

**Magoffin County Schools  
English Language Arts  
Kentucky Core Academic Standards Planning Guide**

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ **Suggested Unit** 5 \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** February 9-March 21, 2011 \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:**  
Science or Fiction?

**Unit: 5**  
 **6 weeks**

**Grade Level:**  
7

**Essential Question: How do authors make science fiction believable?**

**Overview** –Like other genres studied to date, science fiction examines humans’ existence and issues, but often approaches characters and experiences in a futuristic manner. Science fiction involves the imagining of ideas and technologies that haven’t yet been invented; however, many of them may comport with our current understanding of science and technology. In addition to exploring classic and contemporary works of science fiction, students pair fictional stories with informational text about science and astronomy. Student discussions trace the logic of various storylines, focusing on the believability of the stories read in class. This unit ends with the students’ choice of responding to the open-ended reflective question or writing their own science fiction story that answers the question, “What if....?”

**Focus Standards**

<b>Reading - Literature</b>	<b>Reading - Informational</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Speaking &amp; Listening</b>	<b>Language</b>
<b>RL.7.1:</b> Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<b>RI.7.8:</b> Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	<b>W.7.2:</b> Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	<b>SL.7.5:</b> Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. <b>SL 7.6:</b> Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)	<b>L.7.1:</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

**Student Objectives :** Knowledge/Understanding

Reasoning

Performance Skill

Product

### ***I CAN...***

1. **Read** and **discuss** science fiction stories and nonfiction science texts about space, robots, and planets.
2. **Compare** and **contrast** the settings, characters, and unusual circumstances among science fiction stories, and discuss the unique nature of this genre.
3. **Analyze** how a science fiction story evolves over the course of a text, and discuss how this is similar to and different from other novels read.
4. **Write** a variety of responses to literature and informational text.
5. **Conduct** research on an astronaut or science fiction author of choice and present findings to the class in a multimedia format.
6. **Write** a science fiction story.
7. **Participate** in group discussions.

### **Resources**

**(E)** indicates a CCSS exemplar text; **(EA)** indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

#### **Literary Texts**

##### **Stories**

##### ***"Classic" Science Fiction***

- ***A Wrinkle in Time* (Madeleine L'Engle) (E)**
- ***Dune* (Frank Herbert)**
- ***The War of the Worlds* (H.G. Wells)**
- ***The Invisible Man* (H.G. Wells)**
- ***I, Robot* (Isaac Asimov)**
- ***Journey to the Center of the Earth* (Enriched Classics) (Jules Verne)**

##### ***"Modern" Science Fiction***

- ***The Ear, the Eye and the Arm* (Nancy Farmer)**
- ***My Favorite Science Fiction Story* (Martin H. Greenberg)**
- ***Eva* (Peter Dickinson)**
- ***The House of the Scorpion* (Nancy Farmer)**
- ***Fly by Night* (Frances Hardinge)**
- ***George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt* (Lucy and Stephen Hawking)**

##### ***Easier to Read (but excellent)***

- ***Among the Hidden* (Shadow Children series, #1) (Margaret Peterson Haddix)**
- ***George's Secret Key to the Universe* (Lucy and Stephen Hawking)**

##### ***Challenging to Read***

- *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (Douglas Adams)
- *Ender's Game* (Orson Scott Card)
- *The Collected Stories of Arthur C. Clarke* (Arthur C. Clarke)

#### Audiobooks

- *A Wrinkle in Time* (Madeleine L'Engle)

#### Informational Texts

##### Informational Text

##### General

- "Elementary Particles" from the *New Book of Popular Science* (E)
- "Space Probe" from *Astronomy & Space: From the Big Bang to the Big Crunch* (Phillis Engelbert) (E)
- *Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream* (Tanya Lee Stone)

##### Robots (Related to I, Robot)

- *Robo World: The Story of Robot Designer Cynthia Breazeal* (Women's Adventures in Science series) (Jordan D. Brown)

##### Planets/Stars

- *Beyond Jupiter: The Story of Planetary Astronomer Heidi Hammel* (Women's Adventures in Science series) (Fred Bortz)
- *Summer Stargazing: A Practical Guide for Recreational Astronomers* (Terence Dickinson)
- *Stephen Hawking: Cosmologist Who Gets a Big Bang Out of the Universe* (Mike Venezia)
- *Stars & Planets* (Carole Stott)
- *The Physics of Star Trek* (Lawrence M. Krauss) (advanced)

#### Art, Music, and Media

##### Music

- Gustav Holst, *The Planets* (1914-16)

##### Media

- [\*War of the Worlds\*](#) (The Mercury Theater on Air, October 30, 1938) (This is Orson Welles's radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds*)

#### [Finding the Science Behind Science Fiction through Paired Readings](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.9)

Science fiction has the potential to spark lively discussions while inviting students to extrapolate from their own working knowledge of scientific principles. This genre offers a human lens to what can otherwise be a complex science concept. In this lesson, students will be able to explore the genre of science fiction, while learning more about the science integrated into the plot of the story using nonfiction texts and resources.

#### [Science-fiction author Ray Bradbury was born in 1920](#) (ReadWriteThink) (W.7.7)

Have your students do a Bradbury author study, and then create flyers to advertise their favorite story.

#### Text Messages, Recommendations for Adolescent Readers Podcast: Episode 2—[Teen Time Travel](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.7.9)

Readers with an interest in science fiction—or those who are simply curious about what the future may hold—will surely find something they like in this episode. Each book presents a different vision of what life in the future may be like, both for better and for worse.

#### [Star Wars creator George Lucas was born in 1944](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.7.6)

As he was writing the script for the original *Star Wars* films in the 1970s, George Lucas spent a great deal of time reading and interviewing mythologist Joseph Campbell, whose ideas included a concept called "The Hero's Journey," the archetypal hero story that is found in cultures around the world.

### **Activities- Graphic Organizer**

As you read one of the science fiction novels, take notes about the elements of the story that would classify it as science fiction. Be sure to note page numbers with relevant information so you can go back and cite the text during class discussion.

- What is the setting of the novel?
- Who are the character(s) you are studying?
- What is familiar or believable about these characters?
- What is unusual about the characters' circumstances?
- What is the primary theme of the novel (i.e., good vs. evil)?

Your teacher may give you the opportunity to share your notes with a partner who read the same text, prior to class discussion. (RL.7.1, RL.7.2, RL.7.3)

### **Literature Response**

While reading *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle, take notes in your journal about role of the space/time continuum as an integral part of the novel. How does this continuum contribute to the fantastic nature of the book? Defend your answer, citing specific information from the text. (RL.7.1, RL.7.4)

### **Literature Response**

While reading *Eva* by Peter Dickinson, take notes in your journal about how the author comments on human beings' impact on the ecology of the earth. Did this book make you think more about this issue? Why or why not? Defend your answer, citing specific information from the text. (RL.7.1, RL.7.2)

### **Media Appreciation**

After listening to the original 1938 radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds*, discuss the following questions:

- Did the radio play hold your attention? Why or why not?
- Which techniques were effective in making the audio "come alive"?
- Were you invested in what happened to any of the characters? Why or why not?
- Does this remind you of any similar stories/broadcasts you have heard? (RL.7.7, SL.7.1a, b, c, d)

Follow up by researching public reaction to the radio broadcast on the night before Halloween, 1938. What effect did the program have on listeners who tuned in late? What would make the broadcast sound believable? Write your ideas in your journal and share ideas with a partner prior to class discussion. (SL.7.3)

### **Music Appreciation**

Each movement of *The Planets* by Gustav Holst is named after a planet of the solar system. All planets, except Earth, are represented. Discuss what makes the music for each planet unique. Take notes of your thoughts in your journal while listening to the music. (SL.7.1a, b, c, d, L.7.1a, b, c)

### **Word Study**

[Continuing activity from the first four units] Choose some words learned this unit and add these to your personal dictionary. (L.7.4a, b, c, d, L.7.5c)

**Assessments** – selected response and short answer; extended written response; performance; personal communication

### **Class Discussion**

Compare and contrast settings and experiences from the various science fiction stories read. How can you begin to generalize about the genre of science fiction from reading your novel? (SL.7.1a, b, c, d, RL.7.1, RL.7.3, L.7.1a, b, c)

### **Class Discussion**

Why doesn't H.G. Wells give a name to his protagonist in *The War of the Worlds*? What is the significance of his anonymity? How does it add to the effectiveness of the story? Write your ideas in your journal and share ideas with a partner prior to class discussion. (SL.7.1a, b, c, d, L.7.1a, b, c)

### **Research Essay**

Write a research essay about an astronaut or science fiction author of choice. Include multimedia components and visual displays. Publish your research on the class webpage, including links to references materials used, and present your report to the class. (W.7.7, W.7.2a, b, c, d, e, f, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.6, W.7.8, SL.7.5, RI.7.1, RI.7.7, RI.7.10, L.7.1a, b, c, L.7.3a, L.7.5c)

### **Class Discussion**

While conducting research on an astronaut or science fiction author of choice, discuss with classmates specific claims made by an author in a text. Is the reasoning "sound" and the evidence

“relevant and sufficient” to support the claims? Why or why not? (RI.7.8, RI.7.5, SL.7.1a, b, c, d, L.7.1a, b, c)

**Reflective Essay (Option 1)**

Write your own science fiction story that answers the question, “What if...?” Work with peers to edit and strengthen your story before presenting it to the class. Publish it in a multimedia format on the class webpage. (SL.7.5, W.7.3a,b,c,d,e, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.6, W.7.8, L.7.1a,b,c, L.7.3a, L.7.5c)

**Reflective Essay (Option 2)**

Write an essay response to the essential question: “How do authors make science fiction believable?” Cite specific details from texts read. After your teacher reviews your first draft, work with a partner to edit and strengthen your writing before presenting it to the class. Publish it in written or multimedia format on the class webpage. (RL.7.2, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.6, W.7.8, W.7.9a, b, L.7.1a, b, c, L.7.3a, L.7.5c)

**Terminology/Vocabulary**

- fantasy vs. science fiction
- common settings for science fiction: in the future, alternate timelines, in outer space

- common themes for science fiction: time travel, alternate histories/societies, body and mind alterations

**Notes:**



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