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| **Grade 5****Unit Overview*****Social Issues***  |
| **Focus Teaching Points** | *Social Issues** Reading through the lens of social issues
* Considering not just one, but multiple issues in a book
* Reading with a question about social issues in mind: “What does this story teach about \_\_?” (e.g. homelessness, bullying, losing someone)
* Paying attention to scenes that evoke strong reactions; considering what can be learned from these scenes
* Paying attention to what can be learned about social issues through a character’s struggles
* Comparing and contrasting how different authors address the same/similar social issues
* Considering the perspective of different characters
* Deepening conversations about social issues by considering issues of fairness/unfairness in books
* Looking beyond specific social issues to universal issues/themes
* Reading both fiction and nonfiction and noticing how they can inform one another
* Considering the perspectives not only of individual characters, but the groups to which they belong (e.g. gender, race, religion, class)
* Considering how social issues affect our lives
* Developing new insights and understandings from our conversations with others
* Reading closely to understand how authors shape texts through craft strategies (literary devices)
* Writing to develop new understandings
* Writing to prepare for conversations
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| **Key CCSS Standards** | ***Reading Standards for Literature (RL)**** *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10*

***Reading Standards for Information (RI)**** *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10*

***Reading Standards: Foundational Skills (RF)**** *3, 3a-3f, 4, 4a-4c*

***Speaking and Listening Standards (SL)**** *1, 1a-d, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*

***Language Standards (L)**** *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*
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| **Bends in the Road** | * Reading between the lines to interpret issues in texts
* Analyzing the way different authors address and craft similar social issues in both literature and current events
* Bringing our reading lenses to the world—and making our thinking more complex
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| **Recommended Professional Resource(s) to Guide Instruction** | * “Social Issues Book Clubs: Applying Analytical Lenses across Literature and Informational Texts” from the If. . . Then. . Curriculum Grades 3-5 from the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* by Lucy Calkins (2015)
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| **Recommended Anchor/Mentor Texts** | * *Locomotion* by Jacqueline Woodson
* *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting
* “The Marble Champ”, from Baseball in April and Other Stories
* Suggested mentor texts and student book suggestions previously used in the *Interpretation Book Clubs* unit will also support reading about social issues and can be found on the Mentor Texts tab of this unit. Many of these texts have also been previously purchased in your buildings. In addition to the novels and picture books recommended, we encourage you to supplement the text sets with nonfiction articles and poetry that also address social issues. You may find some appropriate poems on the following website: [poets.org: Social Justice for Kids](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/social-justice-poems-kids). **Read through the entire poem** before determining its appropriateness. Sometimes there is a stanza or two that may not be appropriate for your students.
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| **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).”* * 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 themes that develop across the texts, but also the larger social issues that the characters in their books face.
* We encourage you to read the Rationale/Introduction found on pages 94-99. This section includes an overview of the unit, “A Summary of the Bends in the Road” (pages 96-97), suggestions for getting ready and assessment; however, to truly understand the intentions and suggestions for teaching within each bend we recommend reading this entire streamlined unit, as the more detailed descriptions of each bend offer helpful suggestions .
* Refer to the “Possible Teaching Points” section beginning on page 113 as you plan for specific minilessons across the unit.
* As with other units, we recommend documenting student learning with a pre-and post-assessment. See suggestions below under **Assessment**.
* Be sure to see the Mentor Texts page of the unit for mentor text and student book suggestions. You will also find links and suggestions for resources for nonfiction articles. When creating collections from which your students will read, you also have a variety of options depending on your students and resources—there is no one right way and you need not worry about creating a variety of “perfect collections.” No matter which texts children read throughout the unit, they will naturally make connections and compare/contrast—often in ways we can’t even predict—if the texts are rich and powerful.
* One option you might consider is to have all children read texts that explore the same general social issue, such as “growing up and fitting in.” You could then ask children to keep their eyes open for other text suggestions (articles, poems, novels, picture books) that they could add to the collections of texts they read.
* Another option is to create collections for groups of children that address different social issues. We just caution you against labeling a collection by its social issue. To make it more powerful, let the kids discover the common threads/social issues themselves!
* Conversation and collaboration is 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.
* You may decide to combine this unit with Historical Fiction Book Clubs and/or Poetry since there are many overlapping teaching points across all three of these units. If you do decide to combine units, or want to overlap parts of units, we encourage you to speak to your literacy coach about ideas for interweaving teaching points, creating collections of texts and supporting students’ independence.
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| **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 Texts page.
* 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
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| **Materials and Resources** | * Reader’s notebooks
* Anchor charts from *Interpretation Book Clubs* that apply to the work of this unit
* Teacher-created anchor charts specific to the work of this unit
* Active engagement anchor charts
* Thinking and talking strategy bookmarks or thinksheets
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| **Assessment** | * There is no pre-assessment for this unit; however, we encourage you to consider creating your own assessment using an excerpt from your read-aloud or another short text you select, such as a poem. You could then ask students to address one or more of the types of questions previously used during the fall and winter Silent Reading Assessments.
* The post-assessment for this unit will serve as the **Spring Silent Reading Assessment. See the assessment page on our website for more information**.
* We encourage you to use the Narrative Student Rubrics and Learning Progressions to support your students in self-assessment and goal setting for this work. The rubrics and learning progressions for narrative reading can be found on the Heinemann online resources under the Reading Pathways section of the Grade 5 resources.
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| **Celebrations** | * One celebration suggested for this unit helps children investigate solutions related to social issues and ACT upon these solutions with a day or two for mini-projects: poster campaigns, video-taped public service announcements, letters or emails to congressional representatives and so on. See pages 112-113 for more details.
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