

Unit Guide

Meeting Ourselves in Literature: How Do Choices Create a Character?

Marcy Mehdizadeh

This curriculum unit is designed for a 90-minute block-scheduled middle school English Language Arts classroom and its completion may range from five to fifteen days, depending on the degree of independence of the learners. Through reading, listening, viewing, and Accountable Talk, this unit is designed for at-risk students to first interact with relatable non-fiction and fictitious biographies, so that they make personal connections with these life stories. The use of literacy stations differentiates for extreme variances in skill levels, and allows for the writing process to be both guided and collaborative. The final products are the writing and sharing of their own fictitious biographies. The teacher's role is to be that of mentor, and for the learning to be achieved through the intentional action of providing models, feedback, peer support, and practice through the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework of instruction. The ultimate learning outcomes are that the students will view themselves as the main character in their own lives, capable of making sound choices with healthy outcomes, and that they might encounter the change that developing a growth mindset in their lives can create.