

***Literature & Thought* Thematic Literature Program**  
**Aligned to**  
**READING NEXT**

The *Literature & Thought* program from Perfection Learning is designed to teach middle school and high school students to be critical readers and thinkers through a unique questioning strategy.

- Each anthology begins with an essential question and a set of related cluster (unit) questions. Students explore these questions through reading relevant and provocative fiction and nonfiction selections.
- Students are directly taught specific critical thinking skills that they apply in their reading, writing, and speaking. Individual titles focus on four to five higher-level thinking skills, including
  - defining
  - comparing/contrasting
  - analyzing
  - classifying
  - generalizing
  - evaluating
  - synthesizing
- Students react to the cluster questions through writing, group discussions, and independent projects.
- At the end of the reading experience, students write their response to the essential question and support their answer with information from the reading selections, class discussions, and cluster writing prompts.

The following chart explains how the *Literature & Thought* program aligns with the Reading Next Report.

READING NEXT ELEMENTS	LITERATURE & THOUGHT FEATURES
<p>1. <b>Direct, explicit comprehension instruction</b>, which is instruction in the strategies and processes that proficient readers use to understand what they read, including summarizing, keeping track of one's own understanding, and a host of other practices.</p>	<p>Effective readers, according to the National Reading Panel, employ the following strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-questioning</li> <li>-predicting</li> <li>-clarifying</li> <li>-connecting</li> <li>-summarizing</li> <li>-evaluating</li> </ul> <p>The focus of the instructional design of the <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> program is to engage students in all these essential strategies.</p> <p>Before each cluster (unit), students are directly taught specific thinking and reading strategies (see above). This includes defining, modeling, practicing, and applying the critical thinking skill throughout the cluster selections.</p> <p>Students generalize, synthesize, and evaluate as they discuss the intertextual questions at the end of each cluster. Reproducible graphic organizers for each cluster writing prompt enable students to visualize how they will organize their thoughts and respond to the cluster question.</p>
<p>2. <b>Effective instructional principles embedded in content</b>, including language arts teachers using content-area texts and content-area teachers providing instruction and practice in reading and writing skills specific to their subject area.</p>	<p>The <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> program is divided into three strands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-literary genres</li> <li>-literary Themes</li> <li>-historical eras</li> </ul> <p>The historical eras titles can easily be integrated into an interdisciplinary curriculum or used in an American history class to enhance historical events. The historical events include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The Civil War</li> <li>-American Frontier Development</li> <li>-The American Depression</li> <li>-Immigration</li> <li>-Civil Rights</li> <li>-The Harlem Renaissance</li> <li>-The Holocaust</li> <li>-The Vietnam War</li> </ul>

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<p>3. <b>Motivation and self-directed learning</b>, which includes building motivation to read and learn and providing students with the instruction and supports needed for independent learning tasks they will face after graduation.</p>	<p>Adults need to be able to analyze problems and situations, reach practical conclusions, make decisions based on sound reasoning, raise questions, and especially be aware of their own thinking processes. <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> targets these important skills through the unique instructional design and the highly relevant and intriguing selections.</p> <p>The last cluster in each student book requires students to synthesize what they have learned and design their own question to help them respond to the overall essential question.</p>
<p>4. <b>Text-based collaborative learning</b>, which involves students interacting with one another around a variety of texts.</p>	<p>The <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> teacher resources suggest three options for incorporating the texts into the curriculum.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching the entire text with all students reading each selection and discussing their reactions in small or large groups.</li> <li>2. Teaching part of the text in a shorter time frame by assigning students to read essential selections and share their findings.</li> <li>3. Incorporating the text into a novel study. Literature titles are suggested on a variety of reading levels so students can read a book that is accessible to them and share their findings with students who have read other titles.</li> </ol>
<p>5. <b>Strategic tutoring</b>, which provides students with intense individualized reading, writing, and content instruction as needed.</p>	<p>There are no questions that follow the selections in the <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> student books. This design allows students to relate the selections to the cluster question as they read. When it is necessary to monitor progress and provide individual instruction, the teacher guides provide teaching pages for each selection in the student text. These pages focus on reading and literary skills.</p> <p>To further individualize, suggestions for research, writing, and discussion topics offer a variety of ways for students to express their responses to the essential question and explore related topics in more detail. In addition, the multi-modal Assessment and Project Ideas include extended research opportunities, speaking and listening activities, creative writing choices, and artistic expression suggestions.</p>

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6. <b>Diverse texts</b> , which are texts at a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics.	See Element 4 above, text-based collaborative reading.
7. <b>Intensive writing</b> , including instruction connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will have to perform well in high school and beyond.	<p>Each cluster ends with a writing prompt that asks students to respond to the cluster question as they apply the targeted thinking skill. This focused, purposeful writing is essential for success in high school and beyond.</p> <p>The essay question for every student text requires students to respond to the essential question. Students synthesize all they have learned from the selections, their writing, and classroom discussions into a cohesive essay. (Rubrics are provided for planning and evaluation). According to Bloom's Taxonomy, this is one of the highest levels of thinking.</p>
8. <b>A technology component</b> , which includes technology as a tool for and a topic of literacy instruction.	<p>The research, creative writing, and artistic expression suggestions all can be explored through electronic tools such as the internet.</p> <p>For instructors, the teacher guides are available on CD-ROMS.</p>
9. <b>Ongoing formative assessment of students</b> , which is an informal, often daily assessment of how students are progressing under current instructional practices.	<p>There are several informal assessment options in the <i>Literature &amp; Thought</i> program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-cluster discussion questions</li> <li>-vocabulary quizzes</li> <li>-cluster writing prompts with rubrics</li> <li>-teaching pages for each selection</li> </ul>