we design our guides. We test our products with students and colleagues and use their feedback to improve. We adjust and adapt as we work to deliver the best possible product for both our classrooms and for other classroom teachers. Our motto is, “We do the work, so you don’t have to!”

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Bios

Debra Rook has taught high school English, English as a Second Language K-12 and middle school social studies and language arts for nearly 15 years. Currently, she teaches 8th grade language arts and coaches the Quiz Bowl team at Chowan Middle School outside of Edenton, North Carolina. She achieved National Board certification in 2008 and will complete her MFA in writing for children and young adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts in 2015. She is currently researching the Red Wolf Reintroduction Program, the Lost Colony and local folklore for her young adult historical fantasy novel.

Molli Rose has taught middle school social studies and language arts in grades 6-8 for over 20 years. She also has some experience in the mental health field as a case manager and crisis line worker. Currently, she teaches 8th grade language arts at Chowan Middle School outside of Edenton, North Carolina. She achieved National Board certification in 2009; she completed her MSE in Curriculum and Instruction and is currently a licensed Curriculum Facilitator for grades K-12. She enjoys the beach, reading and most of all spending time with her husband, Eric, and her two children.

Both Debra and Molli have been recognized as Teacher of the Year at their school. They enjoy planning together and implementing units that connect students to the past, illuminate the present and stir a call to action for the future. They encourage students to synthesize new ideas through reading, writing and collaborating. Both support the philosophy that there is nothing more exciting in education than sparking a child's love for learning.

APPENDICES

Common Core Alignment

Taken from www.corestandards.org

This novel is best used in the middle grades to teach and/or reinforce all of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Grades 6-12 Reading:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

*****Your grade level standards will give you the depth and breadth of where you need to go with teaching and reinforcing each standard. We have found it helpful to pull the standards from the grade level below and grade level above to enable us to better differentiate for the varied ability levels of students in our classrooms.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature » Grade 6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.3

Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.5

Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.6

Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature » Grade 7

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.5

Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.6

Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature » Grade 8

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5

Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.6

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

NCTE/IRA Standards Integration

Taken from www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association reaffirmed the NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts in November 2012. These standards are designed to complement national, state and local curricula. According to the NCTE/IRA guiding visions, the standards “provide ample room for the innovation and creativity essential to teaching and learning.” The standards “are not prescriptions for particular curriculum or instruction.” Finally, the standards “are interrelated and should be considered as a whole, not as distinct and separable.” As you integrate these standards into your classroom lesson plans, consider how each standard integrates with every other standard.

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).