**Unit Plan:** Epic Poetry-Heroism

**Length of Unit:** 6 weeks

**Grade Level:** 9th

**Teacher:** Mrs. Carlson

**Summary:** This unit focuses on epic poetry as its own genre and introduces students to classic and more recent epics, as well as to works of contemporary nonfiction that also address themes related to heroism. Students read Homer's The Odyssey or Virgil's The Aeneid, with special attention to the hero's journey, and learn about the characteristics of an epic hero. They become familiar with classic Greek and Roman mythology and consider the role of the gods in the hero's adventures. Building on themes in the previous unit, they may discuss the role of fate. Through pairings of these works with informational texts, students learn about the ancient city of Troy and the story of the Trojan War for historical context. They may also encounter informational texts that describe the experience of soldiers going to or returning from war in contemporary times; they may compare and contrast these accounts with the experiences of Aeneas or Odysseus. Alfred, Lord Tennyson's “The Lotos-Eaters” is included in the unit so that students may explore how authors draw on the works of other authors to examine related themes. “The Song of Hiawatha” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is included so that students can compare a classic epic with a more recent one. As a segue to the next unit on memoir, William Manchester's Goodbye Darkness allows students to delve more deeply into the themes of bravery and heroism. Teachers may also choose to read excerpts from the Indian epic The Ramayana to explore an epic from yet another culture.

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| **Stage 1 –Desired Results** |
| **Established Goals (Standards)****RL.9–10.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. **RL.9–10.3:** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. **RI.9–10.7:** Analyze various accounts of a subject in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story told in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. **W.9–10.9**: Draw evidence from literary or or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **SL.9–10.3:** Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence. **L.9–10.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.  | **Transfer** |
| Students will be able to independently use their learning to…Unit Objectives* Identify and explain the elements of an epic poem.
* Identify and explain the characteristics of an epic hero.
* Analyze the relationship between myths or legends and epic poetry.
* Examine the historical context of literary works.
* Compare and contrast how related themes may be treated in different genres (here, epic poetry and contemporary nonfiction).
* Hone effective listening skills during oral presentations and class discussions.
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| **Meaning** |
| **Understandings**Students will understand that… | **Essential Questions**Students will keep considering…* Are epic heroes brave, smart, or lucky?
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| **Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill** |
| **KNOWLEDGE**Students will know… | **SKILLS**Students will be skilled at… |

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| **Stage 2 – Evidence of Understanding** |
|  | **Students will show their understanding by…** |
|  | Performance Task(s): |
|  | Other Evidence: |

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| **Stage 3- Learning Plan** |
| Summary of Key Learning Events and Instruction |
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UbD Template from The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units by G. Wiggins and J. McTighe