ABOUT LOUISIANA’S ELA GUIDEBOOKS

ELA Guidebooks is an English language arts curriculum for core instruction. Made by teachers for teachers, the Guidebook units ensure all students can read, understand, and express their understanding of complex, grade-level texts, ensuring their readiness for college or a career.

In the ELA Guidebooks, students:

● explore central questions that connect units in a yearlong pathway;
● examine texts by multiple authors about substantive topics;
● engage in varied opportunities to read, discuss, write, and present; and
● experience integrated instruction and assessment leading to a comprehensive ELA experience.

THE STPPS HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH EXPERIENCE

The highly acclaimed texts we explore through our high school English curriculum provide opportunities for students to analyze traditional literature and modern classics in order to examine significant questions.

At the high school level, texts of appropriate complexity for college and career readiness inevitably cover topics that are more sophisticated. As one of the aims of education is to help students be ready for life beyond high school, it is essential for students to engage with texts representing authentic issues within society.

Additionally, it is important for students to receive an age-appropriate educational experience. Every text is vetted by teachers, district staff, and community members and all high school English teachers receive training and resources connected to the implementation of curriculum. Teachers are prepared with the tools they need to ensure students are both engaged in complex thinking and experiencing age-appropriate content.

Finally, we would like to provide all parents and guardians the opportunity to ask questions about our high school English curriculum, teacher training, or instructional process. If a question arises, please visit the school website to access the digital version of this document (STPPS High School English – Parent Guidance) and click on the following link to access our continuous parent survey: https://forms.gle/psFc4kwtapLkrF85A. Upon completion, a member of the district will reach out to you to address your questions.

To get more information about each individual literature unit, access the full Parent Guidance document on the school’s website.

We look forward to engaging in valuable learning experiences with your child in the year ahead!
A Lesson Before Dying

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines and a series of related literary and informational texts to explore the following question: What makes us human? Students will express their understanding through a literary analysis.

The main text they will read in this unit is *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines which tells the story of Jefferson, a young black man unjustly executed for murder. Throughout this unit, students will analyze the changes in the characters' views on being human. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write an essay in which they determine multiple lessons that Grant and Jefferson learn about what it means to be human.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:
- "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" by Saul Mcleod
- "Strange Fruit" by Billie Holiday
- "Jim Crow Laws" by History.com Editors
- "NEA Big Read: Meet Ernest Gaines" by NEA
- *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines
- "Sympathy" from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- "Caged Bird" from *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?* by Maya Angelou
- Paragraphs one and two from the prologue to *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- "I Am a Rock" from *Sound of Silence* by Paul Simon
- "No Man is an Island" from *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* by John Donne
- "Why Your Worst Deeds Don't Define You" by Shaka Senghor
- "If We Must Die" from *The Vintage Book of African American Poetry* by Claude McKay
- "Invictus" from *Book of Verses* by William Ernest Henley

Who is our author?

Ernest Gaines is an African American author from Louisiana. He lived in Louisiana until 1948 when he moved away for a better education. He has written many books and short stories, many of which focus on the lives of African Americans in Louisiana. Ernest J. Gaines brings to this novel the same rich sense of place, the same deep understanding of the human psyche, and the same compassion for people and their struggle that have informed his previous, highly praised works of fiction.

Content Guidance

The novel contains some instances of sensitive content, including the use of ethnically offensive terminology, mature language, and some brief sexuality. The inclusion of these elements are strictly for characterization and an authentic depiction of the realities of the text's setting. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the book or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.

For further background information on this text, please click [here](#).
The Joy Luck Club

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan and a series of related literary and informational texts to explore the following question: How does a greater understanding of a person’s life experiences change our perception of them? Students will express their understanding through a narrative essay.

The main text they will read in this unit is The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan, which explores all the dangers that could come upon a child and a mother’s desire to protect her children against dangers they face. Throughout this unit, students will analyze the varying perspectives of the main characters. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a narrative essay that explores how characters’ perceptions of each other in the The Joy Luck Club influence their growth.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:

- The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
- “I Stand Here Ironing” by Tillie Olson
- “I Ask My Mother to Sing” by Li-Young Lee
- “Like Mother, Like Daughter – The Science Says So, Too” by Jordana Cepelewicz
- “The Chinese Mother,” “On Generational Decline,” and “The Chuas” from Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother by Amy Chua
- “What ‘White Food’ Meant to a First Generation Kid” by Lisa Ko
- Selected images from Fan Ho by Fan Ho
- “Evoking and Measuring Identification with Narrative Characters - A Linguistic Cues Framework” by van Krieken, Kobie et al
- "Chinese Superstitions" by Viking River Cruises

Who is our author?

Amy Tan is a Chinese American writer and novelist. In 1985, she wrote the story "Rules of the Game," which was the foundation for her first novel The Joy Luck Club. The book explored the relationship between Chinese women and their Chinese-American daughters. It received the Los Angeles Times Book Award and was translated into 25 languages.

Content Guidance

The novel contains a few instances of sensitive content, including the topics of suicide, unwanted pregnancy, and some brief sexuality. These elements are not condoned or glamorized by the text and are strictly included for characterization and an authentic depiction of the realities of the text’s setting. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the book or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.

For further background information on this text, please click here.
Romeo and Juliet

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare and a series of related literary and informational texts about choices and consequences. Romeo and Juliet explores a tragedy of two young lovers whose death reconciles their feuding families. Students will understand and express their understanding of how the motivations, decisions, and actions of complex characters propel the action of a story and how patterns and contrasts in language develop various motifs that reveal central ideas. Students will also apply their understanding of the teenage brain to Romeo and Juliet.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read or view the following texts:

- Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
- Romeo + Juliet by Baz Luhrmann
- Romeo and Juliet by Franco Zeffirelli
- “Teenage Brains are Malleable and Vulnerable, Researchers Say” by Jon Hamilton
- “Understanding the Mysterious Teenage Brain” by NPR
- “A Poison Tree” by William Blake
- “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe
- “The Teenage Brain: Still Under Construction” by the National Institute of Mental Health
- Where’s Romeo (Act III, Scene iii) by William Hatherell
- The Reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets over the Dead Bodies of Romeo and Juliet by Frederic Lord Leighton
- “Understanding the Mysterious Teenage Brain” by NPR
- “Beautiful Brains” Photo Gallery from “Teenage Brains” by David Dobbs

Who is our author?

William Shakespeare was an English poet and playwright who is considered one of the greatest writers to ever use the English language. He is also the most famous playwright in the world, with his plays being translated in over 50 languages and performed across the globe for audiences of all ages.

Content Guidance

The play contains a few instances of sensitive content, including the topics of suicide, homicide, and some brief sexuality. These elements are included to build characterization and setting. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the play or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.
Life of Pi

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and a series of related literary, informational, and primary sources to explore the following question: How do our stories reveal our realities? Students will express their understanding through a narrative essay.

The main text they will read in this unit is *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, which tells the story of a young man who survives a harrowing shipwreck and months in a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Throughout this unit, students will examine narrative techniques and their effects. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a narrative essay retelling a key episode from *Life of Pi* from another point of view.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:

- *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel
- "Is Your Reality Real?: The Dual Existence of Hobbes in ‘Calvin and Hobbes’" by Kira Lyle
- "Who Can You Trust? Unreliable Narrators" by Annie Matthews and Andrew Matthews
- "What Animals Need" from *Animals Make Us Human* by Temple Grandin
- “Zoos" from *Animals Make Us Human* by Temple Grandin
- Excerpt from "Tiger for Malgudi” by R. K. Narayan
- Religion by History.com
- “The Open Boat” by Stephen Crane
- The Five Major World Religions TED-Ed Video by John Bellaimey
- "Life of Pi (alternate ending)" [Tweet] by Bill Watterson

Who is our author?

Yann Martel is the author of *Life of Pi*, the #1 international bestseller and winner of the 2002 Man Booker (among many other prizes). Born in Spain in 1963, Martel studied philosophy at Trent University, worked at odd jobs—tree planter, dishwasher, security guard—and traveled widely before turning to writing.

Content Guidance

The novel’s content contains some moments of violence, homicide, and discussion about various religions. These elements are strictly included for characterization and an authentic depiction of the text’s setting. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the text or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.

For further background information on this text, please click here.
Hamilton

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read and listened to Hamilton: An American Musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda and a series of related literary, informational, and primary sources to explore the following question: How does Lin-Manuel Miranda tell Hamilton’s story? Students will express their understanding through a literary analysis.

The main text they will read in this unit is Hamilton: An American Musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda, which tells the story of American Founding Father Alexander Hamilton. Throughout this unit, students will examine ways in which Lin-Manuel made decisions about information to emphasize, de-prioritize, or leave out when depicting Hamilton through primary and secondary sources. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a literary analysis to answer the questions: How does Miranda both accurately and inaccurately portray history within the musical Hamilton? How do these choices in portrayal impact the reader or listener’s understanding of either the character, time period, or musical?

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:

- "Lin-Manuel Miranda Performs at the White House Poetry Jam" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- 70th Annual Tony Awards 'Hamilton' by 70th Annual Tony Awards
- "The Battle Over the Creation of a National Bank" by Middlemarch Films, Inc.
- "Fightin’ Words, or "Who are you calling a puppy?" by Joanne Freeman
- "Alexander Hamilton" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Aaron Burr, Sir" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "My Shot" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "The Schuyler Sisters" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Right Hand Man" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "A Winter's Ball" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Helpless" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Satisfied" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Wait For It" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Stay Alive" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Ten Duel Commandments" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Guns & Ships" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Nonstop" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Cabinet Battle #1" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "The Room Where It Happens" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "One Last Time" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "The Election of 1800" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "Your Obedient Servant" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- "The World Was Wide Enough" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- From Alexander Hamilton to The Royal Danish American Gazette, 6 September 1772 by Alexander Hamilton
- From Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, [14 March 1779] by Alexander Hamilton
- From Abigail Adams to John Adams, 31 March 1776 by Abigail Adams
- John Adams to Abigail Adams, 14 April 1776 by John Adams
- Excerpts from Alexander Hamilton by Ron Chernow
• “Washington’s Runaway Slave” from The Granite Freeman, Concord, New Hampshire (May 22, 1845) by Thomas H. Archibald
• To Alexander Hamilton from Harrison Gray Otis, 17 December 1800 by Harrison Gray Otis
• From Alexander Hamilton to Harrison Gray Otis, [23 December 1800] by Alexander Hamilton
• "Why Hamilton Has Heat" by Erik Piepenburg
• "Hamilton's America | Hamilton and the Election of 1800" by Great Performances

Who is our author?
A Pulitzer Prize, Grammy, Emmy, Tony Award-winning composer, lyricist, and actor, Lin-Manuel is the creator and original star of Broadway’s Hamilton and In the Heights, and the recipient of the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award and 2018 Kennedy Center Honors. Miranda is heavily influenced by his cultural upbringing and often draws inspiration from his Latino childhood home for his projects.

Content Guidance
The play’s content contains some moments of violence and mature language. These elements are strictly included for characterization and an authentic depiction of the play’s true events. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain language or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate the realities of historical events with students.

For further background information on this text, please click here.
About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read the tragic play *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, as well as read literary and informational texts about ambition and failure. Students understand that conflicts serve as the basis of a text’s meaning and that identifying the internal and external conflicts of a story reveals the motivations of complex characters. They express their understanding of how characters advance a plot and develop a theme and how literature reflects real-life situations in which conflicting motivations propel humans to act in different ways.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read or view the following texts:

- *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare
- *Great Performances: Macbeth* by Rupert Goold
- “Reading Shakespeare’s Language” by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine
- “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus” by William Carlos Williams
- “Murderer, King, and Scot, All Rolled Into One Madman: Alan Cumming in ‘Macbeth’ at Lincoln Center Festival” by Charles Isherwood
- “Musee des Beaux Arts” by Jonathan Fuseli
- *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* by Pieter Bruegel
- “The Story of Daedalus and Icarus” by Ovid
- Excerpts from *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles
- “Ozymandias” by Percy Shelley
- Poetics by Aristotle
- *TEDTalk: Are We Really in Control of Our Own Decisions?* by Dan Ariely

Who is our author?

William Shakespeare was an English poet and playwright who is considered one of the greatest writers to ever use the English language. He is also the most famous playwright in the world, with his plays being translated in over 50 languages and performed across the globe for audiences of all ages.

Content Guidance

The play contains various instances of sensitive content, including violent imagery, homicide, and brief sexuality. These elements are included to build characterization and plot. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the text or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.
The Great Gatsby

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and a series of related literary and informational texts to explore the following question: How are our lives influenced by our perceptions? Students will express their understanding through a literary analysis.

The main text they will read in this unit is *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, which explores how perception can shape a person’s reality. Throughout this unit, students will analyze the ideas of perception and ambition to better understand how Fitzgerald uses these characteristics to develop themes within the novel. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write an essay that analyzes how Fitzgerald develops a theme about perception throughout the novel.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- "What Reality are You Creating for Yourself?" by Isaac Lidsky
- "The 1920s - An Overview" by Mintz, S., & McNeil, S.
- “Lost Generation”
- Blank Map of New York City
- excerpt from *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World* by Scott Russell Sanders
- "The Golden Touch" (pages 53-76) from *A Wonder-book for Girls and Boys* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- “Causes Of The Restless Spirit Of Americans In The Midst Of Their Prosperity” from *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville

Who is our author?

F. Scott Fitzgerald was an American novelist, essayist, screenwriter, and short-story writer. He was best known for his novels depicting the flamboyance and excess of the Jazz Age—a term which he popularized. During his lifetime, he published four novels, four collections of short stories, and 164 short stories. Although he temporarily achieved popular success and fortune in the 1920s, Fitzgerald only received wide critical and popular acclaim after his death. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century.

Content Guidance

The novel contains some sensitive content, including violence, homicide, implied sexuality, and a brief instance of ethnically offensive language. The inclusion of these elements are strictly for characterization and an authentic depiction of the realities of the text’s setting. Teachers have received training and planning resources that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.
**The Warmth of Other Suns**

**About this Unit**

By the end of this unit, your student will have read *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson and a series of related literary and informational texts about the Great Migration to explore the following question: How can a single decision change your life? Students will express their understanding through a multimedia presentation.

The main text they will read in this unit is *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson, a historical study of the Great Migration: the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities, in search of a better life. Throughout this unit, students will analyze the impact of the decision to migrate on an assigned migrant based on the time period in which he/she lived. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to create a multimedia presentation that examines the story of one person’s migration experience and describe the economic, societal, and/or political conditions that precipitated it.

**Unit Texts**

In this unit, students will read the following texts:
- *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson
- Map “The Great Migration, 1916-1930” by Michael Siegel
- “The Great Migration and the Power of a Single Decision” by Isabel Wilkerson
- ”Definition of Migration” in *Theory of Migration* by Everett S. Lee
- ”The Lynching” by Claude McKay
- ”One-Way Ticket” by Langston Hughes
- ”The South” by Langston Hughes
- ”Where We Are Lacking” and ”Some Don’ts” by Chicago Defender
- minutes 0:00-13:11 from *Slavery by Another Name* by PBS
- ”Sharecropping” and ”Jim Crow and Plessy v Ferguson” from PBS
- ”Penalties of Migration” by The Atlanta Constitution
- ”The Great Migration Series” by Kelly Simpson
- *The Great Migration: An American Story* by Jacob Lawrence and Museum of Modern Art

**Who is our author?**

Pulitzer Prize winner and National Humanities Medal recipient Isabel Wilkerson is the author of National Book Critics Circle Award winner *The Warmth of Other Suns*. A gifted storyteller, Wilkerson captivates audiences with the universal human story of migration and reinvention, as well as the enduring search for the American dream.

**Content Guidance**

The text contains some instances of sensitive content, including the use of ethnically offensive terminology, violence, and some brief sexuality. The inclusion of these elements are strictly to provide an accurate depiction of the texts’ settings and events. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the book or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.

For further background information on this text, please click [here](#).
Hamlet

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare and a series of related literary and informational texts to explore the following question: How are revenge and madness closely related to one another? Students will express their understanding through a literary analysis.

The main text they will read in this unit is *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare in which the ghost of the King of Denmark tells his son, Hamlet, to avenge his murder by killing the new king, Hamlet’s uncle. Throughout this unit, students will analyze the idea of how conflict influences a character’s thoughts and actions. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a literary analysis where they examine character motivation and behavior.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:

- *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
- *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (audiovox recording) by Audiovox
- Act I and Act II from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by Tom Stoppard
- *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by Clip one, Clip two, and Clip three by Tom Stoppard
- *Hamlet* (1996) - Kenneth Brannagh Act 2 Scene 2 soliloquy; Act 3 soliloquy by Kenneth Brannagh
- *Hamlet* (1990) - Mel Gibson by Franco Zeffirelli
- “Entirely” by Louis MacNeice
- "On being just crazy enough" by Joshua Walters
- "Much Madness in its Divinest Sense" by Emily Dickenson
- Excerpts of “On Human Nature” from *The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer* by Arthur Schopenhauer
- Excerpt from "Hamlet and His Problems" by T.S. Eliot
- Excerpt from "The Real or Assumed Madness of Hamlet" by Simon Blackmore
- *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais
- *Ophelia* by Henrietta Rae
- “Introduction to Hamlet” by Amanda Mabillard
- “Why Should You Read Hamlet?” by Iseult Gillespie
- *Beckett, Ionesco, and the Theater of the Absurd: Crash Course Theater #45* by CrashCourse
- Minutes 0-1:30 and 1:50-3:00 of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* trailer by Tom Stoppard

Who is our author?

William Shakespeare was an English poet and playwright who is considered one of the greatest writers to ever use the English language. He is also the most famous playwright in the world, with his plays being translated in over 50 languages and performed across the globe for audiences of all ages.

Content Guidance

The play contains various instances of sensitive content, including violent imagery, homicide, suicide, and some crude humor. These elements are included to build characterization and plot. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the text or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.
1984

About this Unit

By the end of this unit, your student will have read 1984 by George Orwell and a series of related literary and informational texts to explore the following question: How can an individual's view of society be influenced by depictions of dysfunctional societies in classic literature? Students will express their understanding through an informative essay.

The main text they will read in this unit is 1984 by George Orwell, which follows the life of Winston Smith, who is frustrated by the omnipresent eyes of The Party, and its ominous ruler Big Brother. Throughout this unit, students will analyze concepts about dystopian societies and other literary and informational texts. At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write an informative essay that examines the society depicted in George Orwell’s 1984 in comparison to modern day society.

Unit Texts

In this unit, students will read the following texts:

- 1984 by George Orwell
- “The Unknown Citizen” by W.H. Auden
- “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury
- Excerpt from “Why I Write” by George Orwell
- “Government” by Scholastic
- “Are We in Control of Our Own Decisions?” by Daniel Ariely
- “No One Died in Tiananmen Square” by William Lutz
- “The Science Behind Why People Follow the Crowd” by Rob Henderson
- “Privacy and Information Sharing” by Lee Raine and Maeve Duggan
- “What Orwellian Really Means” by Noah Tavlin
- “When China Massacred its Own People” by Nicholas Kristof
- “Memories of Tiananmen Square” by Jiayang Fan
- Pages 174-175, 250-256, 267-269 from Ministry of Truth by Dorian Lynskey

Who is our author?

George Orwell, pseudonym of Eric Arthur Blair, was born in 1903 in India. He was an English novelist, essayist, and critic famous for his novels Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-four, the latter a profound anti-utopian novel that examines the dangers of totalitarian rule.

Content Guidance

The text contains instances of sensitive content, including moments of violence, sexuality, and ethnic stereotypes. These elements are not glorified by the text and are strictly included to develop the plot, setting, and characters. Teachers have received training and planning resources that either indicate omission of certain sensitive parts of the book or that provide context and guidance for how to navigate these issues with students.

For further background information on this text, please click here.