**World Literature: Africa and the Middle East**

**In this twelve-week unit, students read ancient and modern works by African and Middle Eastern authors, as well as select Western perspectives on Africa and the Middle East.**

* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Overview**

* + Students consider the beauty and craftsmanship of the works, as well as the effects of the African and Middle Eastern colonial experience—and the subsequent challenges of the postcolonial era. They consider religious, generational, and cultural conflicts, effects of modernization, political struggle, and other themes common to many literary works. At the same time, students recognize that not all literary works make explicit political or cultural statements and must be approached on their own terms. In order to enrich their understanding, students investigate the historical background for selected works, as well as author biographies. They have the opportunity to read additional works of interest.

*Note: the tenth-grade World Literature course consists of three twelve-week units. Four units have been provided (Russia; Africa and the Middle East; Asia; and Latin America); schools may select three out of the four. The middle unit will likely cross from one semester into another; teachers should divide it accordingly.*

* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Focus Standards**

* + These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.
    - **RL.9-10.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
    - **RL.9-10.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
    - **RL.9-10.6:** Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
    - **RI.9-10.5:** Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).
    - **RI.9-10.8:** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.
    - **W.9-10.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
    - **W.9-10.5:** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10 on page 54.)
    - **W.9-10.6:** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
    - **W.9-10.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
    - **SL.9-10.6:** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9–10 Language standards 1 and 3 on pages 54 for specific expectations.)
    - **L.9-10.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
    - **L.9-10.6:** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

[Common Core State Standards, ELA](http://commoncore.org/free/resources/CCSSI_ELA_Standards.pdf) (1.5 MB)

* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Suggested Student Objectives**

* + - Read a variety of literary works from Africa and the Middle East, particularly from the postcolonial period.
    - Consider the challenges of translation, including the different connotations that various cultures attach to given words.
    - Through analysis of literary works, explore the changing social structures of Middle Eastern and African societies.
    - Explore various literary devices in plot development such as suspense, foreshadowing, symbolism, and extended metaphor.
    - Trace the development of an idea or argument in a work of literary nonfiction.
    - Offer insightful inferences regarding the themes of the text.
    - Create a clear, original, specific thesis statement.
    - Organize concrete evidence and supporting textual details to support a thesis statement.
    - Use precise language, avoiding casual language and clichés.
    - Write appropriate transitions to organize paragraphs.
    - Analyze how literary devices convey theme.
* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Suggested Works**

* + (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

**Literary Texts**

**Note:  Teachers may choose texts from the list in a number of ways. They might include one novel or two short novels; a play; a selection of poems by various authors; and a nonfiction essay. They may choose to include ancient and medieval works, or they may focus on modern works. Where possible, teachers should play audio recordings of the poetry read in the original language, so that the students may become familiar with its sounds.**

**Novels**

*Turkey*

* + - *My Name is Red* (Orham Pamuk)

*Nigeria*

* + - *Things Fall Apart* (Chinua Achebe) (E)
    - *The Joys of Motherhood* (Buchi Emecheta)

*South Africa*

* + - *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Alan Paton)
    - *Waiting for the Barbarians* or *Life and Times of Michael K* (J.M. Coetze)

*Egypt*

* + - *The Thief and the Dogs* (Naguib Mahfouz)

*Senegal*

* + - *So Long a Letter* (Mariama Ba)

*United Kingdom*

* + - *Martha Quest* (Doris Lessing)

*Lebanon*

* + - *Beirut Blues* (Hanan al-Shaykh)

*Kenya*

* + - *The River Between* (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o)

**Short Stories**

*Botswana*

* + - *The Collector of Treasures and Other Botswana Village Tales* (Bessie Head)

*South Africa*

* + - *Tales from a Troubled Land* (Alan Paton)

*Mozambique*

* + - *We Killed Mangy-Dog and Other Mozambique Stories* (Luis Bernardo Honwana)

*Israel*

* + - *The World Is a Room and Other Stories* (Yehuda Amichai)

*Egypt*

* + - “The Answer is No” (Naguib Mahfouz)

*Other*

* + - *One Thousand and One Nights* or *Arabian Nights*

**Poems**

* + - *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Ancient poem from Mesopotamia)

**Plays**

*South Africa*

* + - *“Master Harold”… and the boys* (Athol Fugard) (E)
    - *Woza Albert!* (Percy Mtwa, Mbongeni Ngema, and Barney Simon)

*Nigeria*

* + - *Death and the King’s Horseman: A Play* (Wole Soyinka) (E)
    - *King Baabu* (Wole Soyinka) (EA)

**Poems**

*Palestine*

* + - *The Butterfly’s Burden* (Mahmoud Darwish)

*Israel*

* + - *Open Closed Open: Poems* (Yehuda Amichai) (selections)

*Iran*

* + - *The Conference of the Birds: A Sufi Allegory* (Farīd al Dīn Attār or Attar of Nishapur)
    - *The Illuminated Rumi* (Jalal Al-Din Rumi Michael Green, and Coleman Barks, trans.) (selections)

*General*

* + - *Poems of Black Africa* (Wole Soyinka, ed.) (selections)

**Informational Texts**

**Informational Text**

*Iran*

* + - *Ethics of the Aristocrats and Other Satirical Works* (Nezam al-Din Obeyd-e Zakani)

*South Africa*

* + - *Living in Hope and History: Notes From Our Century* (Nadine Gordimer)

**Autobiographies**

* + - *Out of Africa* (Isak Dinesen)
    - *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (Nelson Mandela)

**Art, Music, and Media**

Prompt: How does studying objects from Africa and the Middle East, offer special insight into the literary cultures of these regions?

*Africa*

* + - Gabon, [mask for the Okuyi Society](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/2907/Mask_for_the_Okuyi_Society_Mukudj) (late 19th century)
    - Burkina Faso, [hawk mask](http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~bcr/Bayly/Nunuma_hawk_mask_b.JPG) (no date)
    - Nigeria, [coronet](http://www.smith.edu/artmuseum/exhibitions/africanbeadedart/yoruba_coronet.htm), Yoruba (20th century)
    - Ivory Coast, [leopard stool](http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/107532.html?mulR=19023) (20th century)
    - Mali, [standing female figure](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/94839/Standing_Female_Figure_Nduleri_style) (late 19th or early 20th century)
    - Congo, [power figure](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/images/objects/size3/22.1421_threequarter_PS1.jpg) (19th-20th century)

*Middle East*

* + - Turkey, [dish](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/islamic_art/dish/objectview_enlarge.aspx?page=3&sort=0&sortdir=asc&keyword=&fp=1&dd1=14&dd2=0&vw=1&collID=14&OID=140008811&vT=1) (2nd half of 16th Century)
    - Syria, [Qur'an manuscript](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/islamic_art/qur_an_manuscript/objectview_enlarge.aspx?page=1&sort=0&sortdir=asc&keyword=&fp=1&dd1=14&dd2=0&vw=1&collID=14&OID=140005627&vT=1) (late 9th–early 10th century)
    - Iranian-American, Shirin Neshat, [*Untitled*](http://boundlessmeanderings.files.wordpress.com/2006/03/1_ShirinNeshat_Untitled.jpg), (1996)
    - Iran, [antique Kurdish rug](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Antique_kurdish_iran_rug_404854.jpg) (no date)
* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Sample Activities and Assessments**

* + ***Teachers Note:*** *After reading and discussing a work or pairing of works as a class, students prepare for seminars and essays by reflecting individually, in pairs, and/or in small groups on a given seminar/essay question. Ideas are student generated in this way. (Seminar/Essay assignments include more than one question. Teachers may choose one or all the questions to explore in the course of the seminar; students should choose one question for the essay.) Seminars should be held before students write essays so that they may explore their ideas thoroughly and refine their thinking before writing. (Click here to see a sample seminar scoring rubric.) Page and word counts for essays are not provided, but teachers should consider the suggestions regarding the use of evidence, for example, to determine the likely length of good essays. In future iterations of these maps, links to samples of student work will be provided.*

**Collaborate**

Reflect on seminar questions, take notes on your responses, and note the page numbers of the textual evidence you will refer to in your seminar and/or essay answers. Share your notes with a partner for feedback and guidance. Have you interpreted the text correctly? Is your evidence convincing? (RL.9-10.1, SL.9-10.1)

**Seminar and Essay**

What is satire? What is being satirized in *Ethics of the Aristocrats* or *King Baabu*? What is the author’s political point of view as revealed by this satire? Write an essay that uses at least three pieces of textual evidence to support an original thesis statement. (RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.4, W.9-10.2)

**Seminar and Essay**

Agree or disagree: “Personal crisis coincides with cultural change.” (Teachers choose the work.) Discuss in seminar and then use at least three pieces of textual evidence to support an original thesis in an organized essay. (RL.9-10.6, W.9-10.2, W.9-10.9)

**Seminar and Essay**

Writers are meant to: “Describe a situation so truthfully that the reader can no longer evade it.” Choose an essay by Nadine Gordimer and explain what “truth” she develops in her essay. How does she develop that truth? Use at least three pieces of specific textual evidence from her essay to support an original thesis statement in an essay. (RI.9-10.5, W.9-10.2, W.9-10.4)

**Seminar and Essay**

What is “chi” in its cultural context? Compare the use of “chi” (personal spirit) in *Things Fall Apart* and *The Joys of Motherhood*. After discussion, use two pieces of evidence from *each* text to support an original thesis statement that compares the two texts in an essay. (RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.4, W.9-10.2, L.9-10.5)

**Seminar and Essay**

Agree or disagree: “It is possible to understand this piece of literature outside of its historical context.” (Teachers choose the work.) In an organized essay, use textual evidence from the work as well as from historical or reference works to support an original thesis statement. (W.9-10.1, W.9-10.2, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, L.9-10.6)

**Seminar and Essay**

Is there a common concern of postcolonial literature, as reflected in the works of this unit? Is there one statement they all seem to be making about colonialism? If so, what is that statement? Write an essay using at least three pieces of textual evidence to support an original thesis statement. (W.9-10.2, SL.9-10.4)

**Seminar and Essay**

Agree or disagree: “Moral choices are essentially choices between two sets of values: one belonging to one culture or era, one to another.” Use textual evidence to support your response. After seminar, write an organized essay using at least three pieces of textual evidence to support an original thesis statement. (W.9-10.2, SL.9-10.3)

**Creative Writing/performance**

Write a narrative monologue from the point of view of one of the *secondary c*haracters in *Things Fall Apart* or *The Lion and the Jewel*. Perform the monologue for the class. (W.9-10.3, SL.9-10.6)

**Oral Presentation**

Working with a partner, choose a work in this unit with a character facing a difficult choice. Write and perform two monologues, each one defending a particular option. (W.9-10.3, SL.9-10.6)

**Oral Presentation**

Choose a poem that you have read on this unit and recite it from memory. Include an introduction that discusses:

* + - who wrote the poem and when it was written (i.e., historical context); and
    - how the form of the poem and its meaning are related. (RL.9-10.2, SL.9-10.4, SL.9-10.6)

[Scoring Rubric](http://commoncore.org/free/resources/Socratic_Seminar_Rubric_SP.doc)

* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Additional Resources**

* + [Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*: Teaching Through the Novel](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=382) (National Endowment for the Humanities) (RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10)

This lesson introduces students to Achebe's first novel and to his views on the role of the writer in his or her society. It can be used alone or in conjunction with the related lesson [Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart: Oral and Literary Strategies](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=343).

[Women in Africa: Tradition and Change](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=307) (National Endowment for the Humanities) (RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-10.10)

In this lesson students can gain insight into the lives of some black women in Sub-Saharan Africa by adopting a perspective that is in part traditional, based on the arts of African village life, and in part postcolonial, based on the work of African women writing in English and French today.

* [Show All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Hide All](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/) | [Top](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_3/#top)

**Terminology**

* + - antagonist
    - denouement
    - extended metaphor
    - foreshadowing
    - irony
    - mysticism
    - colonialism
    - paradox
    - persona
    - point of view
    - postcolonialism
    - rhetoric
    - satire

[Previous](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_2/) [Next](http://commoncore.org/free/index.php/maps/grade_10_unit_4/)