
WIT & WISDOM PARENT TIP SHEET

WHAT IS MY GRADE 7 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 4?

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: Identity in the Middle Ages

Module 2: Americans All

Module 3: Language and Power

Module 4: Fever

In the fourth module, *Fever*, students explore a powerful moment in American history, the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1793, and use this crisis to explore human responses and to ask and investigate research questions. Throughout, students ask: *How can times of crisis affect citizens and society?*

OUR CLASS WILL READ AND VIEW THESE TEXTS:

Novel (Literary)

- *Fever 1793*, Laurie Halse Anderson

Historical Account

- *An American Plague*, Jim Murphy

Painting

- *The Artist in His Museum*, Charles Willson Peale

Websites

- “Yellow Fever,” U.S. National Library of Medicine
- “Q&A,” Jim Murphy

Video

- *Philadelphia: The Great Experiment*, History Making Productions

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- In what context did the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 emerge?
- What were the effects of the unfolding crisis on Philadelphia and its citizens?
- What did the crisis reveal about Philadelphia's citizens and society?
- How did people respond to the crisis?
- What is the story of the year?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As your Grade 7 student reads, ask:

- What have you learned about the crisis and the response to it?
- How does what you are reading build your knowledge of how people and societies handle crisis?
- What do the books you are reading show about historical research?

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *Invisible Microbe: Tuberculosis and the Never-Ending Search for a Cure*, Jim Murphy
- *Oh, Rats! The Story of Rats and People*, Albert Marrin
- *Terrible Typhoid Mary: A True Story of the Deadliest Cook in America*, Susan Campbell Bartoletti
- *When Plague Strikes: The Black Death, Smallpox, AIDS*, James Cross Giblin
- *The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel*, Deborah Hopkinson

IDEAS FOR DISCUSSING HISTORY AND CRISES:

The core texts in this module help students see different human responses to a crisis and the importance of historical knowledge and research to accurately depict history. Discuss historical events and people and past and modern-day crises, as well as the responses to those crises. Ask questions such as:

1. For history: The study of history helps us to understand not only our past but our present. Read history books together, and share stories about your personal history. Help students see how the past informs the present—and how we can learn from the past.
2. For crises: Read other related books or the news together and discuss the contexts, causes, events, and effects of crises. Help your student see that individual actions can make a difference and that people can respond compassionately and courageously in response to natural or human-made disasters.
3. For all content: Encourage your child to ask questions, and when he or she does, work together to investigate and research the answers to those questions.