Junior Great Books

Series 6–8

Sample Lesson Plans

Complete readings for:
“Friends of the Hide” by Timothy Egan
“At work with my father” by Eve L. Ewing
NEW Junior Great Books Series 6–8!

We are proud to announce the upcoming release of all-new classroom materials for grades 6, 7, and 8! These materials include a wide variety of text types, meet state and national standards in English language arts, and maintain the Great Books focus on close reading, critical thinking, and collaboration. Student and teacher materials will be available in print and through our digital platform, Great Books Plus, and teacher materials will also include a range of online resources.

Our research-based approach to learning has been recognized as effective by the US Department of Education, Learning Forward, and other studies of curricula, and our core activities and student reflection options support widely recognized social and emotional learning skills.

The new series includes:

- High-quality texts in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry: 10 stories, 8 nonfiction texts, and 2 poems at each grade level
- In-depth reading, critical thinking, and writing activities
- Note-taking options focused on author’s craft
- Differentiated instruction for every core activity
- Formal and informal assessment options
- Teacher support and online resources
- Print and digital options

The Shared Inquiry™ Method of Learning

Every Junior Great Books program centers on Shared Inquiry, an engaging, collaborative approach to teaching and learning that enables students to comprehend, discuss, and think critically about complex texts. Regular use of Shared Inquiry fosters the habits of mind essential to effective readers, thinkers, and learners.

Shared Inquiry™ is a trademark of the Great Books Foundation.

Inside this booklet, you will find:

- The features and benefits of Junior Great Books Series 6–8 (p. 3)
- A look inside the teacher materials, student materials, and online resources (pp. 4–11)
- The unit overview for “Friends of the Hide” from the Series 7 Teacher's Edition, as well as the full text from the Series 7 Student Book (pp. 12–17)
- The unit overview for “At work with my father” from the Series 6 Teacher's Edition, as well as the full poem from the Series 6 Student Book (pp. 18–20)
- Information about our digital platform, Great Books Plus, and our professional development (pp. 21–22)
- A preorder form for Junior Great Books Series 6–8 materials (p. 23)
### Features and Benefits of Series 6–8

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<td>High-quality fiction, nonfiction, and poetry from a range of cultures and time periods</td>
<td>Support <strong>close reading and in-depth questioning</strong>; familiarize students with a variety of text types and purposes</td>
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<td>Evaluative and prereading questions for each text</td>
<td>Encourage students to make <strong>personal connections</strong> and relate texts to <strong>larger, real-life issues</strong></td>
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<td>Student-facing headnotes and introductions to genres</td>
<td>Enable students to understand <strong>essential context</strong> for each selection and type of text</td>
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<td>Sharing questions activity</td>
<td>Stimulates curiosity and builds <strong>metacognitive and collaborative skills</strong>; enables students to take more responsibility for their learning</td>
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<td>Note-taking options for second reading</td>
<td>Contrasting notes require students to <strong>explain evidence for divergent ideas</strong>; literary element notes (for fiction and poetry) and recurring concept notes (for nonfiction) focus on <strong>author's craft</strong> and reinforce <strong>genre-specific skills</strong></td>
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<td>Essay writing activities and frameworks</td>
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<td>Related reading suggestions</td>
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<td>Teacher resources and annotated instructional frameworks</td>
<td>Simplify finding and using <strong>appropriate techniques</strong>; enrich use of activities</td>
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<td>Differentiated instruction</td>
<td><strong>Engages all students</strong> in higher-level reading, thinking, and discussion</td>
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<td>Assessment and reflection options</td>
<td>Include <strong>formative and summative assessment options</strong> that build a complete picture of students’ progress and <strong>reflection forms</strong> that support <strong>metacognition, including social and emotional learning</strong></td>
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<td>Planning and implementation recommendations</td>
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Series 6–8 Classroom Materials

High-Quality Resources for Teachers and Students

We developed these classroom materials with three major goals in mind:

- To meet ELA standards through authentic, inquiry-based activities
- To simplify implementation through clear instructional frameworks
- To offer flexible ways to extend learning into writing and across the curriculum

Take a look at pages 5–11 of this booklet to see how the NEW Junior Great Books Series 6–8 classroom materials can ignite learning in your classroom!

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<td><strong>Teacher’s Edition</strong></td>
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<td>• Easy-to-follow instructions on conducting each activity</td>
<td>• 20 texts per grade level, including 10 fiction selections, 8 nonfiction texts, and 2 poems</td>
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<td>• Unit overviews with planning details</td>
<td>• Student-facing headnotes that include biographical information on each author and background and contextual information for each text</td>
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<td>• Activity sessions planning chart to help you meet curriculum goals</td>
<td>• Informational pages with Shared Inquiry guidelines</td>
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<td>• Support and Challenge options so you can differentiate instruction</td>
<td>• Introduction to each genre to familiarize students with what to expect before they read</td>
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<td>• Full instructional framework for each genre: fiction, nonfiction, and poetry</td>
<td><strong>Reader’s Journal</strong></td>
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<td>• Guide to question types so you can use each kind of question for the right purpose</td>
<td>• Pages for each activity that prompt students to think deeply about what they read</td>
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<td>• Tips for how to foster Shared Inquiry discussion and how to troubleshoot common challenges</td>
<td>• Shared Inquiry Discussion page that enables students to record initial answers and revised answers, and to gather evidence to support their opinions</td>
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<td>• Instructions on conducting Shared Inquiry discussion with evaluative questions</td>
<td>• Essay writing materials that take students through the writing process and enable peer review</td>
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**Online Resources**

- Shared Inquiry discussion materials include:
  - Discussion Planner
  - Question Testing Chart
  - Discussion Observations
  - Discussion-Partner Feedback
- Writing materials include:
  - Interpretive and Evaluative Essay Writing
  - Evidence Organizer
  - Drafting Guide
  - Peer Review Checklist
- Related readings for each text
- Full range of assessment materials
- Reflection materials for teachers and students

**Student-facing headnotes**

- Tips for how to foster Shared Inquiry discussion
- How to troubleshoot common challenges
- Instructions on conducting Shared Inquiry discussion
- Related readings for each text
- Full range of assessment materials
- Reflection materials for teachers and students
Now the word creative means thinking outside the box and using my imagination to help see others' views. When you know there is more than one good answer, you're not afraid of being wrong. It makes it easier to think about different possibilities. More open-minded and learning to collaborate has made me a better leader on my team. When I think more fully about myself, it helps me understand what I read.

Suggested vocabulary words are included for each unit, and uncommon terms and references are briefly defined so you can clear up confusion without interrupting your reading.

Interpretive questions are suggested for use in Shared Inquiry discussion or as models to help you formulate your own.

Suggested note-taking prompts and follow-up questions for the second reading activity allow students to practice close-reading skills and focus on author’s craft.
Now the word creative means what you're trying to say so that people might say ideas that you haven't thought of and you might think because of what people are saying. You can explain more about what you're trying to say so that people might understand and participate. Our discussions teach me how to talk to people. They help me think about how other people might think and explain their ideas. It makes it easier to think about different possibilities.

What I like most is the way we can all come together and discuss a question and think about other people's opinions. I feel like we're learning skills we can use now and in the future.

In our discussions, we get to know each other better and understand what we read.

When you know there is more than one good answer, you're not afraid of being wrong. It makes it easier to think about different possibilities.

The conversations are interesting because people might say ideas that you haven't thought of and you might think because of what people are saying.
Teacher’s Edition, continued

The **instructional framework** for each genre walks you through a typical unit, using one of the texts as an example.

### SESSION 1

**First Reading with Sharing Questions (25–50 minutes)**

#### Activity Instructions

1. **Prepare** students to ask questions by having them mark anything they are confused or curious about as they read (or listen to) the text. (Students may mark the text or use sticky notes.)
2. **Allow** time for students to read or listen to the text and mark their questions.
3. **Ask** students to share their questions, and explain that not all questions will be answered at this time. Record students’ questions and put students’ names beside them.
4. **Help** students answer any questions that signal a problem with comprehension. Leave the rest unanswered for now.
5. **Post** the list of questions in the classroom and let students know they will revisit some of these questions during their work on the text.

#### Vocabulary Activities

- **You may use the suggested vocabulary words in each unit and the vocabulary activities on page 137 at any time during a unit.**
- **Suggested vocabulary words for** “The Secret Life of Bees” **include collective, locomotor, invertebrate, invertebrates, and recurve.**
- **Note that some vocabulary words can serve as signal comprehension issues, so resolve them early and add students’ understanding of each word**.

#### Reader’s Journal

- **The Exploring Reader’s Journal** on pages 134–135 asks students to analyze a confusing or unfamiliar text, have them listen to it or work through it (or read) before the second reading, and save others for a research project or other activity.

### Student Learning Spectrum

Look for students to:

- **Approaching Objectives**
  - Follow the text and ask a variety of questions, all of them relevant to the text’s meaning.
- **Meeting Objectives**
  - Follow the text and ask a variety of questions, most of them relevant to the text’s meaning.
- **Exceeding Objectives**
  - Follow the text and ask a variety of questions, most of them relevant to the text’s meaning, identify types of questions and address them in pairs or small groups.

### Differentiated Instruction

- **Support**
  - If students struggle to follow the text, have them listen to it or work through it as part of a guided reading group. If students struggle to articulate questions about the text, ask them brainstorm questions using question words (who, what, when, why, where, how, that, than), or model how you would ask a question about part of the text.

- **Challenge**
  - If students read the text and ask many questions relevant to its meaning:
    - Have students practice identifying question types (see pages 10–11 of the student book) and testing questions (see the Question Testing Chart in the Online Resource).
    - Have pairs of students choose a question from the class list and find relevant evidence.

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**Spotlight on Factual and Background Questions**

The types of questions students ask after reading can vary depending on the type of nonfiction text you’re using. When they respond to a memo, their questions may resemble those they would ask after reading fiction. A more informational text may prompt students to ask more factual and background questions and fewer interpretive and speculative questions.

If students raise many factual and background questions, address only those that are vital to comprehension before the second reading, and save others for a research project or other activity.

**“The Secret Life of Bees” Questions**

1. **What does Emmet mean by “collective decision-making”?**
2. **How long have humans studied bees?**
3. **What is a “sperm”?**
4. **How does the queen’s scent attract other bees?**

For more information on question types, see pages 144–145.

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**The student learning spectrum** allows you to informally assess student understanding while you conduct activities.

**Support** and **Challenge** options provide differentiated instruction ideas.

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**This icon indicates when an activity calls for students to use the Reader’s Journal.**

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Managing Participation in Shared Inquiry Discussion

Using a Seating Chart
On a seating chart, make check marks next to students’ names when they speak in discussion, and mark an N/A next to students’ names if you call on them and they do not respond (see diagram). You can also track students’ critical thinking skills with other notes (for example, marking an E when a student supplies evidence from the text). Keeping a seating chart enables you to:

- Identify students who have not yet spoken and invite them to answer
- Keep a record of participation and discussion skills so you can assess them
- Slow down the discussion—if the conversation is moving too fast for you to make any notes, it’s going too fast for many of your students to follow

Dividing Large Classes for Discussion: The Fishbowl
If your class has more than twenty students, try having half the class actively observe the other half in discussion, using the Discussion Observations handout or the Discussion Partners Feedback handout in the Online Resources.

Instructions
1. Seat discussion participants in an inner circle and observers in an outer circle (see diagram).
2. Ask each outer-circle student to either:
   - Use the Discussion Observation handout to take notes and
   - Use the Discussion Partners Feedback handout to note behaviors of a partner.
3. Lead the discussion:
   - At the end, have the whole class share their observations with the observer in their pair.
4. Have the inner circle switch roles halfway through the discussion.

Vocabulary Activities
Below are some suggested vocabulary activities to be done at any time during a unit. For each activity, you may either select a word from the suggested vocabulary words in the unit overviews or make your own list of unfamiliar words from the text as a class, starting with any vocabulary questions that arise during the sharing questions activity.

- **Words in Context**
  - Have students develop their inference skills and build vocabulary by teaching them how to make educated guesses using context clues.
  - **Reader’s Journal**: Have students complete the Exploring Vocabulary page in the Reader’s Journal for fiction and nonfiction units, or follow these steps:
    - Assign students a word and have them make educated guesses about its meaning by looking at the way the word is used in the text. Have them write down words or sentences that serve as context clues and the inference they made based on those context clues.
    - Have students look up the word in the dictionary to determine how accurate their inference was. Tell them to write the correct definition in their own words.
    - Have students use the dictionary to find two antonyms and/or two synonyms for the word.
    - Ask students to describe what they picture in their mind when they hear the word. Then have them use the word correctly in a sentence.

- **Word Map**
  - Begin this activity by placing the vocabulary word in context and helping students define it. Then have the class create a word map listing words they associate with the vocabulary word. Ask students to pick which words on the map best help them understand the meaning of the word as it is used in the text.

- **Interpreting Words**
  - Begin this activity by placing the vocabulary word in context and helping students define it. Then ask an interpretive question about the text using the word.
  - **Examples**: How does Gladwell’s mention of skewed ape distributions in youth hockey support his argument that success is not as simple as it seems? What does Mathilda’s immoderate longing for the diamond necklace tell us about her character?

- **Artist’s Dictionary**
  - Begin this activity by placing the vocabulary word in context and helping students define it. Then have students draw a picture depicting the meaning of the word and explain why they drew what they did.
Online Resources
The Online Resources contain a wealth of materials to help you and your students plan for discussion, build on your Shared Inquiry experience, and integrate Junior Great Books into the rest of your curriculum. A full list of the Online Resources is available in the Teacher's Edition.

The Discussion Planner allows you to record students’ ideas and questions for use in Shared Inquiry discussion and other activities.

The Question Testing Chart helps your class or groups of students analyze questions and test them for discussion.

Assessment materials, including comprehension tests and rubrics, provide tools for evaluating progress in reading comprehension, critical thinking, and speaking and listening (participation).

Reflection materials, including individual, whole-class, and teacher reflection forms, help you and your students determine strengths and areas for growth through self-assessment.
I feel like we're learning skills we can use now and in the future. What I like most is the way we can all come together and discuss a question and think about other people's opinions. It makes it easier to think about different possibilities. If you're being respected and you get to do the whole class. It makes me feel happy like when I get to share my thoughts with others. You're being respected and you get to do the whole class. It makes me feel happy like when I get to share my thoughts with others.

In our discussions, we get to know each other better and understand what we read. More open-minded and learning to collaborate has made me a better leader on my team. When I think more fully about myself, it helps me be a better person by helping them get through what they're dealing with stuff and how I can be a better person by helping them get through what they're dealing with.

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Reader’s Journal

The Reader’s Journal provides students with a structured way to process their thinking at each stage of work on a text, reinforcing the reading-writing connection.

- The Reader’s Journal page enables students to record key evidence and to compare their answers before and after discussion.

- Each Shared Inquiry activity prompts students to think more deeply about what they read and trace how their ideas develop over the course of a unit.

- Three complete sets of essay writing materials take students step by step through the process of organizing, drafting, and peer reviewing an essay.
Friends of the Hide

Unit Overview

Friends of the Hide (excerpt)

Timothy Egan

The following overview will aid your unit planning for “Friends of the Hide.” Note that all page numbers refer to the student book. Accompanying materials can be found in the Teacher Resources section or in the Online Resources.

LENGTH: 7 pages  READ-ALoud TIME: About 11 minutes

SESSION 1 (25–50 MINUTES)

PREREADING (5–10 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students explore a concept relevant to the text they will be reading.

Details: Ask students one or more of the following:

• What do you know about orcas?
• Have you ever been to a zoo or an aquarium? If so, how did you feel about the animals being kept there?

FIRST READING WITH SHARING QUESTIONS (25–50 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students read (or listen to) the text, mark places where they are confused or curious, and share their questions.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary activities can be done at any time during a unit.

Suggested vocabulary words:

invariably (p. 257), insignificant (p. 257), orchestrated (p. 258), kinship (p. 259), displaying (p. 259), mogul (p. 259), formalize (p. 260), surliness (p. 265), Uncommon terms and references:

coup de grâce (p. 259), death bleu (p. 259), leapt from the water (p. 261), related to climb (p. 261), learning through association (p. 261), Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov

SESSION 2 (50–50 MINUTES)

SECOND READING (40–50 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students reread the text and mark passages to note contrasting ideas or a recurring concept.

Details: Use one of the following options:

OPTION 1: Contrasting Note

Students mark an A where Egan seems to admire something he is describing and a C where he seems to criticize something he is describing.

Follow-up question: What do you see Egan admiring (or criticizing) here?

OPTION 2: Personification Note

Students mark a P where Egan uses personification to describe an animal.

Personification: giving human characteristics to something that is not human

Follow-up questions: What human characteristic is Egan using to describe an animal here? What is the effect of giving the animal this characteristic?

SESSION 3 (40–50 MINUTES)

SHARED INQUIRY DISCUSSION (40–50 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students explore the text’s meaning by discussing an interpretive or evaluative question that has multiple reasonable answers.

Details: For discussion, use one of the following interpretive questions or a question of your own:

OPTION 1: According to Egan, why have human attitudes toward orcas changed?

• Why does Egan tell the story of the faked safari theme park on Speiden Island?
• Why does Egan say that the “worldwide publicity” that Ted Griffin and Numa received was due to the view that orcas “would attack and kill any human in the water”? (p. 260)
• Why does Egan include the story of Numa?
• Why does Egan note that becoming “the world’s leading aquarium attraction” prevented orcas from being protected in the same way as Whales and humpback whales were? (p. 280)
• Why does Egan describe the living conditions of orcas at Sea World?
• Why does Egan mean when he says “the wolf of the sea had become a bloody bear”? (p. 280)

OPTION 2: What does Egan say about orcas at Sea World?

• Why does Egan conclude with a story of bottlenose dolphins being “drafted into indentured service”? (p. 280)

SESSION 4 (TIMES VARY)

ESSAY WRITING (TIMES VARY)

Interpretive Essay: Students write an essay supporting their interpretation of the text.

Evaluative Essay: Students write an essay based on an evaluative question. Have students choose one of their own or one of the following:

• Does Egan convince you that orcas should not be kept in captivity?
• How do you think we should decide whether the benefits of studying or preserving an animal are worth keeping it in captivity?
FRIENDS OF THE HIDE (excerpt)

TIMOTHY EGAN

Timothy Egan was born in Seattle, Washington, in 1954. After graduating from the University of Washington, Egan worked as a journalist for the New York Times, and was part of a team of Times reporters that won a Pulitzer Prize in 2001. He has written several nonfiction books, including 2006’s The Worst Hard Time, about the Dust Bowl years in America, which won the National Book Award.

This excerpt is taken from Egan’s book The Good Rain: Across Time and Terrain in the Pacific Northwest, which was published in 1990. In the book, Egan follows in the footsteps of Theodore Winthrop, an American writer and traveler who wrote a bestselling book about the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s.

Whale-watching requires the patience of a gardener in winter. I’m in a small boat, trying to hold the binoculars with one hand and the guardrail with the other as I scan the water around the northern San Juan Islands. The day is bright, as they almost always are during the warm months in this archipelago.

People who come to the San Juans, no matter their background or degree of sensitivity to the earth, invariably fall in love with the natural world; in turn, the natural world repays such affection. Man is but one resident, in places a fairly insignificant one, in the habitat of the San Juans. The islands are fir-covered mountains with all but the summits buried by sea. Just offshore, the water is a thousand feet deep in parts; year-round, it stays at a temperature of forty-six degrees Fahrenheit. As species continue to die out in most other places of the world, the San Juans belong to creatures on the comeback—killer whales, harbor seals, bald eagles. Eighty-four islands in the San Juan chain are wildlife refuges; of those, humans are allowed to visit only three.

We stop for a while to watch harbor seals. About six feet long, they sprawl atop rocks close to water, soaking in sun. As we approach, their personality quirks reveal themselves. Their heads are like those of fashion models—sleek and clean, with slicked-back hair. They have front-end flippers, and no external ears. For years, the harbor seal was considered an enemy; the state of Washington paid a five-dollar bounty for any seal snout brought into a game office. Hunters would motor to within a few yards of their targets, then shoot the seals from the boat. Between 1946 and 1960, about seventeen thousand harbor seals were killed this way. Now, they are protected by federal law. However, they do have a predator.
We move on, out toward Canadian water, passing Spieden Island—a grassy, open isle with large madrona trees latched onto bits of hardened soil in the rock outcrops. In the 1970s, a group of investors purchased the island and imported to it a variety of exotic animals. They intended to have a sort of safari theme park here, a place where hunters with no sense of sport and deep pockets could sit on stools and shoot transplanted exotic animals who had little room to roam and no room to hide. When residents of other San Juan Islands found out about this, they orchestrated a publicity campaign that, at its peak, brought the crew from 60 Minutes to tiny, uninhabited Spieden Island. Under pressure, the investors shelved the idea of a safari hunters’ island and sold the property.

In Haro Strait, not far from Lime Kiln Point, somebody spots a pod of orcas; few things set the human heart to racing as hard as the sight of black dorsal fins on the horizon. When they break the surface, jumping ten feet or more, the killers show the grace of ballerinas. Hearing them breathe, you find it hard not to feel a sense of mammal kinship. Through their blowholes, they spout a blast as grand as a geyser gush—the sight and sound of large lungs exhaling warm air. Cleanly black-and-white, the orca would be ruined by colorization.

One larger whale, apparently the bull, leaps high and crashes down, displacing enough water to flood a subdivision. They move fast. I want to get closer, but we can’t; it is against the law to come within a hundred yards of killer whales or to harass them in any way. From Lime Kiln Point, the nation’s only whale-watching park, the orcas can often be seen thirty to forty yards offshore. In the chill waters of Haro Strait, chasing fish, playing with each other, they seem like regal creatures. Later in the day, I hear a story from one of the naturalists at the Whale Museum in Friday Harbor on San Juan Island. A few harbor seals were sunbathing on rocks near a steep edge on one of the small islands when they were approached by a pod of orcas. One whale snatched a two-hundred-pound harbor seal, then the rest of the pack moved in, tearing the seal apart.

The killer whale has had many friends in this part of the world for at least two decades. Most schoolchildren can describe the orca’s intelligence, its strong family ties, its sense of humor, its dorsal-fin size. Every killer whale in the waters of Washington and British Columbia has been identified and named; their pictures are published in a book, not unlike a high school yearbook. When [Theodore] Winthrop toured Puget Sound by canoe—passing the spot on San Juan Island where orcas play ‘most every day—the killer
whale was the most feared creature of the deep. Efficient carnivores, a pack of thirty orcas may attack a gray whale, for example, and tear the larger creature apart, shredding the tail flukes, then stripping away the blubbery flanks. Another type of orca attack includes the coup de grâce: forcing open the other whale’s mouth and ripping out its tongue. In such a case, the victim dies from shock and blood loss. The orca also eats dolphins, sea lions, and occasional shorebirds.

As recently as the early 1960s the United States government issued bulletins stating that the orca would attack and kill any human in the water. A National Geographic book published about the same time repeated the myth. This perception helps explain the worldwide publicity a man named Ted Griffin received when he purchased a killer whale in 1965 for $5,000 from a group of Vancouver Island fishermen. While press helicopters buzzed overhead and newspaper reporters sent daily dispatches from the sea, Griffin took eighteen headline-filled days to tow his caged orca five hundred miles south to Seattle. He named the whale Namu, put it inside a small tank, and charged admission from the curious who came to see him swim with a creature that was supposed to rip him apart. Soon, Griffin was a celebrity, invited by Pentagon brass to formulate a plan to put the orca to military use. In 1968, the Defense Department purchased two killer whales from Griffin, believing they could be trained as a sort of watchdog on the high seas. Meanwhile, United Artists had paid Griffin $25,000 for the rights to film Namu, the Killer Whale. When the picture was shot off San Juan Island in 1966, a fake whale manufactured in Hollywood was used in place of Namu, who had died in his cement pen in Seattle. The cause of death was listed as drowning brought on by sickness from polluted water.

Griffin proceeded to catch a total of thirty orcas, selling most of them to places like Sea World in Southern California and Florida. By the early 1970s, the killer whale had become the world’s leading aquarium attraction. Nearly forty orcas, more than a third of the Puget Sound population, were captured by aquarium hunters in a ten-year period up to 1976. So, even after the landmark whale treaties of 1966 protected blue and humpback whales from further predation by man, the orca hunts accelerated. Killer whales were netted, sedated, taken from their families, and put into tiny tanks for amusement purposes. In the open sea, moving at a top speed of thirty knots, they cruise up to a hundred miles a day. In the cement tanks, their range is usually just several lengths longer than their body size.
Few Puget Sound orcas, conditioned to a stress-free life of roaming in forty-six-degree water with their families and friends of the pod, have lived very long in captivity. At Sea World, they have been taught to breach on command for their food and generally treated like circus dwarfs in the [nineteenth] century. One transplanted orca in Los Angeles was trained to wear sunglasses for a car dealer’s ad. Like the sea otter and the wolf, the orca is known to have a well-developed sense of humor in the wild, playing tag with friends, doing cartwheels and backflips. But at aquariums such as Sea World, their humor appears stiff and forced—Pavlovian routines of hoop-jumping and fin-standing in order to get their dinner. Some have rebelled and turned surly or refused to eat; a few captives have died of anorexia, baffling trainers who can’t understand why such an intelligent mammal would starve itself to death. Most of the captured orcas have died well before their natural life expectancy of seventy to eighty years.

In the early 1970s, a onetime Vancouver Aquarium whale expert named Dr. Paul Spong led a worldwide campaign to keep the orcas free. While Spong fit the generational stereotype—during summer months, he lived in a treehouse off Blackfish Sound and played his flute to the whales as a way of communicating with them—his early research was gaining a foothold of credibility in the scientific community. Initially, Dr. Spong was laughed at when he talked about similarities between whale and human brains and claimed that orcas had a sophisticated way of communicating with one another. By comparing the evolution of human brain size with that of orcas, Spong concluded that the cerebral cortex—that part of the brain which houses language, abstract thought, and logic—is strikingly similar in the two mammals; no other warm-blooded creatures have brains of such sizes compared to their body weight. In 1976, while Spong was speaking at an orca symposium at Evergreen State College in Olympia—a school whose official mascot is the geoduck, the “large queer clam” which so fascinated Winthrop—eight killer whales were captured nearby in Budd Inlet, just a few miles from the Nisqually Delta. The seizure, by hunters from Sea World of Japan, made front-page news for days on the West Coast. A few of the whales were released from their holding nets by midnight saboteurs. The others were ordered released by Governor Dan Evans.

Soon after the Budd Inlet capture, the state banned all types of commercial whale-hunting in Puget Sound. This upset columnist George Will, who wrote a piece in Newsweek criticizing Washington Secretary of State Ralph Munro. A fourth-generation Northwesterner, Munro wondered why children of Washington State should have to travel to San Diego and pay ten dollars to see a creature whose home waters used to be...
in their backyard. Munro said people in the Northwest “are tired of these Southern California amusement parks taking our wildlife down there to die.” His statements set George Will off. “If Sea World is denied a permit for ten orcas,” Will wrote, “I hope 230 million Americans go to Puget Sound, unfold lawn chairs on Munro’s lawn, ask for iced tea and watercress sandwiches and watch the whales. It will be good for their souls and it will serve him right.”

The orcas were never captured. Ted Griffin retired from the business of riding killer whales around by the dorsal fin in small cement pools. He was forced out, he admitted, by a tidal shift in public opinion—the wolf of the sea had become a teddy bear. But just as the orca was given its freedom, a group of bottlenose dolphins were drafted into indentured service at the Trident nuclear submarine base at Bangor, on Hood Canal. These swift-moving mammals, part of the same family as killer whales, are being taken from their home waters in the Gulf of Mexico and trained to guard nuclear submarines in Puget Sound.

Having marshaled some of the best scientific brains to build an underwater nuclear arsenal that can destroy the planet, man now attempts to put the smartest creature of the sea at work as a co-conspirator.
At work with my father

Unit Overview

At work with my father

Eve L. Swig

The following overview will aid your unit planning for "At work with my father." Note that all line numbers refer to pages 451–455 of the student book. Accompanying materials can be found in the Teacher Resources section or in the Online Resources.

SESSION 1 (25–35 MINUTES)

PREREADING (5–10 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students explore a concept relevant to the poem they will be reading.

Details: Ask students one or more of the following:

- Tell students that many people have expectations about what a poem is and how to read it. Ask:
  - What is poetry?
  - What do you like, or not like, about poetry?
  - What poems have you heard or read before?
  - Have you ever spent time with an adult at their workplace? What was it like?

SESSION 2 (20–25 MINUTES)

SECOND SET OF READINGS (20–25 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students reread the poem at least twice and mark places where they are confused or curious, and share their questions.

SESSION 3 (25–30 MINUTES)

SHARED INQUIRY DISCUSSION (25–30 MINUTES)

Activity Summary: Students explore the poem’s meaning by discussing an interpretive or evaluative question that has multiple reasonable answers.

Details: For discussion, use one of the following interpretive questions or a question of your own:

OPTION 1: Why has the speaker kept her father’s drawings of her?
- Why does the speaker start by describing how Navy Pier used to be, when it was “a new and desperate thing”? (line 6)
- Why does the speaker say that some of the drawings contain “invented details”? (line 24)
- Why does the speaker compare her father’s drawings to “old love letters”? (line 28)
- Why does the speaker describe “the night spent in the crowd” as her “childish love note”? (line 31)

OPTION 2: Why does the speaker end the poem with an image of her father as he “massaged his aching fingers”? (line 38)
- Why does the speaker say, “you’d think after all that watching I’d be able to do what he does”? (line 17)
- Why does the speaker say that her father talked “like he talked to people all the time”? (line 19)
- What does the speaker mean when she says, “He finds cheetahs and the patterns on your shirt”? (line 23)
- Why does the speaker say, “I cannot draw my own father, with invented details or even real ones”? (line 38)

SESSION 4 (TIMES VARY)

ESSAY WRITING (TIMES VARY)

Interpretive Essay: Students write an essay supporting their interpretation of the poem.

Evaluative Essay: Students write an essay based on an evaluative question. Have students choose one of their own or one of the following:

- Do you think that the speaker spends too much time thinking about the past?
- What do you think is the best way to honor your memories of someone?
At Work with My Father

Eve L. Ewing

Eve L. Ewing was born in 1986 in Chicago, Illinois. She is a sociologist of education and writes nonfiction, poetry, and the Marvel Comics series Ironheart. She also teaches at the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service Administration.

“At work with my father” was first published in Ewing’s 2017 poetry collection, Electric Arches. The poem’s setting is Chicago’s Navy Pier, which extends into Lake Michigan and has been a popular attraction since it was opened to the public in 1916. It underwent a large-scale renovation in the 1990s, the time Ewing describes in her poem.

Back then there was the ferris wheel
and the 21st-century McDonald’s
with the glass orb you can touch and pink lightning
comes to your fingertips like a fruit punch stain
and not much else. You’d barely recognize it.
Navy Pier was a new and desperate thing,
and instead of fireworks a man set himself on fire
and jumped in the water every night at ten, I’m not even kidding.
I’m telling you you’d barely recognize it.

My father built a structure, like a little house or gazebo kind of,
where the Shakespeare Theater is now. And he painted it blue.
And it was kind of set back, not the best location really
(later he would move inside)
so a lot of times he would draw us to get people to come over
when things were slow, or draw one of us really
while the other watched over his shoulder, which also got people to come over.
You’d think after all that watching I’d be able to do what he does.
I can do the talk—“so where you from? ohhh, okay”—
like it was the most natural thing, like he talked to people all the time.

I can make the bad jokes. But I can’t do the drawing.
He finds cheekbones and the patterns on your shirt
and makes you look coyly at your husband even if really you’re indifferent.
I can’t do any of that but I do have a lot of airbrushed drawings of myself,
with all the different glasses I ever had and sometimes with invented details,
like binoculars around my neck during my ornithology phase,
or with an “as if!” hand extended, palm upward, during my irreverent teen years.
I’ve stacked them all carefully, in their original polyvinyl bags
with their original backing boards, nestled among old love letters
which I suppose they also are, in their way.

I cannot draw my father, with invented details or even real ones.
No, my childish love note was the night spent in the crowd
watching the boats come in, selling glow sticks to pass the time,
Making chains of them and hanging them on my skinny arms by the dozen,
yelling at tourists the slogans I invented—light up the night with a glow light!

until the time came for the man to climb the pier’s cement edge with a torch in hand
while the music blared, an electric guitar with no name,
and I stood silent, gangly and fluorescent
and my father, at the edge of my vision, massaged his aching fingers.
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