Unit Plan: Life of Pi

Year Theme
What does it mean to be human?
Other suggested texts to study: “Open Boat” By Stephen Crane (American Text), Othello (Shakespeare)

Unit Questions:
What makes life meaningful? What is the most important? What are the limits of human endurance?

Learning Goals (CCSS standards)

Reading Literary Text:
• RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Reading Information Text:
• RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging

Writing:
• W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
  o Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
• W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation

Speaking and Listening:
• SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
  o Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed

Language:
• L.11-12.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
  o Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase
**Unit Assessment(s):** S = Summative, F=Formative, I=Informal (add as many as you need)

- F: Final Exam on the novel, involving vocabulary, facts about the text, summation of classroom discussion
- F: Quiz on Cultural Presentations
- F: Quiz on Reading
- F: Vocabulary Worksheets
- S: Presentation on research
- S: Research paragraphs
- I: Frequent journal entries about the text, assignments
- I: Silent discussion

**Rationale:**

*Life of Pi* is a novel that gives itself over very nicely to the required of the Common Core. It is rich in new vocabulary, confronts many subtle issues for discussion, and is a combination of a fiction and an information text. *Life of Pi* is not an easy book to read, but it is not so difficult that students will give up trying to read it. This novel has a strong cultural setting, strong character development, many didactical themes that can be analyzed and argued against, and provides a large base for student inquiry projects.

<p>| DAILY PLAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <strong>Day</strong> | <strong>Daily Objective and CCSS</strong> | <strong>Starter</strong> | <strong>Texts, Literacies, and Discourses</strong> | <strong>Agenda / Activities / Strategies</strong> | <strong>Daily Assessment / Framework</strong> | <strong>Date Taught</strong> |
| 1 | Students will be able to make predictions about the novel and form and answer questions | <em>Life of Pi</em>, introduction, Speaking and listening, Reading | Begin by introducing the novel. Pass out class set, if possible. Read the introduction out loud while conducting Pre-Reading Strategy “Questions and Predictions” Assign Vocabulary Strategy, provide first vocabulary sheet | Review notecards handed in at the end of the class period. Revisit questioning next time if possible. | Read Chapters 1-7 Vocab sheets | January 7 |</p>
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<thead>
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<th>Day</th>
<th>Daily Objective and CCSS</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Students will be able to analyze the purpose for the introduction and implement their previous knowledge of storytelling</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: Do you agree that a story can make you believe in God?</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Introduction Reading, Informational texts, Writing and Analyzing</td>
<td>Conduct “Guided Extended Personal Response” Strategy Take in Vocabulary Sheets</td>
<td>Filled in handout sheet, student response question at the bottom</td>
<td>Read Chapters 7-14 Vocab sheets</td>
<td>January 8</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Students will be able to use a think-aloud to help them draw more meaning out of a text, work with peers to create a concise synthesis of found information</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: Do you agree with Pi’s point of view on zoos? Why or why not?</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Chapter 15</td>
<td>Conduct “Think Aloud-Strategy” Move into “Cultural Inquiry Reciprocal Teaching” Finish to the end of filling the group chart. Have students take their question home to research the answer, assign paragraph.</td>
<td>Filled in group sheet, finished think aloud handout. Assess quality and thoroughness of group work</td>
<td>Research notecard, bring completed paragraph to class to hand in.</td>
<td>January 9</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Students will be able to organize and summarize found information into a visual presentation.</td>
<td>Recap last day, introduce next part of strategy, handout poster-boards, reform groups.</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Chapters 16-23</td>
<td>Have students begin working on their presentation of the information they researched. Some students may not have completed research, so have some computers handy (lap-top cart or lab). Spend class day making poster and organizing presentation.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Prep to present</td>
<td>January 10</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Students will be able to present their research in a group setting to provide contextual information</td>
<td>Open the class, have students choose order of presenting. Go right into first group.</td>
<td>Continuation of “Reciprocal Teaching” Have students write down four key points from each presentation in their journals—remind them that there will be a quiz next class on the presentation content. After presentations are over, allow silent reading time, on Life of Pi, or a novel of choice. Have each student hand in their inquiry paragraphs.</td>
<td>Grade paragraphs holistically. Grade group presentations on effort and preparation.</td>
<td>Read Chapters 23-31 Vocab sheets</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Students will be able to read and question as a group</td>
<td>Journal response: What is Pi’s position on religious tolerance? Why do you think it is so hard for people to think like Pi think?</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Chapters 31-36 Conduct a “Read and Question” Period, where students form reading circles of three or four students and take turns reading aloud—students are allowed to interrupt and discuss the text—Similar to a fishbowl, but the text becomes the subject of discussion. Have students use their journals to write a one sentence summary of each chapter read out loud. Remind students to keep up with handing in their vocabulary sheets.</td>
<td>Assess journal entries.</td>
<td>Read Chapters 37-43 Vocab sheets</td>
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<td>Students will be able to connect two texts to find differences and similarities in meaning.</td>
<td>Journal prompt: How would you be feeling right now if you were Pi Patel? How do you predict he’ll survive?</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Chapters 44-49 Wold</td>
<td>Read the text out loud with the class following along. Pause to ask questions, especially to point out whenever Pi describes Richard Parker. Introduce “Linked Text Strategy” Pass out copies of “Tyger, Tyger” Have a student (or several) read it. Continue with planned strategy. Announce reading quiz next time.</td>
<td>Assess journal responses</td>
<td>Study for quiz Read Chapters 50-56 Vocab Sheets</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Students will be able to show they understand Pi’s character and have comprehension of the text</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: Describe a situation where you have been really afraid. How do you react?</td>
<td>Give short reading quiz on chapters 44-56. Review and grade quiz together as a class. Silent reading time.</td>
<td>Quiz grades, Assess journal entries.</td>
<td>Read Chapters 57-70 Vocab Sheets</td>
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<td>Students will be able to apply the text to their own writing as they revisit and reflect on their reactions to the text.</td>
<td>Journal prompt: List ten things Pi learns that help him to survive. Which tactic do you think was most essential?</td>
<td>Begin class be asking, “Remember the first few days of the book, where we wrote outlines on a story that would make us believe in God?” Conduct short discussion reflecting on whether or not this book seems to be living up to that claim. Pass back student outlines, and explain that we will spend the day in the computer lab creating a short story that follows their outline.</td>
<td>Read Chapters 71-78 Vocab Sheets</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Stories due next time.</td>
<td>January 17</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Continue from last day</td>
<td>Continue from last day</td>
<td>Work day on stories.</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Stories due next time.</td>
<td>January 18</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Students will be able to make connections between a film interpretation of the text.</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: What do you think is Pi’s relationship with Richard Parker? Would Pi have been able to survive without him?</td>
<td>Life of Pi, film, released Dec. 2012, first half</td>
<td>Show video, stop ten minutes before end of class and have students comment on differences between the film and the novel. Which do they like better?</td>
<td>Read Chapters 79-90 Vocab sheets.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>January 21</td>
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<td>Students will be able to synthesize a characterization of Pi, and make a text to self connection.</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: Pi’s pens run out as he keeps a diary of his life at sea. Write an example of what one entry might say.</td>
<td>Life of Pi, Part III</td>
<td>Begin reading chapter 95 out loud. Once finished, choose two students to be Mr. Okamoto, and another to be Mr. Achiba. Continue to be Pi. Read through Chapter 99. Ask for student reactions. Read Chapter 100 out loud. Ask students to prepare four statements/arguments/questions about the novel in these four categories to bring to the discussion next class: Religion, Humans Vs. Animals, Survival, Richard Parker</td>
<td>Collect stories, graded systematically, assess journal prompt</td>
<td>Read Chapters 91-94 Vocab sheets. Body Biography due next time.</td>
<td>January 22</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Students will be able to participate in community reading and join in discussion of the text.</td>
<td>Journal prompt: Do you think Pi’s island is real, or just an illusion? What might the island represent?</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Students will be able to ask, comment and respond to the text and to the opinions of others in controlled conversation</td>
<td>Journal Prompt: Why story do you believe? Why?</td>
<td>Conduct Discussion Strategy: Silent Conversations. Introduce final test on Life of Pi.</td>
<td>Assess journal entries</td>
<td>Study for test</td>
<td>January 24</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Students will be able to construct a new genre using their awareness of language</td>
<td>Journal prompt: What did you like about Life of Pi? What didn’t you like?</td>
<td>Conduct “Found Poem” Strategy</td>
<td>Assess journal entries</td>
<td>Found poems due next time</td>
<td>January 25</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Students will be able to appreciate and evaluate multi-genre depictions of information</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Stop movie ten minutes before the end of class. Have students respond to the end of the movie compared to the end of the book. Was this a good interpretation? Was it better?</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Study for test</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Test Day</td>
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