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# WIT & WISDOM PARENT TIP SHEET

## WHAT IS MY EIGHTH GRADE STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 1?

*Wit & Wisdom* is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

### Module 1: The Poetics and Power of Storytelling

Module 2: The Great War

Module 3: What Is Love?

Module 4: Teens as Change Agents

In this first module, *The Poetics and Power of Storytelling*, students will study how we build community, understand ourselves, and explain the world around us using stories and poems. They will read a novel and poetry and ask the question: What is the power of storytelling?

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS:

### Novel

- *The Crossover*, Kwame Alexander

### Articles

- “This Is Your Life (and How You Tell It),” Benedict Carey
- “Your Brain on Fiction,” Annie Murphy Paul, *The New York Times*

### Poetry

- “Nikki-Rosa,” Nikki Giovanni
- “Slam, Dunk, & Hook,” Yusef Komunyakaa
- “Sometimes Silence Is the Loudest Kind of Noise,” Bassey Ikpi

### Speech

- “The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

## Music

- “Filthy McNasty,” Horace Silver

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE WORKS OF ART:

- *The Block*, Romare Bearden
- *Children’s Games*, Pieter Bruegel the Elder

## OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THESE VIDEOS:

- “Sometimes Silence Is the Loudest Kind of Noise,” Bassey Ikpi
- “Nikki Rosa on Def Jam Poetry,” Nikki Giovanni
- “Slam, Dunk, & Hook,” Yusef Komunyakaa
- “The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- “The Human Soul Distilled,” Reading Rockets

## OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- What shapes Josh Bell’s sense of himself and his world?
- How does form shape a story’s meaning?
- What is the role of expression in storytelling?
- How do stories help us make sense of ourselves and the world?
- What does it mean to be a storyteller?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME

As your eighth grade student reads, ask:

- *What do you notice and wonder?*

## BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *Spoon River Anthology*, Edgar Lee Masters
- *Inside Out and Back Again*, Thanhha Lai
- *Brown Girl Dreaming*, Jacqueline Woodson
- *Witness*, Karen Hesse
- *The Red Pencil*, Andrea Davis Pinkney

## IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING THE POWER OF STORYTELLING:

You can talk about storytelling at any time, anywhere. Ask:

- *What's your favorite family story? Why?*
- *Tell me a story you remember from your childhood.*
- *Share a story with your eighth grader about your childhood.*