**A Feast of Words on a Planet Called Earth and Beyond**

**In this fifth six-week unit of third grade, students read stories, poems, and informational text full of rich language, a “feast of words.”**

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**Overview**

* + They read fiction that demonstrates the use of idioms and fiction that exhibits careful diction. They read poems that focus on a simple topic such as corn or grass to see how the topics are developed line-by-line and stanza-by-stanza. They write to express their own opinions about the need (or not) for laws that legislate what people can and cannot eat. Working with Latin suffixes, they will see the way suffixes transform one part of speech into another. Students illustrate an idiom to express their own interpretation of its meaning and then write a note to Amelia Bedelia about the idiom. Finally, the students will stretch beyond this world to read and research about other planets.
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**Focus Standards**

* + These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.
		- **RI.3.7:** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps [and] photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
		- **RF.3.3:** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
		- **RF.3.3(b):**Decode words with common Latin suffixes.
		- **L.3.4b:**Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word*.*
		- **RL.3.4:**Describe the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
		- **W.3.1:**Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
		- **RL.3.5:**Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

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

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**Suggested Student Objectives**

* + - Independently read stories, poems, and informational text.
		- Use dictionaries and thesauruses, both in print and online, to look up words and to consider varied shades of meaning.
		- Decode and analyze words with Latin suffixes.
		- Collect words from poems, both through listening to read-aloud selections and independent reading.
		- Comprehend poems by seeing how each stanza or line builds on its predecessor for meaning, such as in the poem “Eating While Reading” (Gary Soto).
		- Listening to a read-aloud novel such as *The Search for Delicious* (Natalie Babbitt), note how each chapter builds on earlier sections, requiring careful reading /listening for comprehension.
		- Think critically about a text by listening to a read-aloud informational text such as *What the World Eats* (Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel).
		- Write an opinion piece based on one’s own thinking about food legislation.
		- Dramatically read a poem.
		- Learn the meaning of idioms both within stories and in books about idioms.
		- Research and write a report about a planet, using the key questions (“who, where, when, why, what, and how”) to guide research.
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**Suggested Works**

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

**Literary Texts**

**Stories**

* + - *Amelia Bedelia* series (Peggy Parrish)
		- *Dog Breath!: The Horrible Trouble with Hally Tosis*(Dav Pilkey)
		- *My Momma Likes to Say*(Denise Brennan-Nelson)

**Books About Idioms**

* + - *In a Pickle and Other Funny Idioms*(Marvin Terban and Giulio Maestro)
		- *Mad as a Wet Hen!: And Other Funny Idioms*(Marvin Terban and Giulio Maestro)
		- *Punching the Clock: Funny Action Idioms*(Marvin Terban and Thomas Huffman)

**Poems**

* + - “Eating While Reading” (Gary Soto) (E)
		- *Candy Corn: Poems*(James Stevenson)
		- *Popcorn: Poems*(James Stevenson)
		- *Sweet Corn: Poems* (James Stevenson)
		- "Catch a Little Rhyme" (Eve Merriam) (EA)
		- “Barefoot Days” (Rachel Field)
		- “The City” (Langston Hughes) (EA)
		- “Skyscrapers” (Rachel Field)

**Stories (Read Aloud)**

* + - *The Search for Delicious*(Natalie Babbitt) (E)
		- *Frindle*(Andrew Clements and Brian Selznick)

**Poems (Read Aloud)**

* + - “Daffodils” (William Wordsworth)
		- “The Grass” (Emily Dickinson)
		- “Spring Grass” (Carl Sandburg) (EA)
		- “The Grass on the Mountain” (Paiute American Indian) transcribed by Mary Austin

**Informational Texts**

**Informational Text**

* + - *A Medieval Feast* (Aliki) (E)
		- *The Planets*(Gail Gibbons) (EA)
		- *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11*(Brian Floca) (E)
		- *Planets!*(TIME for Kids) (Editors of TIME For Kids with Lisa Jo Rudy)
		- *The Solar System*(Gregory Vogt)
		- *Our Solar System:Revised Edition*(Seymour Simon)
		- *Mercury* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
		- *Venus*(Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)
		- *Mars: The Red Planet*(All Aboard Science Reader) (Patricia Brennan Demuth)
		- *Mars* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)
		- *Jupiter* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
		- *Saturn* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
		- *Uranus* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Christine Taylor-Butler)
		- *Uranus* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
		- *Neptune* (Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers) (Melanie Chrismer)

**Informational Texts (Read Aloud)**

* + - *What the World Eats*(Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel) (E)
		- *It’s Disgusting and We Ate It! True Food Facts from Around the World and Throughout History*(James Solheim and Eric Brace)
		- *11 Planets: A New View of the Solar System*(David A. Aguilar)
		- *Discover the Planets*(Kids Can Read) (Cynthia Pratt Nicolson and Bill Slavin)
		- *Pluto: From Planet to Dwarf* (Scholastic, True Books) (Elaine Landau)
		- *Mercury*(Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Venus*(Scholastic A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Mars*(Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Jupiter*(Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Saturn* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Uranus* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Neptune* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)
		- *Earth* (Scholastic, A True Book: Space) (Larry Dane Brimner)

**Resources for Students**

* + - Dictionaries
		- Online dictionaries
		- Thesaurus
		- Online thesaurus
		- *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms (Revised)* (Marvin Terban)
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**Sample Activities and Assessments**

* + **Note:** *You may want to do the planets in science at the same time you are doing fiction/poetry in language arts. The two parts of the unit will come together in the research project at the end of the unit.*

**Word Work / Latin Suffixes:**

Display this list of words with a common Latin suffix (e.g., -able, -ible, -ation, -fy, -ify, -ment, -ty, -ity): likeable, readable, drivable, laughable, and teachable*.* Ask students:

* + - What does each word have in common with the rest? (Answer: the same Latin suffix –able)

Then explain that this is an example of a Latin suffix. Have students use white boards to write the root word for each (i.e., like, read, drive, laugh, and teach). Then ask students:

* + - What part of speech is “read”? (Answer: verb)

Explain that when we add the suffix –*able*, it becomes a different part of speech (i.e., an adjective). Then use the new word in a sentence so that students see the part of speech change. For example, I was surprised to find this thick book was very readable.” Then explain that “readable” describes the book, which means it’s an adjective. Extend this lesson by continuing to collect words that end in –able or –ible.(RF.3.3b, L.3.4b)

**Vocabulary / Thesaurus:**

Have students look up the word “know” in an online thesaurus**.** Create a horizontal line on the board with “wonder” at one end and “know” at the other. To show shades of meaning, discuss the placement of other “state of mind” words (i.e., the synonyms and antonyms of “know”) on the scale. Repeat this activity with verbs and /or adjectives (such as “warm”) that come up in student reading. (L.3.5c)

**Word Work / Poetry:**

As you and the students read poems throughout this unit, ask them choose words that they like to collect in their journals. Read aloud a poem such as “Daffodils” (William Wordsworth) several times, modeling fluent reading. Choose an evocative word from the poem, because, for example, of the way it sounds or what it means. Every time the class reads a poem, either together or individually, give the students a few minutes to choose one or two words that they like and then use them in a sentence. (RF.3.4c)

**Poetry / Comprehension:**

Using a poem such as “Eating While Reading” (Gary Soto) to illustrate how each line builds meaning to the next. Have students read multiple poems aloud to each other, explaining their understanding of the poem, line-by-line, and stanza-by-stanza. (RL.3.5)

**Language / Writing:**

Read several books that use idioms in the story (e.g., the *Amelia Bedelia* series) or a book that uses idioms as the text (e.g., Terban’s work). Then assign the students this prompt: “Choose an idiomatic saying. Draw a picture of the literal and figurative meaning of the saying. Write a short paragraph to explain to someone like Amelia Bedelia why it is important to know what the saying really means.” [See here for more idioms](http://www.idiomsite.com/). (RL.3.4, RI.3.5,L.3.4a, L.3.5a)

**Drama / Fluency / Poetry**

Give the students this prompt: “Choose one of the poems in this unit's collection. Memorize it (or read it) and perform it for the class. Be sure to use your best expression as you read.” To add a twist to the poetry performance, pair up the students and have them choose a poem with personification such as “Skyscrapers” (Rachel Field) As one student reads, have the other student “be” the skyscraper (or the personified object in the poem of choice). (RF.3.4b)

**Class Discussion / Literature**

Before this lesson, gather some cubes or building blocks to use as a visual representation. Using a chapter book such as *The Search for Delicious*(Natalie Babbitt) or *Frindle* (Andrew Clements and Brian Selznick)*,*use the building blocks to show how the author of a book builds meaning. At the end of each chapter, have students write down on Post-Its what they believe is the main idea of the chapter. Place the Post-Its on the board and look to see how well the students comprehended the text, discussing as you read them aloud. After the class comes to consensus, write down the main idea of the chapter on another Post-It and place it on the block. Do this with each chapter (or in reading session if you do not finish a chapter in one sitting) to show how events build upon each other. If, later in the book, the class realizes (with your guidance) that they have forgotten something important in a previous chapter, go back and revise the building blocks. This will teach the students that good readers tailor their thinking—rethinking the importance of events and ideas—as they read. (RL.3.5, SL.3.2)

**Class Discussion / Informational Text / Opinion Writing**

Using a book such as *What the World Eats*(Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel), discuss the differences in the way people eat around the world. Challenge the students to think critically about nutrition, their eating habits, and the way other cultures look at food. Use the following questions to guide the discussion: What do you think the authors were trying to say in this text?

* + - Can you support your opinion with evidence from the text?
		- How did the illustrations support the ideas in the print part of the text?
		- Do you think the authors fairly described the way people in the United States eat?

Finally, assign an opinion writing piece: “Some people eat more healthy food than other people. In your opinion, do you think there should be laws passed to tell people what they can and cannot eat? Support your answer with strong reasons.”(RI.3.2, RI.3.7, SL.3.1a, SL.3.2, SL.3.1c, SL.3.1d, SL.3.1b**,** W.3.1, L.3.1i, L.3.2)

**Informational Writing / Informative Text**

Assign to the students a research project on a planet other than earth. Create a display of many books on the planets and have students choose a book with which to start their research. Using the key words “where, when, why, and how key events occur,” students should begin by creating a list of questions they want to answer through their research. The generating of questions could happen as a class if students need modeling of the process. Give students large index cards with each question on one side and have them right the answers on the other side. When they are finished finding the answers, have them use these cards to write a report on the planet. As students revise, they should focus on word choice to make their reports as literary and interesting as possible. Students should create one prop to help explain their most interesting finding about the planet. (L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.5, W.3.8, W.3.7, W.3.10, W.3.2)

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**Additional Resources**

* + - [Figurative Language: Teaching Idioms](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/figurative-language-teaching-idioms-254.html) (ReadWriteThink) (L.3.5a)
		- [Dancing Minds and Shouting Smiles: Teaching Personification through Poetry](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/dancing-minds-shouting-smiles-860.html) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.3.5)
		Note: This lesson would be appropriate if you want to focus on personification.
		- [Delicious, Tasty, Yummy: Enriching Writing with Adjectives and Synonyms](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/delicious-tasty-yummy-enriching-868.html) (ReadWriteThink) (W.3.5)
		- [Martian Real Estate: A Good Investment?](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/01/g35/marsreal.html) (National Geographic) (W.3.7)
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**Terminology**

* + - dictionary
		- idiom
		- Latin suffixes
		- thesaurus
		- word roots
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**Making Interdisciplinary Connections**

* + **This unit teaches:**
		- **Geography:** World geography (e.g., continents and countries)
		- **Science:** the solar system (i.e., the planets)

**This unit could be extended to teach:**

* + - **Science:** Astronomy (e.g., the universe, galaxies, orienteering, and exploration of space)