

# Unit Overview: Parent Guide

## *Wonderstruck*, Grade 5

### What is the goal of this unit?

- Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to understand the challenges of language barriers and ineffective communication. Your child will learn about the importance of language, education, and communication.

### What topics and skills is your fifth grader learning in this unit?

- Language
- Education
- Communication
- Innovations in communication
- Bridging differences
- Informational writing
- Research

### What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the question: *How do the details and illustrations of Wonderstruck help to develop the theme of "effective communication develops strong relationships?"*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by conducting research on an innovation in communication and its various evolutions over time. Your child will write a response to the prompt: *Describe and explain your selected innovation. How was it invented? How has it evolved and changed over time? How is it connected to or how did it lead to other communication innovations?*

Your child will read these texts, watch these videos and listen to these audio clips:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
<i>Wonderstruck</i>	Brian Selzinck	Main text of the unit
<i>The Handmade Alphabet</i>	Laura Rankin	Read aloud
<i>Maniac Magee</i> (excerpts)	Jerry Spinelli	Group text
<i>Frindle</i>	Andrew Clements	Student text

<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i> (chapter 7)	Norton Juster	Group text
Excerpts from the Collection of Essays Illuminating the World of Wonderstruck - "The History of Deaf Culture and Sign Language"	Carol Padden and Tom Humphries	Student text
<i>The Story of My Life (Part I, Chapter IV)</i>	Helen Keller	Group text

### Ideas for discussing communication and language diversity

- What are some different ways you communicate?
- What are some different ways people around you communicate?
- Why is communication important?
- How do you feel when someone doesn't understand you?
- What do you do when someone doesn't understand you?
- Do you speak a language other than English?
- How do you think you would feel if you moved to a different country? How would you communicate at school?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
<i>Out of My Mind</i>	Sharon M. Draper
<i>Who Was Helen Keller?</i>	Gare Thompson
<i>The Trumpet of the Swan</i>	E.B. White
<i>Hedy Lamarr and a Secret Communication System</i>	Trina Robbins
<i>No Talking</i>	Andrew Clements

### What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her

reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading (weekends and school breaks too!). Before bedtime is a great time to read.
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss your child's reading. Ask questions like:
  - What was that book about?
  - What did you like about it?
  - What didn't you like about it?
  - What did you learn?
  - What questions do you have about what you read?
  - What didn't you understand about what you read?
  - What do you want to learn more about after reading the book?
  - How does this book connect to other books you've read?