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| **Grade 3**  **Unit Overview**  ***Social Issues Book Clubs*** | |
| **Focus Teaching Points** | *Thinking, talking, and writing about our reading:*   * Reading for social issues in familiar books * Considering other people’s lenses while reading * Using our own writing to uncover social issues important to us * Considering lessons learned about an issue from a book * Reading nonfiction texts about an issue presented in a fiction text * Learning about issues in the world and our lives by studying the characters in a book closely * Learning about social issues in our books by paying attention to crucial scenes * Noticing multiple issues in a book * Considering what the author is trying to teach us about the issues in a book * Comparing our own thoughts and perspectives against the author’s perspective on an issue * Reading nonfiction with issues in mind * Reading multiple nonfiction sources about a particular issue to develop a deeper understanding * Noticing the issues we are thinking about in the world around us * Writing about our ideas for social change * Sharing our thinking with others about our ideas for social change |
| **Key CCSS Standards** | ***Reading Standards for Literature (RL)***   * *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10*   ***Reading Standards: Foundational Skills (RF)***   * *3, 4*   ***Language Standards (L)***   * *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*   ***Speaking and Listening Standards (SL)***   * *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6* |
| **Bends in the Road** | * Reading can teach us about issues that exist in the world and in our lives * Reading with a lens and talking back to the text * Bringing our lenses to the world |
| **Recommended Professional Resource(s) to Guide Instruction** | * “[Social Issues Book Clubs](http://ppsgrade3.weebly.com/published-curriculum-resources.html)”\* from *A Curricular Plan for the Reading Workshop, Grade 3* (2011) by Lucy Calkins and the TCRWP staff   \*This curricular resource is found at the link to our website. |
| **Recommended Author/Mentor Texts** | * Create a demonstration text set containing a short novel of your choice, familiar books from earlier in the year, picture books, nonfiction articles and even poems that relate to a social issue. Suggestions can be found on the [Mentor Text](http://ppsgrade3.weebly.com/mentor-texts1.html) tab for this unit. |
| **Tips for the Unit** | *“In this unit, children learn a very powerful lesson: that by reading, they can watch characters deal with social issues and through this, they can learn, themselves, how they might deal with such challenging issues (and others).”*   * This unit comes from the Curricular Plan (the electronic resource—“e-doc” used in the past). We suggest you read the first few introductory pages (pages 142-144) to get a sense of the unit as a whole and to review the suggestions for organizing yourself for the unit. Following the introduction, you will find a summary of each part (bend). A sequence of possible teaching points begins on page 151. * The term “social issues” is defined in the unit as issues that affect *many* people, not just one person or character—issues such as poverty, homelessness, joblessness, bullying, racism, and bias against older people. You will find that this unit then provides your readers with another opportunity to **deepen** and **extend** their reading skills, considering now not only the life lessons (themes) that develop across the texts, but also the larger social issues that the characters in their books face. * To prepare for this unit you will need to create small collections of texts for your readers. We suggest you deliberately make all of your collections very small—no more than three books and a handful of short texts or related nonfiction articles—so there’s room for children to add to the collections. If you don’t classify the books your children know best, this becomes something they can do, and they’ll see how books and other texts can show many issues. You will probably want to have one basket (and one issue) for the whole class to study together through the read-aloud and minilessons. You may choose to convene the class around the same issue that a group of struggling readers will also explore, providing support and lots of dignity for those strugglers.   + While you will be starting these collections with a particular issue or theme in mind, **you will not want to label these collections by this designated topic or theme**; rather, you will want your students to discover the ways in which they see these texts as related (which may be different than what you had originally thought!). That is the work of this unit. * Part (Bend) I: At the start, you may choose to focus on characters in stories, including the struggles the characters face, how those struggles may be named as social issues, and how they deal with these struggles. This work helps children move away from sequential retelling, and helps them develop one lens for determining importance in a story. Thus, you could teach your young readers that when we read with a lens, first we read for the story, for what happens, and then we read asking, “What does this story teach us about x?” (with x being homelessness, or bullying, or losing someone, etc.). Children might ask questions such as:   + “Which issues seem important in this story?”   + “What are the characters’ reactions to these issues?”   + “How do the characters deal with these issues?”   + “What perspective does each character have on this issue?”   + “If the perspective is different, what explains the difference?”   Teach your children to get ready to talk to their book clubs by putting Post-its on moments when they see their characters first facing x, then struggling with x, then overcoming or not overcoming x.   * Since your students have experience considering life lessons (themes) in their books, they might now use a strategy of carrying an index card with them through and across books. The card should have a text-specific idea on one side, with a universal theme added later to the reverse side as a means of scaffolding from text-based to wider theme development. You might choose to build off this work by showing kids how they can jot on an index card what the character’s big struggles are and what ideas you’re getting about those struggles. They might then jot on the reverse side more universal notions of issues those struggles make them think of. So, for example, on one side of one student’s card she might have written, “Amber’s parents’ divorce is really bothering her and turning her into a different person.” Once the student has talked and thought a lot about Amber’s life, and the issue of divorce and the struggles surrounding it, that same student might return to her card and on the reverse side write, “Divorce can turn kids’ lives upside down.” * While you begin to work with your students to see social issues that exist in their books, the unit reminds teachers to help readers see that books often contain many ideas and issues, **not just one.** * Conversation and collaboration are at the heart of this unit. Take the time that is needed to help your students continue to develop their skills in sharing ideas, building off of each other’s ideas, disagreeing respectfully, providing evidence to support ideas and growing ideas together. * Part II (Bend II) helps students to refine the lenses through which they read their books. Instead of reading texts on the look-out for evidence of social issues such as “bullying” or “homelessness,” this part introduces readers to consider issues of power, gender, class, values. These ideas will be developed much further in 4th and 5th grade, but it is a good time now to introduce your readers to these deeper ways of understanding their books. * Part III (Bend III) helps readers make connections to the broader world around them, ideas raised in the writing unit “Changing the World.” This is a perfect time of year to return to the teaching of this unit and help your students see how they can make a difference, one person at a time. |
| **Classroom Library** | * For leveled book recommendations grouped by different social issues, see the Social Issues Book Club recommendations from Teachers College Reading and Writing Project also on the [Mentor Text](http://ppsgrade3.weebly.com/mentor-texts1.html) page. * Create bins of books, articles and even poems that support students’ thinking about social issues across texts.   + **Remember, you will not want to label these collections by a designated topic or theme**; rather, you will want your students to discover the way(s) in which these texts are related on their own. * Your classroom library should contain plenty of texts from which students can select titles for independent reading, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, as well as author, series, and topic collections * Students should continue to have access to a variety of genres, authors, topics, and levels for independent reading |
| **Materials and Resources** | * Read-alouds that inspire rich conversations * Expanded Reader’s Notebooks to include sections allowing for longer writing in response to texts and in preparation for partner conversations:   + *Reading Log*, *Try It!* for exercises from minilessons, *Independent Thinking* for annotations and stop and jots, ***Longer Writing* for longer responses to text**, and *Favorite Lines* for those memorable phrases, lines, and quotes from favorite books   OR   * + *Reading Log, Strategy Entries* for exercises from minilessons, *Independent Entries* for annotations, stop and jots, **longer written responses**, and *Favorite Lines* for those memorable phrases, lines, and quotes from favorite books * Charts related to routines and expectations for Reading Workshop, particularly expectations related to independent reading and partner conversations * Active engagement anchor charts * Thinking and talking strategy bookmarks |
| **Assessment** | * [BAS](http://www.ppsliteracycoachconnect.com/protocol.html) should be conducted at this time for all students. * Reading conference notes * Reader’s Notebooks entries |
| **Celebrations** | You can well imagine how this looking at the world and seeing their issues playing out everywhere will likely move students to want to learn more—to possibly do something about their issue. In addition to inspirational articles and biographies, you might lead students to texts, such as Change the World for Ten Bucks or 101 Ways You Can Save the Planet before You’re 12, to help them see that they have power to effect change in their lives and the lives of others.  If it makes sense for your students and you have a day or two at the end of the unit, you might consider having clubs create **mini-social action projects** as spinoffs to the work they have done together throughout the units. These can be quick e-mails or letters, presentations to the class, poster campaigns, or scripted and videotaped public service announcements. |