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A COMPLETE TEACHING KIT

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JANUARY

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MARCH

APRIL

MAY

An Extra-Special Nonfiction Feature

My dear *Scope* teachers,

I think every article, story, photo, headline, and heck, even every comma in *Scope* is wonderful. (OK, I'm just a bit biased.) But this issue's nonfiction feature, "Call of Duty," has found an extra-special place in my heart. It's the story of a military working dog named Zenit and his handler, Marine Corporal Jose Armenta, who was gravely injured in Afghanistan. The text has all the ingredients we love: themes of courage and resilience, a topic that is important for your students to know about, and big ideas that will engage them in high-level thinking and passionate class discussion.

It's also a story of, in the words of the Common Core, "exceptional craft." Author Michael Paterniti's writing is exquisite—packed with sensory details, beautifully constructed sentences, and evocative language. I can hardly wait for your students to sink their teeth into it.

We are honored to share this story with you and your students.

Kristin Lewis, Executive Editor
kelewis@scholastic.com

E-mail me
anytime!



Jose Armenta and his
dog, Zenit

EDITOR'S PICK

Before your students read "Call of Duty," show them our fascinating video about military working dogs throughout history. Together, the video and article work beautifully as paired "texts" to build students' skills in synthesizing information from multiple sources. And the dogs are just plain adorable.



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YOUR OCTOBER ISSUE AT A GLANCE









































ARTICLE	SUMMARY	PRIMARY SKILL(S)
Grammar, pp. 2-3 “Grammar Has Bad Luck”	Students practice <i>there</i> and <i>their</i> while reading about the origins of three commonly held superstitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventions of standard English
Narrative Nonfiction, pp. 4-9 “Call of Duty”	The harrowing and inspiring story of Marine Corporal Jose Armenta explores the powerful bond between combat dogs and their handlers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Featured Skill: Forming an Argument Author's craft Descriptive language Author's purpose Key ideas and details Inference Mood Setting Text features Persuasive/argument writing
Debate/Essay Kit, pp. 10-12 “Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?”	Shouting maniacally at the television. Weeping in the stands. Smashing windows. Are we taking our love for our favorite teams just a bit too seriously? Students read arguments on both sides of the debate and take a stand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting an argument Identifying central ideas and supporting details
Drama, pp. 13-18 <i>The Giver</i>	Students will love performing our play version of this powerful story about a dystopian future society. We've paired it with an essay about memory-erasing drugs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Featured Skill: Theme Inference Author's craft Key ideas Synthesizing
Paired Texts, pp. 19-21 “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?”	An informational essay about the decline of cursive writing and a poignant personal essay about a beloved sister's letters become a meaningful synthesizing activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Featured Skill: Synthesizing Author's craft Word choice Structure Inference
The Lazy Editor, pp. 22-23 “The Greatest Invention Ever?”	Students correct grammatical errors and revise sloppy writing in a short nonfiction article about the fascinating history of toilet paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventions of standard English Revision
You Write It, p. 24 “Packing for Mars”	Students use our eye-catching infographic to write a website blurb convincing people to take a trip to Mars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizing Central ideas and details Interpreting visual text



MAURICE R. ROBINSON, 1895-1982, FOUNDER

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ONLINE RESOURCES (scope.scholastic.com)	COMMON CORE ELA ANCHOR STANDARDS*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  More practice with <i>there</i> and <i>their</i> 	L.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio: Hear the article read aloud • Video: Beyond the Story •  Guided Writing Activity •  Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions •  Video Discussion Questions •  Read, Think, Explain (two levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice •   Quiz (two levels) •  Contest Entry Form •  Core Skill: Text Evidence •  Core Skill: Text Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Essay Kit •  Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice •  Core Skill: Text Structures 	R.1, R.2, R.6, R.8, W.1, W.4, W.5, W.10, SL.1, L.1, L.2, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Thinking About Theme •  Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions •  Literary Elements •   Quiz (two levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice •  Contest Entry Form •  Core Skill: Mood •  Core Skill: Summarizing •  Core Skill: Inference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Synthesizing •  Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions •  Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice •   Quiz (two levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Contest Entry Form •  Core Skill: Tone •  Core Skill: Central Ideas and Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Parentheses •  Commas •  Misplaced Modifiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Word Choice •  Capitalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Guide to “You Write It” Activity •  Model Text for “You Write It” Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Contest Entry Form

* To find grade-level specific Common Core standards as well as the Texas State Standards, go to Scope Online.

Call of Duty

A dangerous mission, a gravely wounded soldier, and the dog who refused to leave his side

Preview: The inspiring story of Marine Corporal Jose Armenta explores the powerful bond between military working dogs and their handlers.

Learning Objective: to use ideas from the article to write a letter to Congress arguing that veterans should be able to adopt the dogs they worked with in the field

Key Skills: inference, author's craft, descriptive language, text features, author's purpose, setting, mood, key ideas and details, argument writing



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Watch and discuss a video.

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute or project our **Video-Discussion Questions**. Read through the questions as a class so students know what to look for as they watch “**Beyond the Story: Into the World of Military Working Dogs.**” Show the video, then have students answer the questions.

Preview vocabulary.

(3 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the words and definitions from our **Vocabulary** activity. Highlighted words: *deployed, dispatcher, elite, improvised, patter, prostheses, sable, teeming.* (You may assign the practice activity for homework.)

2 Reading the Article

• Read the article as a class, starting with the “As You Read” box on page 5. Refer to the vocabulary list as you come to words in bold.

TIP!

Challenge students to use their new vocab during class discussions.

• Break students into groups to discuss the **Close-Reading** and **Critical-Thinking Questions** that follow.

Close-Reading Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ In the first section, what sensory details does the author use to help the reader understand Jose's experience searching for IEDs in the desert? (author's craft/descriptive language) *The author describes the day as “bone-dry” and “fryingly hot,” and writes that Jose could “taste the salt of his sweat as it trickled to his lips.” He also mentions the “deathly 120-degree heat” and that “the sun blazed down.”*

These details help the reader understand how physically uncomfortable Jose was.

▶ What is the purpose of the sidebar “**Who Are the Taliban?**” (author's purpose/text features) *The purpose of the sidebar is to explain who the Taliban are and provide information about the people who planted the IEDs that Jose and Zenit were looking for. It also explains why U.S. soldiers are in Afghanistan.*

► **Compare and contrast the settings in the first and last sections of the article. How does the setting of each section affect the section's mood?**

(setting/mood) *The first section is set in the desert of Afghanistan, where it is extremely hot and bright. It is also dangerous—the author describes it as “teeming with enemy fighters” and “littered with IEDs.” This hot, stark, dangerous setting contributes to the uncomfortable, tense mood of the section. In the last section of the article, it is twilight in San Diego as Jose sits by his pool with Zenit; the author also notes that Jose takes Zenit to the beach after work. This quiet, dark, water-filled world contrasts greatly with the inhospitable desert of the first section and evokes a calm, peaceful mood.*

► **On page 9, the author describes Jose's response when a child asks if he is a Transformer. What does this paragraph reveal about Jose?**

How does it support the idea that Jose has come a long way? (inference/key ideas and details) *Jose's answer—a joke about his injuries—reveals both his resilience and his sense of humor. In this paragraph Jose is out in the world—a big change from the way things were when he first came back from Afghanistan and spent his days at home, sitting in a wheelchair with the drapes drawn. Jose's upbeat attitude may be evidence of Zenit's positive effect on him.*

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

► **According to the author, the military regards military working dogs as pieces of equipment.**

In what ways are military dogs like pieces of equipment? Why did Jose think of Zenit as much more than that? *Soldiers use military dogs for the same reason they use other equipment: to do their jobs more effectively. Handlers take care of the dogs—keeping them clean, fed, and in good working condition—in a way that is similar to how they would clean and care*

for a weapon or a jet. With Zenit, however, Jose felt a personal connection. The author states that “man and dog bonded right away.” That bond was unlike anything Jose would have formed with a piece of equipment.

► **Why was reuniting with Zenit so important to Jose?** *Jose and Zenit went through a lot together. They worked together on a dangerous job, and not only was Zenit with Jose when the bomb exploded, he also stayed at Jose's side afterward. Jose trusted Zenit, his “quiet partner.” Without him, Jose felt incomplete. “Nothing felt right without him,” he says.*

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Is it fair to ask animals to perform dangerous jobs?
.....

What does it mean to be loyal?
.....

How can animals help us heal?

► **Do you think veterans should be given the opportunity to adopt the dogs they worked with?**

Why or why not? *Students who answer “yes” may cite the healing powers of animals, particularly for soldiers who are going through difficult recoveries. Students may also argue that veteran handlers deserve the chance to adopt the dogs after sacrificing so much for their country. Students who answer “no” may say that it requires a lot of time and money to train these dogs, and that it is not reasonable to expect the military to give them up while they are still able to perform the service for which they were trained.*

3 Skill Building

Featured Skill: Forming an Argument

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Print and distribute our guided writing activity **Write to Congress**. Students will find evidence in the article and video to include in their persuasive letters; they will also consider their audience and organize their thoughts before writing.

► **GO DEEPER!** Have students research how veterans can benefit from spending time with dogs. In what ways might dogs help soldiers with their mental, emotional, and physical recoveries?

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, explain how Jose and Zenit's relationship has changed over time.

For Advanced Readers

Write a letter to Congress arguing that veterans should be given the chance to adopt the military dogs they've worked with. Use information in the article to support your ideas, as well as information from at least two other sources.

Complexity Factors

See how this text will challenge your students.

Purpose: The main purpose is to tell the story of a soldier's devastating injury and inspiring recovery. The article also provides information about the strong bonds that can form between military dogs and their handlers.

Structure: nonlinear; includes narrative and informational passages as well as text features such as sidebars and a map

Language Conventionalty and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** many challenging academic and domain-specific vocabulary words (*deployed, dispatcher, teeming*)
- **Figurative language:** metaphor, simile, rhetorical question, figure of speech

Knowledge Demands: Some prior knowledge of the war in Afghanistan, as well as prosthetics, will aid comprehension.

Lexile: 1010L

Literature Connections

Connect this article with novels that explore the bond between humans and animals.

- *War Horse* by Michael Morpurgo
- *Cracker! The Best Dog in Vietnam* by Cynthia Kadohata
- *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

ONLINE RESOURCES

AUDIO: Hear the article read aloud.

VIDEO: "Beyond the Story: Into the World of Military Working Dogs"

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Write to Congress*
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Video Discussion Questions*
- Vocabulary
- Read, Think, Explain: Identifying Nonfiction Elements (two levels)
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Text Evidence
- Core Skill: Text Features

*Supports the lesson plan

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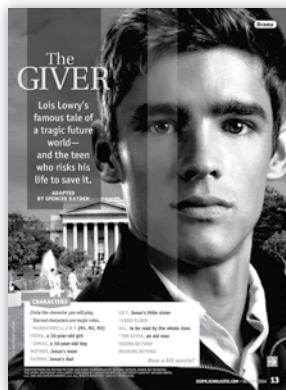
The Giver

Based on Lois Lowry's fabulous dystopian novel
and the new hit movie

Preview: The haunting story of a society in which all memories of pain and pleasure have been taken away becomes a meaningful lesson on theme and genre.

Learning Objectives: to identify themes in the play; to analyze a real-life situation through the lens of a work of fiction

Key Skills: theme, inference, author's craft, key ideas, synthesizing



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preview Vocabulary

(3 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute our **Vocabulary** activity and preview words in the play and essay. Highlighted words: *awash, chaos, corrupting, debilitating, emanates, manicured, penetrate, transmit, traumatic.*

2 Reading the Play

(20 minutes)

Read aloud the “As You Read” box on page 14. Then assign parts and read the play. As a class, discuss the questions in the captions, as well as the following close-reading and critical-thinking questions.

Close-Reading Questions

(7 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ Many words are capitalized that usually wouldn't be (*Community, Elsewhere, etc.*). Why might the author have capitalized these words? How are these words used in the play? (inference/author's craft)
The capitalization indicates that these words mean

something different to members of the Community than they do to readers. In the play, the capitalized words refer to specific people, places, and things that are official, standardized, regulated, etc.

▶ In the Community, what has been eliminated from life and why? (key ideas) *Personal choice, love, color, the arts, extreme weather, and memory have been eliminated because they can provoke strong emotion and obstruct peace, convenience, and ease, which are the foundations of society in the Community.*

▶ Fiona says, “Questioning things is rude.” Why might people in the Community be discouraged from questioning things? *When you question something, you are thinking for yourself, refusing to blindly accept what you are told. You may be expressing disapproval or disagreement. Questioning things is seen as a threat to peace and harmony.*

▶ The Giver says, “But we have stolen life from people. We are distant whispers of what once made

us human.” What does he mean? Do you agree that this has happened in the Community? Explain. The Giver is saying that for the sake of harmony, people are living flat, empty lives. He is speaking up for the value of profound experience, struggle, and individuality. He means that what makes us human is our ability to appreciate beauty, feel emotion, empathize—and that if we don’t do these things, we may be existing, but we are not really living. Students will likely agree, pointing to the absence of love, color, music, family, etc., and to the horrifying practice of killing those who are judged to be imperfect or ineffective.

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

► Why are the Giver and Jonas the only ones who understand what

it means to kill someone? What does memory have to do with it?

In the Community, the concept of death no longer exists; people have been taught to believe in “Release” and “Elsewhere.” Only Jonas and the Giver, who have memories of death, recognize death for what it is.

► What can we do to prevent our society from becoming like the Community? Some ideas: We must beware of giving in to our desire for comfort, safety, etc. We must be critical thinkers, questioning what we are told and challenging things that seem wrong. We must remember and learn from the past, and protect that which brings meaning to our lives.

3 Skill Building: Theme

(10 minutes; activity sheet online)

- As a class, review the definition of *theme*: A message, lesson, or universal truth that applies to people in general, not just the characters in the story. (For more review, use our **Thinking About Theme** activity.)
- Have students work in groups to identify three themes of *The Giver*. (The questions they’ve discussed have prepared them for this task.) Invite the groups to share with the class the themes they

identified. Possible themes include: Memories help shape our morals; for life to be meaningful, it cannot be easy; there is value in pain and struggle; it is important to question what you are told.

4 Reading the Essay

(10 minutes)

Read the essay as a class. Then give students a few minutes to debate whether memory-erasing drugs are a good idea. Students should draw on the text as well as their own ideas.

5 Synthesizing

As a class, discuss the following:

Critical-Thinking Questions

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

► The essay asks if losing a memory would make us less compassionate or less kind.

What does *The Giver* suggest is the answer? The play suggests that the answer is yes. Members of the Community have no memory of death—they know nothing about the pain of losing someone or about the fear of dying. As a result, they have no sense that it is wrong to Release—that is, to kill. Once Jonas gains the memory of death, he is horrified by the practice of Release.

► The essay asks, “Finally, where would we draw the line between a memory that is bad enough to erase and one that isn’t—and who would get to draw that line?” In *The Giver*, where is that line, and who draws it? That is, what kinds of memories have been taken away, and who decided to take them away? Memories that evoke strong emotion—good or bad—have been taken away. It is not spelled out who decided to do this, but the Giver talks to Jonas about changes “we” made, suggesting that society made the decision.

Answer the writing prompt. (10 minutes)

Students are now prepared to respond to the writing prompt on page 18.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Should we always try to make our lives easier?
.....

What makes us human?
.....

What role does memory play in our lives?

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

At the end of the play, Jonas chooses to break the Boundary of Memory. Did he do the right thing? Explain your answer with details from the text.

For Advanced Readers

Imagine that Jonas has time-traveled to the present-day United States. A memory-erasing drug has just been developed. Make a video of Jonas being interviewed on a news program about his thoughts on this new drug.

Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

Levels of Meaning/Purpose: Set in a futuristic society, the play prompts readers to consider complex questions about human nature and what our goals should be as a society. The essay explores the idea of a drug that could erase traumatic memories.

Structure: The play is chronological, though the action pauses at times as the main character inhabits a memory from someone else's life. The essay uses cause/effect and compare/contrast structures.

Language Conventionality and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** some higher academic vocabulary (e.g., *debilitating, emanates, penetrate, traumatic*)
- **Figurative language:** In the play, familiar words are given new meanings (e.g., *Release, Mist*); the essay has rhetorical questions.

Knowledge Demands: Familiarity with the genre of dystopian literature will make the play more accessible.

Lexile: 1000L (essay)

Literature Connections

Connect the play to other classic dystopian stories.

- The Divergent series by Veronica Roth
- The Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins
- "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut

ONLINE RESOURCES

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Thinking About Theme*
- Literary Elements
- Vocabulary*
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Inference
- Core Skill: Mood
- Core Skill: Summarizing

*Supports the lesson plan

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IDEA! Have students read Lowry's novel and see the film adaptation. Discuss the differences between them. Why might the film's screenwriter and director have altered the story and characters the way they did?

Is It Time for Cursive to Die?

For better or worse, cursive—and handwriting in general—is disappearing from our lives.

Preview: An informational essay about the decline of cursive writing and a poignant personal essay about a beloved sister's letters become a meaningful synthesizing activity.

Learning Objective: to synthesize key ideas from two nonfiction texts

Key Skills: synthesizing, author's craft, word choice, structure, inference



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Read, Mark the Text, Debate

1 Preparing to Read

Preview vocabulary. (6 minutes)

Hand out or project our **Vocabulary** word list and definitions for students to use as a reference while they read. Assign the reinforcement activity for homework. Highlighted words: *balm*, *efficient*, *elective*, *eulogy*, *quill*, *relic*, *vividly*.

2 Close Reading: The Informational Essay

- Have students read “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?” in small groups. Then invite each group to share what it found interesting or surprising.
- Discuss the close-reading questions as a class.

Close-Reading Questions

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ **What is the purpose of the first paragraph under the subheading “A Sign of Growing Up”?** How does this paragraph help develop the idea that cursive is a “link to the past”? (author's craft) *The purpose of the paragraph is to show how cursive writing is part*

of history. This is why the author provides examples of where cursive has appeared over the centuries. By mentioning what has been penned in cursive—such as the Declaration of Independence, “one of our country's most famous documents”—the author helps develop the idea that cursive writing connects us to our past.

▶ **Reread the caption at the bottom of page 20. What does *integrity* mean? What context clues help you understand its meaning?** (word choice) *If you have integrity, you have strong morals. The sentence about “sloppy writers” being suspected of having “low moral character” helps the reader understand the meaning of integrity, because sloppy writers with low moral character are presented in contrast to those with good handwriting and integrity.*

▶ **How is the section “Left Behind” structured? Why might the author have structured it this way?** (author's craft) *The section includes a series of questions, which the author does not answer. The author likely chose to end the article with these questions because she wants to encourage the reader to think rather than tell the reader what to think.*

3 Close Reading: The Personal Essay

- Have students read “Why I Keep My Letters” in small groups.
- Discuss the following questions as a class.

Close-Reading Questions

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

- ▶ **The second paragraph begins with “But.” What does this word tell you about the relationship between the information in the first and second paragraphs?** (structure) *The word but is used to signal a compare/contrast relationship between the information in the first and second paragraphs. The first paragraph lists the various mementos the author has of her sister Anne-Marie. The second paragraph explains that Anne-Marie’s handwritten letters are the most meaningful mementos of all.*
- ▶ **How can a letter represent “the substance” of a person?** (inference) *Through both the content of the letter and the style of the writer’s handwriting, a letter reveals the writer’s thoughts and feelings and expresses his or her personality.*
- ▶ **The author writes that texts aren’t enough to “salve” how much she misses her son. What does she mean?** (inference) *To salve is to soothe, as if with a balm. The writer means that short text messages don’t offer enough of her son’s personality, thoughts, or feelings to make her feel connected with him.*

▶ **GO DEEPER!** Have students bring in a letter written either by a relative or by a famous person from history and present it to the class. They should explain what the letter reveals about its writer and his or her world. Encourage students to write their own letters to a loved one.

GO TO SCOPE ONLINE

to see how these texts will challenge your students, including the Lexile scores.

4 Skill-Building: Synthesizing

- Discuss these questions in groups.

Critical-Thinking Questions

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ **What is the difference between handwritten letters and digital forms of communication, such as Snapchat, texts, and tweets?** *Digital communication is quick and efficient and allows us to communicate with many people at once. A handwritten letter is deeper and more personal.*

▶ **Today, we learn a lot about the past through letters. How will future generations learn about us? Will they have the same insights into our way of life as we have into our ancestors’ way of life?** *Answers will vary. Students might say future generations will know a lot about where we went, what we saw, and what we ate based on our Instagram and Facebook postings. But most digital communication is too short and hastily written to reveal profound reflection. Future generations may not have the same insight into the substance of who we are as we have into the substance of past generations.*

▶ **Should cursive be taught in school?** *Answers will vary. Students should draw on the texts as well as their own ideas.*

- Distribute our **Synthesizing** activity, which will prepare students to respond to the prompt on page 21.

ONLINE RESOURCES

ACTIVITIES:

- Close Reading and Critical Thinking*
- Vocabulary*
- Synthesizing*
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Tone
- Core Skill: Central Ideas and Details

*Supports the lesson plan

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