

# Family Learning Guide: English Language Arts, 6 - 12

Marking Period 2: Nov. 2 - Jan. 29,  
2021



# Welcome to the Family Learning Guide!



*Dear Families,*

*Thank you for reading this Family Learning Guide. We are excited to work with you as partners during these challenging times to ensure that all our students receive an excellent education.*

*As reflected in our district's strategic plan – The District Model of Excellence or DME – we are working hard every day to provide all our students with the resources that they need to thrive.*

*We have developed this resource to support student learning – especially at-home learning – and we are excited to work with you and develop more tools and resources to support your children in their learning.*

*Please reach out with any questions or concerns and suggestions on how to make this guide more useful in the future.*

*Your partners at Hartford Public Schools*



Khary Fletcher – Director of  
Humanities

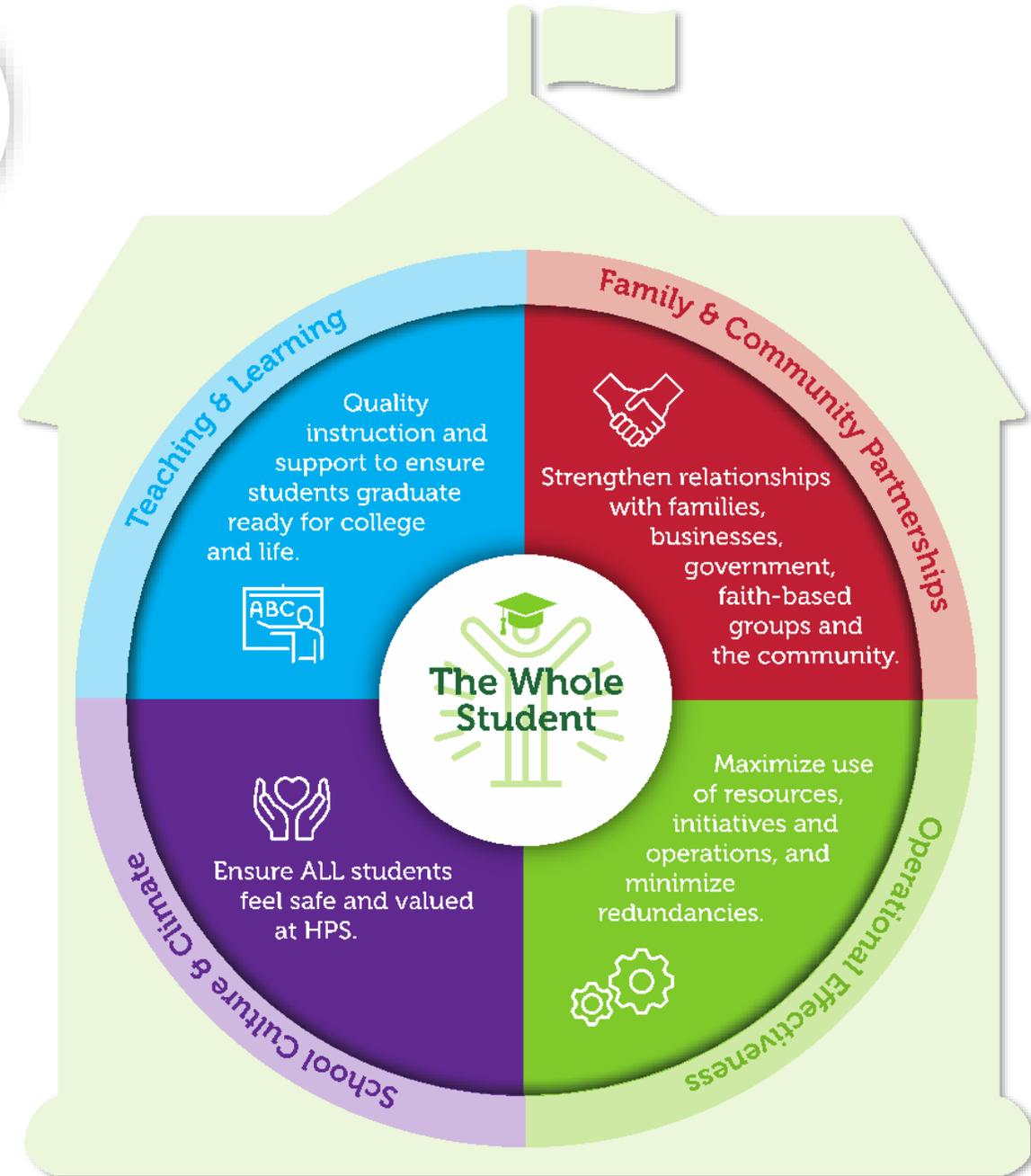
[Khary.Fletcher@hartfordschools.org](mailto:Khary.Fletcher@hartfordschools.org)

We are committed to excellence and equity for all our students.



**The District Model of Excellence is our roadmap for providing every child in Hartford with access to a high-quality public school.**

We are committed to **excellence** and **equity** for all our students. This means that we cannot and will not allow the pandemic to interrupt high quality instruction for our students.



Teaching & Learning

Quality instruction and support to ensure students graduate ready for college and life.



Family & Community Partnerships



Strengthen relationships with families, businesses, government, faith-based groups and the community.

School Culture & Climate



Ensure ALL students feel safe and valued at HPS.

Operational Effectiveness



Maximize use of resources, initiatives and operations, and minimize redundancies.



## Introducing the Family Learning Guide



### WHAT IS A FAMILY LEARNING GUIDE?

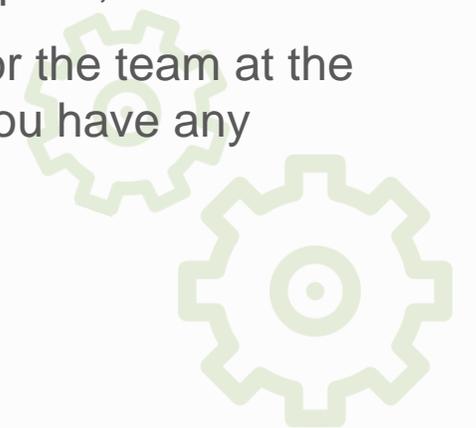
This is a resource developed by the team at Hartford Public Schools to provide you – our families – with an advance look at what your children will be learning in the coming weeks.

Learning requires partnership between families and schools. During the pandemic, this is even more true and we want to be your partner in this challenging time.



### HOW SHOULD YOU USE IT?

1. Review the sample learning objectives so that you can reinforce them at home;
2. Review the resources to support at-home learning so that you can make sure your children have the right supplies;
3. Reach out to your school or the team at the Hartford Public schools if you have any questions!





## English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 12 FAMILY LEARNING GUIDE

**What are the marking period dates for this Family Learning Guide?**

November 2, 2020 - January 29, 2021

**What are the specific units covered in this Family Learning Guide?**

1. English Language Arts, Grade 6
2. English Language Arts, Grade 7
3. English Language Arts, Grade 8
4. English I
5. English II
6. Literature & Composition I
7. Literature & Composition II



# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: English Language Arts: Grade 6



**Unit Topic(s):** : How Do My Actions Help Define Who I Am?

## WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

Central Texts  
Ghost by Jason Reynolds  
OR  
Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

### Enduring Understandings

- Authors develop themes to inspire change and to teach us about the world.
- Themes in stories can influence our positions on social issues by putting ourselves in “character’s shoes”.
- The central idea is created through reoccurring ideas (words, phrases, or images) throughout the story.
- Fiction structure is the order in which the author presents the plot elements to help us make sense of a story.

### Essential Questions

- How do authors develop theme(s) in fiction?
- How does an author develop the central id in fiction?
- How do stories influence our position on social and/or political issues?
- How does text structure help you make sense of a story?

### Writing Goal

- Argumentative Writing

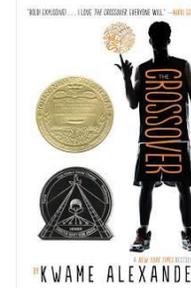
## HOW WILL WE TEACH YOUR CHILDREN?

- We use the Workshop Model for reading and writing instruction
- Students participate in:
  - whole group instruction: with Read Aloud & Think Aloud to model a skill
  - Small group instruction
  - Individual instruction with Conferences to provide students with feedback on their progress
  - Accountable Independent Reading

## WHAT RESOURCES WILL BE NEEDED TO SUPPORT AT-HOME LEARNING?

- Access to a device and internet to follow along with the class and the teacher.
- Digital access to Unit 2 Central Text
- Access to an independent reading book
- Pen & Paper: if working with a hardcopy book
- Google suite, Open eBooks, Khan Academy

# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: English Language Arts: Grade 7



## Unit Topic(s): The Power of Words

### WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

Central Texts  
The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that an author's choice of words and techniques construct meaning in a text, and gives it enduring power.
- Students will understand that the purpose and audience shape how an author expresses their ideas.
- Students will understand that valid claims are supported by specific textual evidence.

Essential Questions

- How is our understanding of society constructed through and by language?
- How does an author use words to create meaning?
- What gives words their enduring power?
- How do we craft an effective argument?

Writing Goal

- Argumentative Writing

### HOW WILL WE TEACH YOUR CHILDREN?

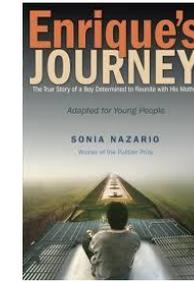
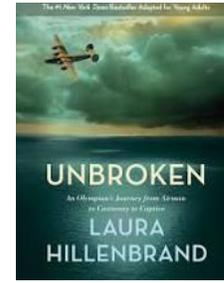
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# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: English Language Arts: Grade 8



**Unit Topic(s):** Thinking Beyond the Text: Connecting Literature and Research

## WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

Central Texts  
Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand

OR

Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario

Enduring Understandings

- Research begins with developing questions worthy of investigation.
- Research can help us understand the context in which some stories are written.
- Research can help us gain a deeper understanding of real-world issues.
- Effective researchers use strategies to determine the relevance and reliability of sources.

Essential Questions

- How is research writing different from other types of writing?
- How can we deepen our understanding of a text through research?
- How can we determine what is important in an informational research paper?
- How can we synthesize from multiple sources to include in a research paper?
- How can we assess a source for its relevance and credibility?

Writing Goal

This is a research writing unit

## HOW WILL WE TEACH YOUR CHILDREN?

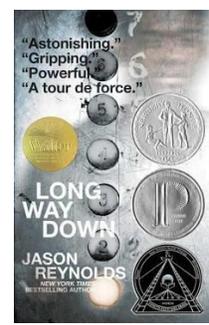
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# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: English 1



## Unit Topic(s): Choices: Where am I Going?

### WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

#### Central Texts

*Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds

OR

*Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi

#### Enduring Understandings

- There are certain experiences that everyone has.
- People discuss their experiences through storytelling.
- Writers use different mediums to convey lessons about universal ideas.
- Writers choose words carefully to affect meaning and tone.
- Writer's choices create mystery, tension, and/or surprise.
- Author's craft refines central ideas and advances the plot.
- Understanding author's moves/craft can make reading more fun.
- Writers use different techniques or styles of writing to reach their audiences.

#### Essential Questions

- What makes an idea universal?
- What matters the most to people and how do they share their perspectives?
- How do people make themselves understood?
- What choices do writers make to share their ideas and engage their audiences?

#### Writing Goal

Informational Writing

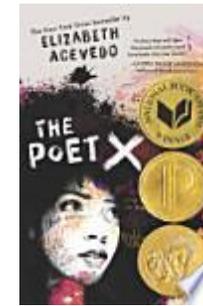
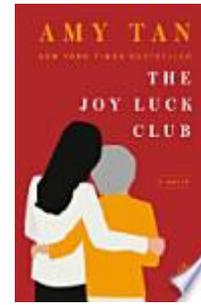
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# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: English 2



**Unit Topic(s):** Developing Identity  
Author's Craft and the Development of Ideas

## WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

### Central Texts

*The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo

OR

*Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan

### Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that there are different possible meanings of words or phrases (connotative vs denotative) and understand their cumulative impact on meaning and tone in a text
- Students will understand that an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- Students will understand that particular points of view or cultural experiences from around the world are reflected in works of literature.

### Essential Questions

- How does what we write express who we are?
- How do the cultural experiences of a character develop the theme of a story?
- Why do authors organize their writing in different ways?
- Why is an author's choice of words important?

### Writing Goal

Informational Writing

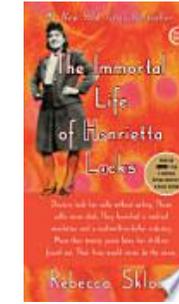
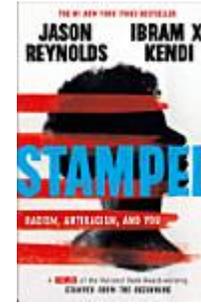
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# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: Literature and Composition 1



**Unit Topic(s):** Affirming Identity Through an Historical Perspective

## WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

Central Texts

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks- Skloot

OR

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You- Reynolds

Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that their social identities are based on their membership in multiple groups in society. (I.1)
- Students will understand the language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups. (I.2)
- Students will understand the traits of the dominant culture, their home culture and other cultures and understand how they negotiate their own identity in multiple spaces. (I.5)

Essential Questions

- How do specific historical events and phenomena impact social identities?
- How can powerful language help us learn about others' cultures and experiences?
- Which methods of communicating ideas best develop empathy and understanding of others?

Writing Goal

Informational Writing

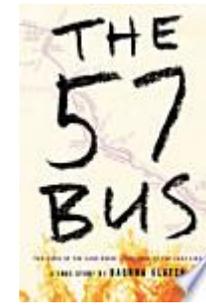
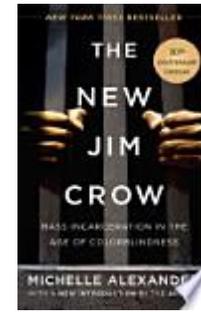
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# Family Learning Guide Unit 2: Literature and Composition 2



## WHAT ARE OUR LEARNING GOALS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

### Central Texts

The New Jim Crow-Michelle Alexander

OR

The 57 Bus- Slater

### Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that discrimination is an injustice that is embedded into most social networks.
- Students will recognize that acquiring new understanding and then communicating it effectively can be a tool for growth.
- Students will understand that discrimination affects all people in different ways.

### Essential Questions

- *Who are the victims of discrimination?*
- *What is the cause of discrimination?*
- *How are you a part of the cycle of discrimination?*
- *How do specific systems and institutions perpetuate discrimination?*
- *How can knowledge be a tool for justice?*

### Writing Goal

Informational Writing

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