Units of Study for Reading

Lucy Calkins

Kindergarten

Unit 1 – We Are Readers

Big ideas - different kinds of reading, fiction/non-fiction, concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, story language, and the importance of rereading

Books – The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss and Mrs. Wishy-Washy by Joy Cowley

Unit 2 – Super Powers

Big ideas - using super reading powers to read unfamiliar books, 1:1 match, picture clues, initial sounds, reading for meaning, fluency, and sharing a favorite part of a book


Unit 3 – Bigger Books, Bigger Reading Muscles

Big ideas - using “extra strength” powers to read more difficult books, using meaning and syntax, decoding with blends/digraphs and word patterns, automatic high frequency word reading, and thinking and talking about books

Books – Dragonflies by Margaret Hall and My Bug Box by Pat Blanchard and Joanne Suhr

Unit 4 – Becoming Avid Readers

Big ideas - reading “play dates” with friends, the way books work, continued problem solving actions, setting goals, becoming experts on a topic, and poems and songs for fluency

Books – Not Norman: A Goldfish Story by Kelly Bennett and Gossie by Oliver Dunrea
Grade 1

Unit 1 – Building Good Reading Habits
Big ideas - kindergarten skills recap with more independence and automaticity, previewing books, decoding with long and short vowel sounds, and establishing reading partnerships

Books – Ish by Peter H. Reynolds and Ollie the Stomper by Oliver Dunrea

Unit 2 – Learning About the World
Big ideas - learning from non-fiction books, comprehension strategies, word solving/fix up strategies, non-fiction vocabulary, breaking longer words into parts to decode, and studying writer’s craft

Books – Super Storms by Seymour Simon and Owls by Mary R. Dunn

Unit 3 – Readers Have Big Jobs to Do
Big ideas - reading complex texts with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, taking charge of their own reading with strategies, monitoring for meaning, and partner work

Books – Frog and Toad Are Friends by Arnold Lobel and Tumbleweed Stew by Susan Stevens Crummel

Unit 4 – Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons
Big ideas - story elements, making sense of more complex stories, retelling, main and secondary characters, and life lessons and messages

Books – Upstairs Mouse, Downstairs Mole by Wong Herbert Yee and George and Martha by James Marshall
Grade 2

Unit 1 – Second Grade Reading Growth Spurt

Big ideas - growing as readers, moving from print focus to meaning focus, drawing on everything you know to solve hard words, breaking words into syllables and using word parts to decode, reading longer texts, making reading/writing connections, collaborative reading

Books – Those Darn Squirrels by Adam Rubin and Mercy Watson to the Rescue by Kate DiCamillo

Unit 2 – Becoming Experts

Big ideas - exploring the world through reading of nonfiction texts, reading about lots of topics and activating schema, noticing details, questioning the text, word solving and vocabulary work, context clues, pausing to solve words without losing meaning, connecting/comparing/contrasting ideas and books, books can be your teacher

Books – Knights in Shining Armor by Gail Gibbons and Tigers by Laura Marsh

Unit 3 – Bigger Books Mean Amping Up Reading Power

Big ideas - improving fluency to increase comprehension, exploring figurative language, close reading, holding onto comprehension with longer texts, working in clubs to reach a goal

Books – Minnie and Moo Go Dancing by Denys Cazet and Happy Like Soccer by Meredith Boelts

Unit 4 – Series Book Clubs

Big ideas - chapter book reading with partners and small groups while looking at text carefully, comparing/contrastig series books, story elements, writer’s craft, debates

Books - The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron
Grade 3

Unit 1 – Building a Reading Life

Big ideas - reflecting on performance assessments to accelerate skills, setting goals and making plans, literal comprehension and fix up strategies, synthesis, multi-syllable words, figurative language, subordinate clauses and parenthetical phrases, prediction and envisionment

Book – Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner

Unit 2 – Reading to Learn

Big ideas - essential skills for reading non-fiction, big ideas and supporting details, infrastructure of non-fiction and using boxes and bullets for note taking, comparing, thinking critically and applying new information, narrative non-fiction, biographies

Books – Gorillas by Lori McManus, Frogs and Toads by Bobbi Kalman and Tammy Everts, and Cactus Hotel by Brenda Z. Guiberson and Megan Lloyd

Unit 3 – Character Studies

Big ideas - character study, evidence based theories about characters, story elements, identifying themes and supporting with text evidence, prefixes, suffixes, root words, prediction, compare/contrast story elements

Books – Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo, Peter’s Chair by Ezra Jack Keats, and Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel by Nikki Grimes

Unit 4 – Research Clubs

Big ideas - working in a group to conduct a study of an animal, main ideas, cross text synthesis, second animal study, compare/contrast topics, solving real world problems

Books – titles will be based on student chosen topics (will vary from class to class and within clubs)
Grade 4

Unit 1 – Interpreting Characters

Big ideas - close reading, character traits/flaws, theme, inference, interpretation, author’s craft, text structure

Book - *The Tiger Rising* by Kate DiCamillo

Unit 2 – Reading the World

Big ideas - expository text structure, main ideas and important points, summarizing, reading as a researcher, group research of extreme weather and natural disasters, cause and effect, synthesizing across texts, adjusting strategies when text gets dense, evaluating sources for credibility, becoming activists for the world around them

Books – *Everything Weather* by Kathy Furgang, *Hurricane and Tornado* by Jack Challoner, and *Hurricanes* by Seymour Simon

Unit 3 – Tackling Complexity: Moving Up Levels of Non-fiction

Big ideas – skills and strategies to attack complex non-fiction texts, fluency and word solving, independent inquiry projects, conducting surveys, interviews, and observations, analyzing differences and perspective across texts, noticing contradiction in texts, following personal interests and contribute ideas to grand conversations


Unit 4 – Historical Fiction Clubs

Big ideas – small group book clubs, compare/contrast themes, conducting non-fiction research to support reading, synthesizing and analyzing text, novel and picture books read around a time period in history, complicated settings, multiple plotlines, thinking deeply about craft and structure, extending work done in unit 1 character study, interpreting theme, how does non-fiction help you understand fiction characters

Book – *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry