

Home Connection

Grade 9 Unit 2: Survival

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will investigate what it takes to survive, considering the physical and emotional costs of survival. 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 *What does it take to survive?* 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 *What does it take to survive?*
- Is luck most important in all survival situations? In which situations might it be more important to be smart or strong?
- Why do you think survivor stories are so popular in the media and in books and film?
- What is the most interesting aspect of survival that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will take a position on the question *Should people in life-or-death situations be held accountable for their actions?* He or she will write an argumentative essay and may prepare an oral presentation supporting that position, drawing on knowledge gained from the selections in this unit, as well as from the Performance Tasks he or she completed.

STANDARDS

Here are some key standards students will work toward mastering in this unit:

Reading

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
- 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.
- Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

Writing

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Speaking and Listening

- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence

Thank you for your continuing support!