Unit at a Glance

Grade Level: 10th

Essential Question: Why do we need war stories?

Length: 5–7 weeks (see Pacing Guide)

Unit Texts: (see full list of texts)
- “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien (Short Story)
- “The Death of a Soldier” by Wallace Stevens (Poem)
- “Yesterday was Beautiful” by Roald Dahl (Short Story)
- “During the War” by Philip Levine (Poem)
- “The Wound-Dresser” by Walt Whitman (Poem)
- “A Veteran Wonders: How Will PTSD Affect My Kids?” by Brooke King (Essay)
- “Facing It” by Yusef Komunyakaa (Poem)
- “Spin” by Tim O’Brien (Short Story)
- Paired texts included (English + Spanish)
- Independent Reading and Book Club Options

Focus Skills: (see Reading and Writing Skill Arcs)

Reading:
- Theme and central idea [RL.9-10.2]
- Imagery and figurative language [RL.9-10.4]
- Structure, meaning, and surprise [RL.9-10.5]
- Refining central idea [RI.9-10.5]

Writing:
- Explanatory writing [W.9-10.2]
- Cohesion, clarity, and relationships between ideas [W.9-10.2.C]

Language:
- Absolute and other descriptive phrases for variety and interest [L.9-10.1.B]
- Sentence variety for effect [L.9-10.3]
- Analyze author’s diction [L.9-10.5]
- Grade appropriate academic vocabulary [L.9-10.6]

Speaking and Listening:
- Refer to text evidence and invite peers to refer to text evidence to support ideas [SL.9-10.1.A]
- Clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions [SL.9-10.1.C]
- Ask questions that probe for reasoning [SL.11-12.1.C]
- Synthesize ideas in a discussion [SL.11-12.1.D]

Unit Overview

In this 360 Unit, students read about war from both combatant and civilian perspectives. Throughout the unit texts, students read about conflicts from the American Civil War to the Vietnam War in order to gain an understanding of the experience of war and what people carry with them after leaving a war zone. Students work in collaborative groups during a Related Media Exploration that features videos about the contemporary experience of war; they consider why Americans today need to read and hear historical and modern war stories, the stories of soldiers, veterans, and civilians. By the end of the unit, students should be able to use evidence from the unit’s literary and informational texts to analyze the importance of war stories and the ways that the events of war live on long after a war officially ends. To demonstrate this skill, students write a cross-textual literary analysis essay that examines how the unit texts illustrate ideas presented in Viet Thanh Nguyen’s quotation: “All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory.” This unit also includes resources to support teachers in launching an independent reading program or book clubs that run parallel to the core instruction in this unit.

NOTE: The texts and videos throughout this unit discuss the experience of war, and, as a result, include moments of violence and emotional intensity. We recommend that you preview the full content of each text and video and plan how to present this content with sensitivity and care.

This unit guide aligns with War Stories, Edition 1.0. CommonLit 360 Edition 2.0 will be available July 2023. Learn more.
Skill Focus: Analyzing Theme

By the time they reach high school, students should be able to determine a theme and its connection to specific elements of a text [RL.8.2], analyze the impact of specific word choice [RL.8.4], and compare the structure of different texts and how those structures contribute to meaning [RL.8.5]. In this 10th grade unit, students read more complex texts and refine their skills in order to become more sophisticated readers and thinkers. Students now examine the way a theme emerges and how it is shaped by specific details [RL.9-10.2]. They also interpret the way an author’s diction and use of figurative language combine to form a central message [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4]. In 10th grade, students should be able to observe multiple structure choices or patterns in a text to examine an author’s purpose and perspective on a topic [RL.9-10.5].

Reading lessons in this unit include scaffolded questions to help students meet grade level reading standards. Independent Practice for reading lessons is aligned to RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4, and RL.9-10.5, and includes both multiple choice and short answer responses.

Writing in this 10th grade unit provides students with direct instruction on writing skills that are designed to help students develop more descriptive writing. Students examine the powerful impact of writing fewer words through a lesson on varying sentence length, and they are pushed to consider the role of descriptive phrases in their writing. Students review how to write sophisticated explanations by analyzing an author’s diction. To demonstrate these skills, students write an essay that responds to a cross-textual literary analysis prompt. Students plan for a theme and its connection to specific elements of a text, and analyze the impact of specific word choice and the structure of two or more texts and how those structures contribute to meaning.

ARC OF READING INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Lesson 1</th>
<th>Reading Lesson 2</th>
<th>Reading Lesson 3</th>
<th>Reading Lesson 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Things They Carried&quot; by Tim O’Brien (Short Story)</td>
<td>&quot;The Death of a Soldier&quot; by Wallace Stevens (Poem)</td>
<td>&quot;Yesterday was Beautiful&quot; by Roald Dahl (Short Story)</td>
<td>&quot;During the War&quot; by Philip Levine (Poem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students analyze how a story’s structure contributes to its meaning. [RL.9-10.5]</td>
<td>Students analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme. [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4]</td>
<td>Students analyze how an author’s structural choices contribute to a text’s meaning and create tension or surprise. [RL.9-10.5]</td>
<td>Students analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme. [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reading Lesson 5**  
“The Wound-Dresser” by Walt Whitman  
(Poem)

**Reading Lesson 6**  
“A Veteran Wonders: How Will PTSD Affect My Kids?” by Brooke King  
(Essay)

**Reading Lesson 7**  
“Facing It” by Yusef Komunyakaa  
(Poem)

**Reading Lesson 8**  
“Spin” by Tim O’Brien  
(Short Story)

Students analyze imagery and poetic structure to determine a theme. [RL.9-10.4]

Students determine how the central idea is developed and refined by particular paragraphs or sections of the text. [RL.9-10.5]

Students analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme. [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4]

Students analyze how the structure of a text contributes to a central idea. [RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.5]

Visit the Supporting Resources & Guidance tab for:
- Optional paired texts in English and Spanish that support students in developing reading volume and stamina.
- Independent reading and book club optional to build students’ volume and breadth of reading.

**ARC OF WRITING INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Lesson 1:</th>
<th>Writing Lesson 2:</th>
<th>Writing Lesson 3:</th>
<th>Writing Lesson 4:</th>
<th>Writing Lesson 5:</th>
<th>Writing Lesson 6:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varying Sentence Length for Effect</td>
<td>Sentence Study</td>
<td>15 Minute Review: Analyzing Diction</td>
<td>Reflecting on Unit Themes</td>
<td>Planning for the Unit 5 Essay</td>
<td>Exemplar Essay Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prompt (Recommended):** Read the following quotation:

Viet Thanh Nguyen said, “All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory.”

Select two or more of the texts you have read throughout this unit, and analyze how each author develops or expands upon Nguyen’s idea. Be sure to discuss the literary devices or structural choices the author uses to develop the ideas in each text. [W.2]

**Essay (Optional):** Narrative

**Prompt:** Select a character from one of the unit texts. Imagine they are sharing their wartime experience with a friend or family member twenty years in the future. Write a narrative from this character’s perspective that reflects what they would remember and tell others about their war experience.

In your narrative, make sure to include:
- your character’s perspective about the experience and effects of war
- references and details from the original unit text

[W.3]
VOCABULARY, DISCUSSION, AND GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Vocabulary
This unit includes explicit vocabulary instruction on 20 academic words. Students complete 5 activities for each set of words. Consistent with research, students encounter these words in context. Word usage is reinforced in reading, writing, and discussion activities [L.9-10.6]. Learn more here.

Discussion
In all CommonLit 360 Units, students discuss the texts they are reading daily. Students receive explicit instruction as they review key discussion skills from previous 10th grade units. [SL.9-10.1.A, C; SL.11-12.1.C-D]

In addition to multiple opportunities for informal discussion, there is one formal whole class discussion where students discuss their interpretation of author Viet Thanh Nguyen’s quotation from the Unit Essay prompt: “All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory.”

Grammar Instruction
This unit includes a short lesson and 6 practice activities that focus on using absolute phrases to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing [L.9-10.1.B]. This skill helps students add more sophisticated descriptions to their writing.
Lessons & Materials

Below, you will find all of the materials needed to teach this unit. To better help you understand the choices and flexibility within the unit materials, individual lessons are tagged as either Essential, or Optional.

A sample Pacing Guide is available [here](#).

### Unit Introduction

**ESSENTIAL**

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
Kick off this 360 Unit with an editable slide deck and paired handout. This short slide deck introduces students to the unit’s topics and texts through engaging discussion!

**HOW TO FACILITATE (25 MINS):**
- Lead students through this slide deck whole-class.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
- Slide Deck
- Teacher Copy
- Student Copy
- Student Reference Sheet
- Word Wall

### Vocabulary Activity Set: List 1

**ESSENTIAL**

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
This vocabulary activity set will help students master the 10 high-impact academic vocabulary words they will see in the texts they read. These 5 activities are great for a quick warm-up activity or homework.

**HOW TO FACILITATE:**
- Use the Slide Deck to facilitate Vocabulary Activity 1 whole-class.
- Flexibly assign the remaining activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the Vocabulary Quiz.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
- Student Vocabulary Activity Set
- Teacher Answer Key*
- Activity 1 Slide Deck
- Word Wall
- Word Wall Teacher Guidance

*Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!
**Reading Lesson: “The Things They Carried” (Short Story)**

**EXCITING NEW FEATURE:**
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross is a young man at war — but he's also in love. When one of his soldiers is killed, Lieutenant Cross realizes that he can't be both. "The Things They Carried" by Tim O'Brien introduces students to the physical and emotional burdens that soldiers must bear in a war zone. As students read, they analyze how a story's structure contributes to its meaning.

**HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (90 MINS):**
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

**HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (90 MINS):**
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.

---

**Discussion Lesson**

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
Having the discussion skills to participate in a productive academic discussion is a critical skill for high schoolers. This discussion lesson reviews key discussion skills from previous 10th grade units and prepares students to use them in discussions across the unit.

The assignment includes a section to review the discussion skills whole-class, a section to help students conduct a partner discussion and take notes, and teacher resources to help you facilitate whole-class or small group discussions.

Students will discuss their answers to the following question about the text "The Things They Carried": Is the change in Lieutenant Cross positive or negative? Could it be both?

**HOW TO FACILITATE (25 MINS):**
• Lead students through Parts 1 and 2 of the Discussion Skill Lesson.
• Launch partner discussions and have students take notes during discussion.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
• Discussion Skill Lesson Student Copy
• Discussion Skill Lesson Teacher Copy
• Discussion Protocols
• Student Voice Tracker
### Writing Lesson: Varying Sentence Length for Effect

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
One way for students to write with more complexity is to understand how to use short, simple sentences for effect. In this writing lesson, students learn to vary the length of their sentences in order to emphasize particular points and create emotional reactions in their readers. Students analyze a mentor paragraph from "The Things They Carried" before revising their own paragraphs to incorporate varied sentence length.

**HOW TO FACILITATE (40 MINS):**
- To assign the interactive digital lesson, click "Assign" and schedule the lesson.*
- To facilitate the lesson on paper, access the student copy of the lesson and distribute it to students.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
- Teacher Copy (Google Doc Lesson)
- Student Copy (Google Doc Lesson)

*The data for interactive digital lessons will show up on your teacher assignment report.

### Reading Lesson: “The Death of a Soldier” (Poem)

**EXCITING NEW FEATURE:**
Watch [this video](#) for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
In this poem, Wallace Stevens compares the death of a soldier to the fall of leaves in autumn, to emphasize the public’s indifference to war deaths. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme.

**HOW TO FACILITATE:**
Watch [this video](#) for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this [slide deck](#).

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the [slide deck](#). Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

You may also want to use the [Quoting & Citing Poetry Reference Sheet](#) in this and other poetry lessons.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.
Vocabulary: Quiz 1

About This Assignment:
This vocabulary quiz assesses students’ knowledge of the vocabulary words in Vocabulary List 1.

How to Facilitate (15 Mins):
• To assign this quiz digitally, click “Assign” and schedule the quiz. Set aside 15 minutes for students to complete the vocabulary quiz.
• To have students complete the quiz on paper, access the Student Copy PDF and use the Answer Key* to score the quiz.

*Navigate to the Lessons & Materials page for this unit to access the Answer Key.

Writing Lesson: Sentence Study

About This Assignment:
Students become sophisticated writers by incorporating descriptive detail into their sentences. In this writing lesson, students analyze an excerpt from the unit poem “The Death of a Soldier” by Wallace Stevens as a mentor text and then practice using descriptive phrases to add variety and interest to their writing.

How to Facilitate (20 Mins):
• To assign the interactive digital lesson, click “Assign” and schedule the lesson.*
• To facilitate the lesson on paper, access the student copy of the lesson and distribute it to students.

Assignment Materials:
• Teacher Copy (Google Doc Lesson)
• Student Copy (Google Doc Lesson)

*The data for interactive digital lessons will show up on your teacher assignment report.

Reading Lesson: “Yesterday was Beautiful” (Short Story)

Exciting New Feature:
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

About This Assignment:
In this short story, a British World War II pilot encounters Greek civilians who have lost what matters most to them as a result of wartime bombings. Through this story, students are introduced to the often-overlooked civilian cost of war. As students read, they analyze how an author’s structural choices contribute to a text’s meaning and creates tension or surprise.

How to Facilitate Digitally (60 Mins):
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

How to Facilitate On Paper (60 Mins):
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.
**Vocabulary Activity Set: List 2**

**ABOVE THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
This vocabulary activity set will help students master the 10 high-impact academic vocabulary words they will see in the texts they read. These 5 activities are great for a quick warm-up activity or homework.

**HOW TO FACILITATE (20 MINS):**
• Use the Slide Deck to facilitate Vocabulary Activity 1 whole-class.
• Flexibly assign the remaining activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the Vocabulary Quiz.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
• Student Vocabulary Activity Set
• Teacher Answer Key*
• Activity 1 Slide Deck
• Word Wall
• Word Wall Teacher Guidance.

*Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!

---

**Writing Lesson: 15 Minute Review: Analyzing Diction**

**ABOVE THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
In this writing lesson, students review and practice writing sophisticated explanations by analyzing an author’s diction. Students apply this skill by analyzing specific instances of powerful diction from the unit texts “Yesterday was Beautiful,” “Death of a Soldier,” and “The Things They Carried.”

**HOW TO FACILITATE (15 MINS):**
• To assign the interactive digital lesson, click “Assign” and schedule the lesson.*
• To facilitate the lesson on paper, access the student copy of the lesson and distribute it to students.

**ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:**
• Teacher Copy (Google Doc Lesson)
• Student Copy (Google Doc Lesson)

*The data for interactive digital lessons will show up on your teacher assignment report.

---

**Reading Lesson: “During the War” (Poem)**

**EXCITING NEW FEATURE:**
Watch [this video](#) for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

**ABOVE THIS ASSIGNMENT:**
In this poem, the speaker, a 14-year-old boy living in the United States during World War II, witnesses the far-reaching and destructive power of war when he encounters a war widow. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme.

**HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (55 MINS):**
Watch [this video](#) for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

**HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (55 MINS):**
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.
Narrative Writing Prompt

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This engaging narrative prompt can be used as an additional writing assignment. For this assignment, students select a character from one of the unit texts and write a narrative from this character’s perspective that reflects what they would remember and tell others about their war experience.

HOW TO FACILITATE:
Have students respond to the narrative prompt using the Narrative Writing Checklist as they write.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Student Copy

Reading Lesson: “The Wound-Dresser” (Poem)

EXCITING NEW FEATURE:
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
In this poem, Whitman uses imagery and parenthetical asides to portray the suffering that he witnessed during the American Civil War. As students read, they analyze imagery and poetic structure to determine a theme.

HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (50 MINS):
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (50 MINS):
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF,* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.

Vocabulary: Quiz 2

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This vocabulary quiz assesses students’ knowledge of the vocabulary words in Vocabulary List 2.

HOW TO FACILITATE (15 MINS):
• To assign this quiz digitally, click “Assign” and schedule the quiz. Set aside 15 minutes for students to complete the vocabulary quiz.
• To have students complete the quiz on paper, access the Student Copy PDF and use the Answer Key* to score the quiz.

*Navigate to the Lessons & Materials page for this unit to access the Answer Key.

EXCITING NEW FEATURE:
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
In this essay, the writer describes her personal experiences with combat PTSD after serving in the Iraq War. As students read, they determine how the central idea is developed and refined by particular paragraphs or sections of the text.

HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (50 MINS):
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (50 MINS):
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.

Grammar and Usage Activities

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
Grammar is an essential component too often missed. This 360 Unit’s grammar and usage materials include 6 activities that focus on using absolute phrases to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing. Great for a quick warm-up activity or homework!

HOW TO FACILITATE (55 MINS):
• Assign the 6 activities as warm-ups, homework, or practice to prepare students for the grammar quiz.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Student Grammar Activities
• Teacher Answer Key
Reading Lesson: “Facing It” (Poem)

EXCITING NEW FEATURE:
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
Through this poem, students develop an understanding of the long-lasting impact of war. Through one veteran’s reflections at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, students grapple with the reality that war does not end when a soldier returns home. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme.

HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (60 MINS):
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (60 MINS):
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.

Reading Lesson: “Spin” (Short Story)

EXCITING NEW FEATURE:
Watch this video for tips on how to use the new digital reading lesson.

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This is an independent reading assignment.

“Spin” is the second excerpt from Tim O’Brien’s novel The Things They Carried that is included in this unit. In this short story, the narrator reflects on his experiences as a soldier in Vietnam by putting a different “spin” on otherwise dark or depressing memories. In this unit’s final reading lesson, students contemplate the purpose of war stories — and of storytelling in general. As students read, they analyze how the structure of a text contributes to a central idea.

HOW TO FACILITATE DIGITALLY (60 MINS):
Watch this video for tips on how to teach the new digital reading lesson. Preview and assign the lesson. Begin by facilitating this slide deck.

HOW TO FACILITATE ON PAPER (60 MINS):
Print and distribute the Student Copy PDF.* Begin the lesson by facilitating the slide deck. Lead students through the reading and activities with the Teacher Copy PDF,* and use the Answer Key* to score questions.

*Navigate to the Lessons and Materials page for this unit to access these resources.
Writing Lesson: Reflecting on Unit Themes

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This discussion-based lesson prepares students to write their Unit Essay. Students analyze the quotation that appears in the Unit Essay prompt and discuss connections between ideas presented in the quotation and unit texts. In the next lesson, students use ideas from this discussion to help them plan and organize their Unit Essay.

HOW TO FACILITATE (40 MINS):
• Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear facilitation directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Teacher Copy
• Student Copy
• Discussion Protocols
• Student Voice Tracker

Writing Lesson: Planning for the Unit 5 Essay

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
The keys to writing a strong essay are often tied to having a clear understanding of the prompt and knowing how to effectively plan an essay. This multi-part writing lesson helps students practice transferable brainstorming and planning skills as they prepare for their unit essay.

Students will:
• Break down the unit essay prompt
• Gather evidence from unit texts
• Draft their thesis statement

HOW TO FACILITATE (30 MINS):
• Follow the guidance on each section of the lesson. Each part has clear directions that indicate if the section should be teacher-led or assigned as partner work or independent practice.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Teacher Copy
• Student Copy

Grammar and Usage Quiz

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This grammar quiz assesses students’ knowledge of the unit’s grammar skill: using absolute phrases to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing.

HOW TO FACILITATE (10 MINS):
• Assign the grammar quiz to students.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Student Grammar Quiz
• Teacher Answer Key* 

*Not available in PDF. Coming soon in digital form!
Writing Lesson: Exemplar Essay Review

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
Students can use this outline as an additional support while preparing to write their unit essay.

HOW TO FACILITATE:
- Provide students with the outline template that you would like them to use, or allow them to choose.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
- Teacher Copy
- Student Copy

Writing: Outlining Resources

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
Students can use this outline as an additional support while preparing to write their unit essay.

HOW TO FACILITATE:
- Provide students with the outline template that you would like them to use, or allow them to choose.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
- Teacher Copy
- Student Copy

Writing Lesson: Unit 5 Essay

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This end of unit activity requires that students respond to the following writing prompt:

Viet Thanh Nguyen said, “All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory.”

Select two or more of the texts you have read throughout this unit, and analyze how each author develops or expands upon Nguyen’s idea. Be sure to discuss the literary devices or structural choices the author uses to develop the ideas in each text.

HOW TO FACILITATE (30–75 MINS):
Have students use their resources to draft their essay.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
- Student Essay Prompt
- Exemplar Essay
- Essay Rubric
Related Media Exploration: Why do we need war stories?

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
In this relevant and timely Related Media Exploration, students work collaboratively to explore contemporary war stories from the perspectives of veterans and civilians who experienced the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq first hand. Students consider the value of war stories and how living in a country where the military is an all-volunteer versus drafted force increases the need for more war stories.

HOW TO FACILITATE (75 MINS):
• Lead students through the introductory slides. Release students to complete the remainder of the exploration with partners.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Slide Deck
• Student Copy
• Teacher Copy

Additional Unit Writing Options

ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT:
This unit offers multiple additional writing options. This resource includes one alternative essay prompt that teachers may use in addition to or in place of the Unit Essay. It also includes several additional writing tasks that teachers may choose to use as creative writing opportunities or extension projects.

HOW TO FACILITATE:
• Consider which prompts best meet your students’ needs and assign them to students.

ASSIGNMENT MATERIALS:
• Teacher Copy
Pacing Guide

With appropriate pacing, Grade 10, Unit 5 should take roughly 5-7 weeks of instructional time. This assumes 90 minutes of daily instruction. With this assumption, many of the reading lessons can last up to 2 days/class periods and should be spaced accordingly. Paired texts, independent reading, vocabulary activities, and grammar activities can often be assigned as homework. Teachers should expect to revise pacing as needed.

### WEEK 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>Unit Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 1 &amp; Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>“The Things They Carried” Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Things They Carried” - Day 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Things They Carried” - Day 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Things They Carried” Independent Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Skill Lesson [RECOMMENDED]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Practice with “The Things They Carried”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri.</td>
<td>Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Lesson: Varying Sentence Length for Effect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training & Support Resources

CommonLit 360 is rich with resources for teachers and administrators. In addition to this PDF Unit Guide, here are just a few additional tools available to teams for free:

- Document: [Curriculum Framework, An Overview](#)
- Document: [Themes & Topics Overview](#)
- Live Webinar: [Getting Started with CommonLit 360](#)

Ready to roll out CommonLit 360 in your school or district? Read about the [affordable professional development](#) we offer for schools and districts through our CommonLit for Schools packages.
### WEEK 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mon.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Activity Set List 1: Activity 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “The Death of a Soldier” Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “The Death of a Soldier”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “The Death of a Soldier” Independent Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tues.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Quiz List 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing Lesson: Sentence Study RECOMMENDED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wed.</strong></td>
<td>• “Yesterday was Beautiful” Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “Yesterday was Beautiful”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “Yesterday was Beautiful” Independent Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thurs.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 1 &amp; Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing Lesson: 15 Minute Writing Review: Analyzing Diction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fri.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flex time for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Paired text set reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Completion of previous activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher-created activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Additional Unit Writing Options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WEEK 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mon.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “During the War” Slide Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “During the War”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “During the War” Independent Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tues.</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary Activity Set List 2: Activity 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Narrative Prompt OPTIONAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WEEK 4

**Mon.**
- Grammar and Usage Activities: Parts 1-3  
  - “Facing It” Slide Deck
- “Facing It”
- “Facing It” Independent Practice

**Tues.**
- Grammar and Usage Activities: Part 4  
  - “Spin” Slide Deck
- “Spin”
- “Spin” Independent Practice

**Wed.**
- Grammar and Usage Activities: Part 5  
  - Writing Lesson: Reflecting on Unit Themes

**Thurs.**
- Grammar and Usage Activities: Part 6  
  - Writing Lesson: Planning for the Unit Essay

**Fri.**
- Grammar and Usage Quiz  
  - Writing Lesson: Exemplar Essay Review
- Outlining the Unit Essay

### WEEK 5

**Mon.**
- Drafting the Unit Essay - Day 1

**Tues.**
- Drafting the Unit Essay - Day 2
### WAR STORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>- Related Media Exploration: Why do we need war stories? <strong>RECOMMENDED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>Flex time for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Paired text reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Completion of previous activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teacher-created activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Additional Unit Writing Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri.</td>
<td>Flex time for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Independent/Book Club reading or meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Paired text reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Completion of previous activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teacher-created activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Additional Unit Writing Options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CommonLit 360: Digital Experience

One of the reasons CommonLit 360 is so unique is that it is accessible through a free, state-of-the-art digital platform. Reading, writing, and vocabulary lessons and assessments within a CommonLit 360 unit can be assigned to students through CommonLit.org. During and after the lesson, teachers can view formative assessment data through a real-time lesson dashboard to easily track completion and progress. All of these digital features are free for teachers and students, just like the rest of CommonLit. To learn more about the digital experience, sign up for an upcoming CommonLit 360 webinar or email help@commonlit.org.

Appendix I: Text Selection & Text Complexity

When selecting texts for this unit, CommonLit considers both quantitative and qualitative measures of text complexity.

UNIT TEXTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title by Author</th>
<th>Lexile</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Things They Carried&quot; by Tim O'Brien (Short Story)</td>
<td>1060L</td>
<td>First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross is a young man at war — but he's also in love. When one of his soldiers is killed, Lieutenant Cross realizes that he can't be both. &quot;The Things They Carried&quot; by Tim O'Brien introduces students to the physical and emotional burdens that soldiers must bear in a war zone. As students read, they analyze how a story's structure contributes to its meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Death of a Soldier&quot; by Wallace Stevens (Poem)</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>In this poem, Wallace Stevens compares the death of a soldier to the fall of leaves in autumn, to emphasize the public's indifference to war deaths. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem's theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yesterday was Beautiful&quot; by Roald Dahl (Short Story)</td>
<td>550L</td>
<td>In this short story, a British World War II pilot encounters Greek civilians who have lost what matters most to them as a result of wartime bombings. Through this story, students are introduced to the often-overlooked civilian cost of war. As students read, they analyze how an author's structural choices contribute to a text's meaning and creates tension or surprise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;During the War&quot; by Philip Levine (Poem)</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>In this poem, the speaker, a 14-year-old boy living in the United States during World War II, witnesses the far-reaching and destructive power of war when he encounters a war widow. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem's theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Wound-Dresser&quot; by Walt Whitman (Poem)</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>In this poem, Whitman uses imagery and parenthetical asides to portray the suffering that he witnessed during the American Civil War. As students read, they analyze imagery and poetic structure to determine a theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;A Veteran Wonders: How Will PTSD Affect My Kids?&quot; by Brooke King (Essay)</td>
<td>1170L</td>
<td>In this essay, the writer describes her personal experiences with combat PTSD after serving in the Iraq War. As students read, they determine how the central idea is developed and refined by particular paragraphs or sections of the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**“Facing It” by Yusef Komunyakaa**  
(Poem) 
non-prose  
Through this poem, students develop an understanding of the long-lasting impact of war. Through one veteran’s reflections at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, students grapple with the reality that war does not end when a soldier returns home. As students read, they analyze imagery and figurative language to determine a poem’s theme.

**“Spin” by Tim O’Brien**  
(Short Story)  
930L  
“Spin” is the second excerpt from Tim O’Brien’s novel The Things They Carried that is included in this unit. In this short story, the narrator reflects on his experiences as a soldier in Vietnam by putting a different “spin” on otherwise dark or depressing memories. In this unit’s final reading lesson, students contemplate the purpose of war stories — and of storytelling in general. As students read, they analyze how the structure of a text contributes to a central idea.

### PAIRED TEXTS (ENGLISH)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title by Author</th>
<th>Lexile</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A Frontline Nurse for the Vietcong” as told to Tong Thi Xuyen</td>
<td>1010L</td>
<td>In this text, Nguyen Thi Do shares her experiences as a Vietcong nurse and her concerns for the future. Students can compare Ms. Do’s experiences with those of Lieutenant Cross and his men in “The Things They Carry.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Kliks South by Phil Klay</td>
<td>760L</td>
<td>Iraq War veteran Phil Klay tells the story of a 19-year-old artilleryman on the day of his first kill-mission in Iraq. Students can assess how these attitudes compare or contrast with that presented by Stevens in “The Death of a Soldier.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 lbs. by Brian Turner</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>Iraq War veteran Brian Turner depicts the moment of a suicide bombing in Mosul from various perspectives: American soldiers, Iraqi civilians, and the bomber. Students can grapple with the way that war impacts the lives of civilians in a combat zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Times of Peace by John Agard</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>In this poem, John Agard asks how veterans will readjust to life at home after the fear and adrenaline of war. Students can draw connections between the poem’s questions and Brooke King’s experiences described in “A Veteran Wonders: How Will PTSD Affect My Kids?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Many Returning Vets, ‘Moral Injury’ Just as Difficult by Rachel Martin (Host)</td>
<td>860L</td>
<td>Rachel Martin from NPR’s Weekend Edition Sunday interviews a Marine who killed two civilians in Afghanistan after mistaking them for combatants, and his struggle to move past that act. Students can compare O’Brien’s discussion of the way he grapples with his memories of Vietnam in “Spin” with what Captain Kudo says about his memories of Afghanistan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS (SPANISH)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title by Author</th>
<th>Lexile</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Comportamiento gregario” por CommonLit Staff</td>
<td>1170L</td>
<td>The author explains how and why humans sometimes display the same behavior as a herd of frightened animals. Ask students which stories in the unit contain elements of herd behavior, and how this affects the outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Comportamiento gregario” por CommonLit Staff</td>
<td>1170L</td>
<td>In this text, Nguyen Thi Do shares her experiences as a Vietcong nurse and her concerns for the future. Students can compare Ms. Do’s experiences with those of Lieutenant Cross and his men in “The Things They Carry.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iraq War veteran Phil Klay tells the story of a 19-year-old artilleryman on the day of his first kill-mission in Iraq. Students can assess how these attitudes compare or contrast with that presented by Stevens in “The Death of a Soldier.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>Iraq War veteran Brian Turner depicts the moment of a suicide bombing in Mosul from various perspectives: American soldiers, Iraqi civilians, and the bomber. Students can grapple with the way that war impacts the lives of civilians in a combat zone.</td>
<td>non-prose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-prose</td>
<td>In this poem, John Agard asks how veterans will readjust to life at home after the fear and adrenaline of war. Students can draw connections between the poem’s questions and Brooke King’s experiences described in “A Veteran Wonders: How Will PTSD Affect My Kids?”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rachel Martin from NPR’s Weekend Edition Sunday interviews a Marine who killed two civilians in Afghanistan after mistaking them for combatants, and his struggle to move past that act. Students can compare O’Brien’s discussion of the way he grapples with his memories of Vietnam in “Spin” with what Captain Kudo says about his memories of Afghanistan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>