

# Choosing your Core Text (Novel): LG 6

## English Inquiry Unit 10 with Mrs. Carmichael

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“Inquiry” has been described as a seeking for truth, information or knowledge by asking deep and meaningful questions.

Your inquiry unit allows you to read a major work, a dramatic work, something non-fiction (true), a short story and poetry on a common theme, subject or idea. As you read, you are going to formulate a BIG QUESTION. A Big Question has no simple or easy answer, but is still worth considering and working on. The process of considering a big question helps us to understand ourselves and the world we live in, even if we never find a single true “answer”.

THIS IS NOT A SELF-PACED UNIT. One of the things I would like you to learn is time management, and this does NOT mean handing in rushed work at the end of a course. Each of your assignments will have a due date. You may, of course, work ahead and submit assignments early.

First, you will need to find your “core text”. This will be a novel or a non-fiction narrative that is book length. As you read through your core text, you will complete 5 reader responses. This will help you organize and remember the ideas that occur to you as you read. A list of good choices can be found on the FKSS website. You may choose another book, but I would like you to “stretch” yourself and choose a book that is just a little more difficult than something you would read on your own for pleasure. Any book that is not on the list must be approved, so be sure to let me know early.

As you read, you will need to develop an inquiry question. A good inquiry question:

- requires thought and revision to create. Your first idea for a question is unlikely to be your final idea.
- has more than one answer
- has a very deep meaning
- requires a lot of information to create a response
- doesn't have a yes or no answer
- takes effort and time to respond to
- is a question you care about exploring

In addition to your core text, you will also be responsible for reading or viewing a piece of drama (movie, play, or script); at least three prose selections; and a selection of three poems that all have something to do with your question. You will complete an assignment on each of them.

Near the end of the course, you will have two major assignments to complete to demonstrate how you have been able to put your ideas together. The first is called a personal essay. A personal essay is much like any other literary response, except that you can use “I” in your writing, and you focus on your own learning and response.

The second is where you “share your learning” with the class in some sort of project. This can be a presentation, a web page, a film, creative writing, a combination of things, or your own idea. It should represent about three solid weeks of work, and should have some sort of interactive component, where you involve the class.

# Your core text and reader responses

Your core text must be:

- a) book length
- b) at a grade-appropriate reading level
- c) have enough thematic meaning to support an important and meaningful inquiry question
- d) be on the pre-approved list, or approved by your teacher.

Before you begin reading, divide your novel into approximately 5 sections. The easiest way to do this is to take the total number of pages, divide by 5, and then look for logical places to stop and write your reflection near these divisions. For example, let's pretend your book is 600 pages long. Six hundred divided by five is 120 pages. Get a sticky note and put it at the end of a chapter, or other logical place, that is around page 120, then another at page 240, then near 360 and 480. The last reflection will be at the end of the book. Reader Response 0 is based on the first chapter or first 10 pages of your book, whichever works for you.

Although all of your reader responses and your Big Question will count as learning guide 6, your responses need to be handed in as you go, so that I can see that you are on track. Here are the due dates:

	Due	This will be pages . . .
Reader Response 0 (practice)	March 7, 2018	Completed in class (about the first chapter)
Reader Response 1	March 26, 2018	To page
Reader Response 2	April 4, 2018	
Reader Response 3	April 6, 2018	
Reader Response 4	April 9, 2018	
Reader Response 5	April 16, 2018	To the end of the book.

## **"Big Question": Due April 6.**

You will also complete a project on your novel.

## Reader Responses

Don't forget to put the following at the top of every reader response. It is really hard for me to give you the right credit without this.

- your name
  - Reader Response #
  - Your novel
1. What is one quote from this section of the novel worth sharing? (Write down the quote, and make sure you include the page number.) (2 marks)
  2. Why did you choose this quote? (Two or three sentences. Don't forget to make your point, and then explain what you mean.) (3 marks)
  3. What was the **most important** or memorable part of the section? Why did you choose this selection? Does it show character, reveal setting, develop theme, or help the plot along? (This should be a brief paragraph, and you don't have to answer all of the questions above – they are just there to help you if you get stuck. You should describe the episode or section that you chose, and then explain why it had an impact on you. This should be around 150 words. (5 marks)
  4. What are **TWO words or facts** you **learned** from this section? These can be single words, phrases, expressions, customs, or ideas. This needs to be **something that applies beyond the book**, to the real world, or to culture. This is information that applies to other things outside of this book: in other words, they are not about characters from the story, made up terms, or pretend events. Explain what they mean, **OR** why did you find them interesting, weird, surprising, or unusual? (Do not copy definitions out of the dictionary. Responses must be in your own words) (2 marks each)
  5. What is a **connection** that you can make to the novel at this point? Does it remind you of anything else? Did you have any strong feelings as you read? Did you enjoy this section? Why or Why not? (Again, you don't have to answer every sub-question for this one, but if you don't think you have any connections, think harder, because "I don't have any connections" gets zero marks.) (5 marks)
  6. What is a **question** that you hope will be answered later in the text? **OR** What do you **predict** will happen next? (1 mark) (Don't do for Reader Response 5. Instead, give your opinion of the ending of the novel).

## Some Novel Suggestions.

**Please do not select a text you have studied in another class. You will make up your own question, and you do not need to use any of the questions suggested.**

Mark Haddon

*Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

- How do we treat people with different abilities?
- How should we treat people who have invisible handicaps?

Harper Lee

*To Kill a Mockingbird*

- Why does society tolerate prejudice?
- How can an individual act in a way that is opposed by society?

George Orwell

*Animal Farm*

- What is the role of allegory and fable in helping us understand our own society?
- How does having power over others corrupt people?
- How does control over information and "truth" allow a government to control people?

Steven Galloway

*Finnie Walsh*

- How has hockey become part of the Canadian identity?
- How do our closest and best friends help us to be better people?

Sherman Alexie

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

- Why is it important for a First Nations perspective to be represented in literature?
- Why do we tend to use humour to distract ourselves from tragedy?

Carol Matas

*Lisa*

- How does historical fiction help us understand events of the past?
- How can one person's bravery change events?

Andy Weir

*The Martian*

- What makes us root for a character to live in a survival story?

Ernest Hemingway

*The Old Man and the Sea*

- How much control do we have over our destiny, and how much is just luck or circumstance?

John Wyndham

*The Chrysalids*

- How do we balance our right to personal freedom with our need to be compassionate and caring towards others?

Tatiana de Rosnay

*Sarah's Key*

- How do we document human tragedies such as the Holocaust?

Kathryn Stockett

*The Help*

- Why do we connect strongly with some fictional characters and not with others?