**Unit 1: Who Are We?**

In the first part of this unit we spent a lot of time considering what kinds of values and characteristics define us as a modern people, a society, culture, or civilization that is flourishing (or not?) right now in 2014. As we move forward into the second part of our first unit, we will continue to consider the central question of *“WHO ARE WE”* at a more personal level: thinking, reading, and writing about the connections we have with the natural world around us, how we affect and are affected by our environment, and how in many ways the very essence of who we are is defined by our cultural and physical *sense of place*. We all have deep relationships with the world around us, whether we consciously think about them or not, and we *need* these connections… both to remember who we are, and, perhaps more importantly, to compel ourselves to love and care for the places where we have taken root.

**Part 2: Sense of Place**

    

“If you don’t know where you are, you don’t know who you are.”

-Wendell Berry, American environmentalist

*“*More than half of all humans now live in cities. The natural habitat of our species, then, officially, is steel, pavement, streetlights, architecture, and enterprise.”

-Barbara Kingsolver, “Knowing Our Place”

“Along with the other animals, the stones, the trees, and the clouds, we ourselves are characters within a huge story that is visibly unfolding all around us, participants within the vast imagination, or Dreaming, of the world.”

-David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World*

**Essential Questions**:

* What does it mean to have a *sense of place*?
* What does it mean to be *present*?
* How has the natural environment shaped who you are?
* What jeopardizes our connections to the natural world?
* What impact do you have on the world around you?

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| **Knowledge:** at the end of the unit, all students should know… | **Understanding:** at the end of the unit, all students should understand… | **Do**: at the end of the unit, all students should be able to… |
| * Effective narrative utilizes descriptive language and figurative language. * Ways of using figurative language: * Similes, metaphors, and personification. * Ways of using descriptive details, vivid adjectives, and active verbs. * Theme: * What it is and why it’s important. * Ways that theme can be conveyed in a narrative essay. * Unit Vocabulary. * Grammar Work: * Simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences. | **Part 1: Civilization**   * Human beings are intrinsically connected to the natural world- our environment shapes who we are. * This connection is vital but also vulnerable; if we hope to protect the natural world we need to *feel* ourselves as part of it. * Descriptive language/figurative language paints a picture for a reader, showing, not just telling. * Theme guides writing and can be delivered in a variety of ways, both explicitly and implicitly. | **Communication:**  Engage in discussion using connections, observations, and questions.  Use an art form to express an idea.  Present with physical expression and voice in public speaking.  **Reading:**  Understand the main and supporting ideas of the text and provide a summary.  Identify theme in a text and analyze its development.  **Writing:**  Establish and maintain a consistent theme in narrative writing.  Use descriptive techniques to show ideas.  Use complete sentences and correct punctuation in my own writing. |

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| *Communication:*  *Discussion* | I am learning how to contribute to discussions in an on-topic way by working on adding my voice to smaller and familiar settings where I feel comfortable. | I can contribute to discussions in an on-topic way by adding my voice using connections, observations, and questions. | **I can contribute to discussions by adding my voice using connections, observations, and questions. My contributions reflect my active listening and push the conversation further.** | I can act as a leader in discussions by not only adding my own voice, but using my physical and verbal language to invite others to make connections, observations, and ask questions. |
| *Communication:*  *Expression Through an Art Form* | I can create or present an artistic work. I am working on using this form of expression to communicate. | I can use basic technical and creative skills to express ideas or information. | **I can effectively use technical and creative skills to clearly express ideas or information.** | I can effectively use technical and creative skills to clearly express information in a thorough, vivid, aesthetic, and original way. |
| *Communication:*  *Physical Expression* | I am working on improving my physical expression and controlling my nervous habits to better engage my audience. | I extensively read from my notes. I mostly control my nervous habits. I show some interest in my topic. | **I may read from my notes but I make frequent eye contact. I control my nervous (playing with hair clothes, etc.). I show interest in my topic.** | I rarely refer to my notes so that I am able to make extensive eye contact. I stand before the audience with poise. I thoroughly engage audience by showing passion and energy for my topic. |
| *Communication:*  *Voice* | I am working on speaking in front of people so I can be heard and using a smooth and varied tone to communicate. | I sometimes control distracting vocal mannerisms and speak with appropriate volume, rate, and varied tone, but I need to do these things more consistently to engage audience in my topic. | **I control distracting vocal mannerisms and speak with appropriate volume and rate. I vary my tone to communicate meaning and engage audience in my topic.** | I speak clearly and confidently with appropriate volume and rate. I vary my tone to emphasize my ideas and fully engage audience in my topic. |
| *Comprehension:*  *Reading for Main Ideas* | I can identify the topic of a text and am working on understanding the main points. | I mostly understand the main (explicit) ideas of a text and can provide a basic summary or overview of some important points, though I may be too broad or too specific. | **I understand main (explicit) ideas of a text and can provide an objective, accurate summary or overview of the most important points.** | I understand the main (explicit) and can draw inferences from a text. I can provide an objective, accurate summary or overview of the most important points in my own words. |
| *Critical Thinking:*  *Analysis and Interpretation of Text* | When given the parts of a text (theme, character, plot, language, etc.) I can find examples that relate to these parts. | I can interpret text by identifying its parts. I find examples of different aspects of a text (theme, character, plot, language, etc.). I am starting to see that these aspects relate to each other. | **I can interpret text by making meaning of its parts. I make connections between different aspects of a text (theme, character, plot, language etc.), finding specific examples as they develop and analyzing how they relate to each other.** | I interpret text by making complex connections between different aspects of a text and can think deeply about how the ways in which they are related affect the text as a whole. I can do this with original thinking that goes beyond what is discussed in class. |
| *Purpose:*  *Conveying Theme* | I am working on establishing a central idea in my writing. | I can establish a central idea in my writing. I am working keeping all parts of my writing consistent to support this big idea. | **I can establish and maintain a consistent central idea in my writing. This big idea is supported and developed through all parts of my writing.** | I can establish and build upon a central idea in my writing. I can develop this big idea in a way that provokes my reader to make connections and inspires further thinking. |
| *Writing:*  *Description* | I can recognize and label similes, metaphors, and personification.  I am working on using descriptive language and sensory detail to move from telling my audience about my topic to showing. | I can use similes, metaphors, and/or personification and/or  other descriptive language and sensory details to show some of my topic to my audience. | **I can craft similes, metaphors, and personification that support my purpose and are not cliché. I use descriptive language and sensory details to show my audience my topic.** | I can craft similes, metaphors, and personification that enhance my writing’s purpose and are fresh and original. I use descriptive language and sensory details to bring my topic to life for my audience. |
| *Writing:*  *G.U.M.* | I can identify independent and dependent clauses and different types of sentences with some accuracy. I am working on applying this to writing complete sentences. | I can identify independent and dependent clauses and different types of sentences with solid accuracy. Most of my sentences are complete and use correct punctuation. | **I can use complete sentences and correct punctuation consistently in my own writing.** | I can vary sentence type and punctuation in my own writing to help communicate my purpose and establish my intended style and flow of writing. |

**Part Two: Sense of Place Summative Assessments**

*Narrative Essay:* students will write a descriptive narrative essay expressing their connections to the natural world.

* Focus on conveying a distinct theme.
* Focus on using descriptive language and details.
* Use paragraphs.
* Length guideline: 2 pages, approximately

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*Creative Expression:* students will express a connection to the natural world through a creative form of their choice. (Options include original artwork, photography, sculpture, dance, music, poetry, creative writing, dramatic monologue, and other options). Presentation required.

* Students will share their creative expression with the class and will explain the theme of the work.
* Plans for creative work will be checked by Molly in advance.

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