

Fifth Grade Language Arts Curriculum

The Grade 5 curriculum modules are designed to address the Common Core State Standards in ELA. The overarching focus for all modules is on building students' literacy skills as they develop knowledge about the world.

Structure of a Module

- Each module provides eight weeks of instruction, broken into three shorter units. Each module includes seven assessments:
 - Six unit-level assessments that almost always are on-demand: students' independent work on a reading, writing, speaking, or listening task.
 - One final performance task that is a more supported project, often involving research.

Module 1 Title: Stories of Human Rights

Focus: Becoming a Close Reader and Writing to Learn

What are human rights, and how do real people and fictional characters respond when those rights are challenged? students read closely the introduction and selected articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), paired with firsthand accounts of real people facing human rights challenges. They then study *Esperanza Rising*, applying their new learning about human rights as one lens through which to interpret character and theme. Finally, students revisit the text and themes of the UDHR and *Esperanza Rising* as they prepare and perform a Readers Theater.

Module 2A Title: Biodiversity in Rainforests of the Western Hemisphere

Focus: Researching to Build Knowledge and Teaching Others

This module (which could be used in conjunction with a study of Latin America) features a close read of *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World*, which describes the work of scientists documenting rainforest biodiversity. Students build knowledge about the rainforests and how scientists closely observe the natural world to then help them communicate their research. They then do a case study of Meg Lowman, the researcher featured in *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World*. Finally, students examine the qualities of field guides and journals, research either ants or butterflies of the rainforest, and produce an informational report and a field journal-style page for younger readers.

Module 2B Title: Inventions that Changed People's Lives

Focus: Researching to Build Knowledge and Teaching Others

Students learn about new or improved technologies that have been developed to meet societal needs and how those inventions have changed people's lives. They conduct authentic research

to build their own knowledge and teach others through writing. Students read the graphic novel *Investigating the Scientific Method with Max Axiom, Super Scientist* as well as several informational articles about inventions in order to write a short opinion paragraph about which of the inventions they learned about has been most important to people and why. Students conclude the module by conducting research about one of two inventions, Garrett A. Morgan's traffic light or the Wright brothers' airplane in order to develop a narrative in the form of a graphic novelette about the invention they researched.

Module 3A Title: Sports and Athletes' Impact on Culture

Focus: Considering Perspectives and Supporting Opinions

Students learn about the importance of sports in American culture. They read the challenging biography *Promises to Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America*, focusing on Robinson as a case study of an athlete who broke societal barriers. They also analyze how Sharon Robinson provides evidence to support her opinions. Next, students research either Althea Gibson or Roberto Clemente, both of whom broke cultural barriers. Finally, students write an opinion letter to a publishing company explaining the need for a biography about that athlete given his/her impact on society.

Module 3B Title: TO COME

Focus: Considering Perspectives and Supporting Opinions

TO COME...

Module 4 Title: Natural Disasters in the Western Hemisphere

Focus: Gathering Evidence and Speaking to Others

This module integrates science and social studies content. Students read literature set during a natural disaster: the beautifully illustrated picture book *Eight Days: A Story of Haiti* and the novel *Dark Water Rising*. They analyze how the narrator's perspective determines how events are described. Then, students conduct a short research project about Haiti and the Red Cross, and ultimately draft and revise an opinion speech in which they take a stand on what role humanitarian organizations should take when neighboring countries are struck by natural disasters. They deliver this speech to the class.