



# SPHERE

Fostering Civil Discourse and Diverse Viewpoints for Every Classroom

## Practicing Civil Discourse through Literature and Film

BY STEPHANIE HASTY



## Common Core State Standards

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: READING LITERATURE (RL)

- **RL.6.1:** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL.6.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- **RL.6.3:** Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
- **RL.6.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- **RL.6.5:** Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- **RL.6.6:** Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
- **RL.6.9:** Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- **RL.7.1:** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL.7.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RL.7.3:** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- **RL.8.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING (SL)

- **SL.6.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.6.2:** Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
- **SL.6.3:** Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

- **SL.7.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.8.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: LANGUAGE (L)**

- **L.6.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- **L.7.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- **L.8.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: WRITING (W)**

- **W.6.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
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#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS (RI)**

- **RI.6.7:** Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.
- **RI.7.7:** Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
- **RI.8.7:** Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.

## Guiding question

How do characters in literature and film navigate their emotions and relationships, and what can we learn from their experiences to develop our own social and emotional skills?

## Pacing

Note: This is just one example of how to pace the unit. And it centers around a Reader's Writers workshop idea, in the sense that you read the chosen book (book club, choice, or whole class novel) or watch a TV episode or film and work with it daily. This is paced for a 48-minute class period. Each day's lesson has a daily plan. Suggestions for books, short stories, poems, TV episodes, and films are below. Use what you know works in your district, school, and classroom.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Who Are We? (Sphere)</b></p> <p>Give students a piece of cardstock and drawing supplies to create a nameplate that has their name displayed really big with words that show what they value and who they are around it. Ask students to share with a partner or tablemate.</p>	<p>2. Civil Discourse: Creating Norms and Exploring Decision Making</p>	<p>3. Civil Discourse: Discussing Themes in Literature</p>	<p>4 and 5. Exploring Reading Metaphors in Cartoons</p>	

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>6. Read: Pomodoro reading of class novel</p> <p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Address a prompt by sharing answers with the class (repeat at least twice)</p>	<p>7. <b>Book Discussion</b></p> <p>Read: 20 minutes</p>	<p>8. Activity: Civil Discourse: A Topic Flood with a Quick Write (choose works that center around the guiding question)</p>	<p>Read: Poem with activity</p> <p>Write: Quick write</p>	<p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Read: Media with activity</p> <p>Write: Quick write</p>
<p>Read: 20 minutes</p> <p>Book discussion (Close read)</p>	<p>Read: 10 minutes of reading</p> <p>Write: Quick write</p>	<p>13 and 14. <b>Character development helps us see who we are</b></p>		<p>Read: 20 minutes</p> <p>Book discussion (Close read)</p>
<p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Write: Quick write</p> <p>Read: Media with activity</p>	<p>View: Another cartoon or movie clip</p> <p>Write: Quick write—compare and contrast themes</p>	<p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Write: Create a journal entry in the voice of one of the characters from the book you are reading</p>	<p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Write: Is this book a window, mirror, door, or something else?</p>	<p>Read: 10 minutes</p> <p>Write: Critical literacy questions</p>
<p>Read: 20 minutes</p> <p>Book discussion (Close read)</p>	<p>Read: Poem with activity</p> <p>Write: Quick write</p>	<p>Assign book assessment: Sketchnotes Assessment or Character Scrapbook and Reflection under the lens of answering the guiding question</p>	<p>Work on book assessment</p>	<p>Finish book assignment</p>

## Literature and Informational Text Ideas

Note: The list below is not separated by grade, as a teacher should pick books according to what is appropriate for your classroom, school and district. These are just ideas of works that could be used. This list is not exhaustive. Use what you know works in your district, school and classroom.

### NOVELS

- *Lois Lowry* (especially *The Giver* and *Number the Stars*)
- *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls
- *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keys
- *The Outsiders* by SE Hinton
- *Orbiting Jupiter* by Gary D. Schmidt
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *Homecoming* Cynthia Voight
- *Redwall* series Brian Jacques
- *Life As We Knew It* series Susan by Beth Pfeffer
- *Tiger Eyes* by Judy Blume
- *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen
- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
- *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne
- *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor
- *Secondhand Lions* by John Whitman
- *A Wrinkle in Time* series by Madeleine L'Engle
- *Misty of Chincoteague* by Marguerite Henry
- *The Black Stallion* by Walter Farley
- *Dear America* series various authors
- *Poppy* series and *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi
- *I, Robot* by Isaac Asimov
- *And, Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie
- *Skeleton Creek* series by Patrick Carman
- *Manchild in the Promised Land* by Claude Brown
- *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* series by J. R. R. Tolkien
- *Fear Street* series by R. L. Stine
- *Shepherd of the Hills* by Harold Bell Wright
- *Harry Potter* series by J. K. Rowling

- *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick
- *Babysitters Club* series by Ann M. Martin
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *Dragonriders of Pern* series by Anne McCaffery
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelo
- *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio
- *All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot
- *Dacey's Song and Homecoming* by Cynthia Voigt
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
- *Slake's Limbo* by Felice Holman
- *The Shadow Children* series by Margaret Peterson Haddix
- *Watership Down* by Richard Adams
- *Restart* by Gordon Korman
- *Twelfth* by Janet Key
- *The Civil War of Amos Abernathy* by Michael Leali
- *Small Town Pride* by Phil Stamper

#### **SHORT STORIES**

- "The Monkey's Paw" by W. W. Jacobs
- "By the Waters of Babylon" by Stephen Vincent Benét
- "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson
- *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* by Alvin Schwartz
- *More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* by Alvin Schwartz
- "The Red Pony" by John Steinbeck
- "To Build a Fire" by Jack London
- "The Veldt" by Ray Bradbury
- "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury
- "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe
- "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury
- "The Elevator" by William Sleator
- "The Landlady" by Roald Dahl
- "The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry
- "The Ransom of Red Chief" by O. Henry
- "The Sniper" by Liam O'Flaherty

- “The Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant
- “Raymond’s Run” by Toni Cade Bambara
- “The Masque of the Red Dead” by Edgar Allan Poe
- “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin
- “The Lady or the Tiger?” by Frank R. Stockton
- “The Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst
- “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid
- “Civil Peace” by Chinua Achebe
- “The Open Window” by Saki
- “The Wife’s Story” by Ursula K. LeGuin
- “First-Day Fly” by Jason Reynolds
- “The Bet” by Anton Chekhov
- “My Favorite Chaperone” by Jean Davies Okimoto
- “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers
- “Seventh Grade” by Gary Soto
- “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker
- “Click Clack the Rattlebag” by Neil Gaiman
- “Names/Nombres” by Julia Alvarez
- “The Fly” by Katherine Mansfield
- “Geraldo No Last Name” by Sandra Cisneros
- “Rules of the Game” by Amy Tan
- “The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart
- “The Scholarship Jacket” by Marta Salinas
- “Amigo Brothers” by Piri Thomas
- “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros
- “St. Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves” by Karen Russell
- “Mother and Daughter” by Gary Soto
- “What’s the Worst That Could Happen?” by Bruce Coville
- “The Boo Hag” by Veronica Byrd
- “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.
- “Charles” by Shirley Jackson
- “The Fun They Had” by Isaac Asimov
- “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan
- “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- “The Black Cat” by Edgar Allan Poe

- "A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote
- "Recitatif" by Toni Morrison
- "Stone Animals" by Kelly Link
- "The Library of Babel" by Jorge Luis Borges
- "The Paper Menagerie" by Ken Lui
- "Flipped" by Wendelin Van Draanen

## **POEMS**

- [Teach Living Poets](#)
- Ogden Nash poems
- "Porphyria's Lover" by Robert Browning
- "The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes
- "And the Ghosts" by Graham Foust
- "That Sure Is My Little Dog" by Eleanor Lerman
- "Another Reason Why I Don't Keep a Gun in the House" by Billy Collins
- "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes
- "Oranges" by Gary Soto
- "This Is Just to Say" by William Carlos Williams
- "Having a Coke with You" by Frank O'Hara
- "Pass On" by Michael Lee
- "Snow" by David Berman
- "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou
- "So You Want To Be a Writer" by Charles Bukowski
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas
- Emily Dickinson poetry
- "Ode to a Large Tuna in the Market" by Pablo Neruda
- "Language Lesson 1976" by Heather McHugh
- "Mirror" by Sylvia Plath
- "She Walks in Beauty" by Lord Byron
- "A Man Said to the Universe" by Stephen Crane
- "Richard Cory" by Edwin Arlington Robinson
- "The Laughing Heart" by Charles Bukowski
- "Tattoo" by Ted Kooser
- "The Hill We Climb" by Amanda Gorman

- “If” by Rudyard Kipling
- “Invictus” by William Ernest Henley
- “Be the Best of Whatever You Are” by Douglas Malloch
- Edgar Allan Poe poems
- “The Lady of Shalott” by Alfred Tennyson
- Robert Frost poems
- “Rat Ode” by Elizabeth Acevedo
- “I Lost My Talk” by Rita Joe
- “Friend” by Josephine Miles
- “There Are Birds Here” by Jamaal May
- “Dear Future Generations: Sorry” by Prince Ea
- “Casey at the Bat” by Ernest Lawrence Thayer
- “The Rose That Grew from Concrete” by Tupac Shakur
- “We Wear the Mask” by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- ““Eating Poetry” by Mark Strand
- “Deer Hit” by Jon Loomis

#### **TV SHOWS**

- *Tinga Tinga Tales*—African folktales from many African nations told in cartoon form
- “Why Giraffe Has a Long Neck”
- “Why Elephant Has a Trunk”
- “Why Tortoise Has a Broken Shell”
- “Why Monkeys Swing in the Trees”
- “Why Lion Roars”
- “Why Crocodile Has a Bumpy Back”
- “Why Flamingo Stands on One Leg”
- “Why Hippo Has No Hair”
- “Why Tickbird Sits on Hippo’s Back”
- “Why Owl’s Eyes Are Red”
- *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, “The Southern Air Temple”
- *Hey Arnold!*, “The Journal”
- *Gravity Falls*, “Dreamscaperers”
- *Steven Universe*, “Mindful Education”
- *The Simpsons*, “Lisa the Vegetarian”
- *Adventure Time*, “I Remember You”

- *Arthur*, "Arthur's Big Hit"
- *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*, "The Cutie Mark Chronicles"
- *Phineas and Ferb*, "Rollercoaster: The Musical!"
- *Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated*, "The Night the Clown Cried"
- *Teen Titans*, "Nevermore"
- *The Magic School Bus*, "Inside Ralphie":
- *The Powerpuff Girls*, "Members Only"
- *Arthur*, "The Election"
- *Rugrats*, "Chuckie's Wonderful Life"
- *The Wild Thornberrys*, "Gift of Gab"
- *Code Lyoko*, "The Girl of the Dreams"
- *Clifford the Big Red Dog*, "Dog for a Day"
- *Dora the Explorer*, "Lost City Adventure"
- *Kim Possible*, "Stop Team Go"
- *Bluey*, "Magic Xylophone"
- *Bluey*, "Daddy Putdown"
- *Star vs. The Forces of Evil*, "Star Comes to Earth"
- *Star vs. The Forces of Evil*, "Mewberty"
- *SpongeBob SquarePants*, "The Camping Episode"
- *The Simpsons*, "Bart Gets an F"
- *Adventure Time*, "What Was Missing"
- *Steven Universe*, "Change Your Mind"
- *Gravity Falls*, "Not What He Seems"
- *Hey Arnold!*, "Arnold's Christmas"
- *Arthur*, "Arthur's Perfect Christmas"
- *The Magic School Bus*, "Gets Lost in Space"
- *Teen Titans Go!*, "Accept the Next Proposition You Hear"
- *The Wild Thornberrys*, "The Origin of Donnie"
- *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, "The Ember Island Players"
- *Dora the Explorer*, "Save the Mermaids"
- *Phineas and Ferb*, "Phineas and Ferb Get Busted!"
- *Kim Possible*, "So the Drama"
- *Clifford the Big Red Dog*, "Big Hearted T-Bone"
- *Rugrats*, "Mother's Day"

## **FILMS**

- *Glory*
- *The Color of Friendship*
- *Clara's Heart*
- *Corrina, Corrina*
- *The Lion King*
- *Hidden Figures*
- *Wonder*
- *The Princess Bride*
- *Ella Enchanted*
- *Coco*
- *The Karate Kid*
- *The Diary of Anne Frank*
- *The Boy Who Could Fly*
- *I Can Only Imagine*
- *Bridge to Terabithia*
- *Akeelah and the Bee*
- *Matilda*
- *The Sandlot*
- *Soul*
- *Freedom Writers*
- *October Sky*
- *Holes*
- *The Mighty Ducks*
- *The Secret Garden*
- *My Neighbor Totoro*
- *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*
- *The Breadwinner*
- *Queen of Katwe*
- *The Iron Giant*
- *Whale Rider*
- *The Goonies*
- *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*
- *The Sound of Music*
- *A Wrinkle in Time*

- *The Princess Diaries*
- *Moana*

## Teacher Aids

- "Three Words You Need for Your Next Hard Conversation: Oops, Ouch, Whoa" by Annaliese Griffin
- "What's Going on with Gen Z and Civil Discourse" (Cato Institute)
- "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" by NCTE
- "Project Zero's Thinking Routine Toolbox"
- "What Is Civil Discourse?" (Sphere)
- "Cultivating Civic Discourse in Your Middle School Classroom" (Sphere)
- "Best 12 Diverse Artist to Teach in Your Art Classroom"
- "Ditch That Textbook Graphic Organizers"