

Home Connection

Grade 9 Unit 4: Star-Crossed Romances

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will learn about tragic romances, considering the concepts of fate and personal choices. Students will read a variety of texts and view media as they discuss the Essential Question for the unit.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

As a class, in small groups, and independently, students will work to answer the question *Do we determine our own destinies?* Give your student the opportunity to continue the discussion at home.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- What are some of the ways you could answer the question *Do we determine our own destinies?*
- How did Romeo and Juliet's actions bring about their dire fates? Should we always listen to others when making important choices?
- Why do you think stories of ill-fated romances are so popular in the media and in books and film?
- What is the most interesting aspect of the idea of star-crossed romances that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will need to answer the question *Should the opinions of others affect our own choices or destinies?* He or she will write an argument in the form of a piece of literary criticism and may prepare a multimedia presentation, drawing on knowledge gained from the selections in this unit, as well as from the Performance Tasks he or she completed.

STANDARDS

Activities and assignments in Unit 4 will help your student meet the following standards for reading literature and informational texts, writing, and speaking and listening. Here are some key standards students will work toward mastering in this unit.

Reading

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work.

Writing

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature.

Speaking and Listening

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Thank you for your continuing support!