

COMMON CORE CATHOLIC IDENTITY ELA UNIT PLAN	
Title/Theme	Building Bridges with Unlikely Friends
Grade/Subject	2
Length of Unit/Timeframe	6 weeks
Description	Students explore literal and figurative language through the theme of building bridges.
Overview	Students read informational (how-to) texts on building bridges and view these amazing structures on the Internet. Through realistic fiction, they examine the possibility of friendship in conflict-filled settings. Reading fantasy texts that depict animals' experiences with "bridge-building" completes their exploration. Building on the writing of previous units, they write a letter to a character in <i>Charlotte's Web</i> . Students also gather words from poetry and explore the meanings of idioms and words with common roots.
THE BIG PICTURE	
Essential Questions:	Who is a friend? Why do authors use figurative language?
Catholic Identity Elements:	Friendship Sir 6.15 "A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth." Lk 6.31 "Do to others as you would have them do to you." 1 Sm 18.1-3 Story of David and Jonathan
Common Core Standards RL.2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. RL.2.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. RI.2.6: Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe. W.2.2: Write explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. L.2.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. L.2.2 (b): Use commas in greetings and closings of letters. L.2.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on Grade Two reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies. L.2.4 (d): Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words.	Key Objectives Linked to the Standards Students will be able to: 1. Read a how-to book. 2. Write an explanatory piece on how to do something. W.2.2 3. Discern the difference between the use of literal and figurative language. RL.2.6 4. Discern authors' techniques for describing characters. RL.2.3 5. Write friendly letters to one of the characters in a book. L.2.2(b) 6. Use commas correctly in the greeting and closing of a friendly letter. L.2.2 7. Write responses to a letter from a character's point of view. RL.2.7 8. Use knowledge of a root word, such as bridge, to predict the meaning of compound words and idioms. L.2.4 9. Use gospel values to describe who is a friend. 10. Describe the use of riddles and other language in Haiku poetry. 11. Use art to understand relationships. 12. Listen to/read stories that use literal and figurative language. RL.2.3, RL.2.6
Summative Assessment(s):	Write a paragraph describing who is a good friend. Use an example from one of the stories read to show the qualities of friendship. Include some figurative language. Write a friendly letter to a book character describing how you might become friends.

Unit Readings and Vocabulary	
Fiction Texts	<p><i>George and Martha: The Complete Story of Two Best Friends</i> (Marshall) <i>Henry and Mudge: The First Book</i> (Rylant and Stevenson) <i>If Not for the Cat</i> (Prelutsky) - poetry <i>The Fire Cat</i> (Averill) <i>Snow in Jerusalem</i> (da Costa, Hu, and Van Wright)</p>
Non-Fiction Texts	<p><i>Bridges</i> (Simon) <i>Bridges: Amazing Structures to Design, Build and Test</i> (Johmann, Rieth, Kline) <i>Tarra and Bella: The Elephant and Dog Who Became Best Friends</i> (Buckley)</p>
Essential Unit Vocabulary	<p><i>Pop's Bridge</i>: ashamed, binoculars, skim, narrator, skywalker <i>Bridges: Amazing Structures to Design, Build and Test</i>: upright, accordion-fold <i>George and Martha</i>: relief, chocolate, species <i>Henry and Mudge: The First Book</i>: soaked, blockage, misplaced, principles, deny, consider, opinionated, bulk Incorporate basic and high frequency words as appropriate to the group. Theme word: unlikely</p>
Instructional Activities	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Identity 3,6,9,11,14,17,19,25 <input type="checkbox"/> Language 2,7,9 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading 8,10,13,23,25 <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary 2,4,7,9,12,13,24 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing 5,8,12,22,23,26 <input type="checkbox"/> Viewing 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking/Listening 1,3,4,9,19,23,24 <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking 1,2,3,4,6,9,11,18,20,23,25</p>	
<p><i>Note 1:</i> Incorporate Reading Foundations as appropriate to the group. <i>Note 2:</i> This unit could be taught in three parts. First, start with “bridges” so that students see the bridge as both an architectural structure and a symbolic metaphor coming together. Students will then see how children are able to bridge cultural gaps through friendship. Then read the fictional works to further the theme of Unlikely Friends. Students will think about differences in characters such as Charlotte and Wilbur and the way they become friends. Finally, writing a friendly letter to a book character will help the students to think deeply about the fictional characters. <i>Note 3:</i> Throughout this unit, scatter readings of friendship from the book <i>Tales of Virtue: A Book of Right and Wrong</i> (Baker) and discuss them with the students.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the idea of a bridge as a metaphor by reading the book <i>Pop's Bridge</i> (Eve Bunting). (Help the students think of more metaphors to reinforce the meaning of this important term.) In this book, a group of boys experience the sacrifice involved in bridge building and the joy that comes with friendship. Discuss the literal bridge in the book and the way the bridge served as a link not only between two places, but also between two people. Introduce the following Isaac Newton quotation: “We build too many walls and not enough bridges.” Discuss what Isaac Newton may have meant by his comment. (3,4,12) 2. Teach simile using examples from the book as well as other examples. “...the men cling to the girders like caterpillars on a branch.” “It’s like a giant harp,” my pop says. “There’s a noise like a train wreck as the scaffolding crashes down into the safety net.” (3) 3. Discuss: Why do authors use figurative language? Discuss: Using the narrator and Charlie as examples, who is a friend? (3,4) 4. Introduce a chapter from <i>Bridges: Amazing Structures to Design, Build, and Test</i>. This is an informational book, but it is also a how-to book. It will teach how to build bridge structures in the classroom or at home. Read the text to the children and allow them to note that the how-to section is set up as a series of steps to follow. Gather the supplies and allow the students to follow the directions to experiment with building a bridge. Discuss how diagrams help to explain the directions. (1,12) 	

5. Writing prompt: "After building a bridge in the classroom or at home, write an explanatory paragraph telling someone else how you made your bridge." (2)
6. Compare building a bridge to making friends. Who is a bridge-builder? Who is a friend? (6,9)
7. After reading about bridges, have students predict the meaning of compound words that contain the word "bridge": footbridge, drawbridge, flybridge, and bridgework. Repeat the activity using another root word such as *water*: *waterbed*, *watercolor*, *watermelon*, *waterlog*, *watershed*, *waterproof*, *watertight*, *rainwater*, *waterway*, and *waterspout*. Discuss idioms using the word *bridge* such as "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it," "that's water under the bridge," and "don't burn your bridges." (3,8)
8. Read aloud the book *Charlotte's Web* (E. B. White). After you have finished, have the students connect with the characters in the book by writing friendly letters. Students should choose one of the characters in *Charlotte's Web* and write the character a letter. You may say, "Write a letter to one of the characters in *Charlotte's Web*. Explain why you chose the character, what you like about him or her, and ask the character a question." Model, guide and require proper use of punctuation and form for the letters. (You may model this by writing a friendly letter with the class to post as an example. This could be done on large chart paper, on an easel, on a Smart board and then printed, etc. Another strategy is to write three or four letters and have the students use your rubric to "grade" these letters. This helps them to see "what a four looks like" to help them better understand the expectations of the assignment. Be sure to keep the focus on the required elements.) Revise the letters and edit for spelling and punctuation. Model this first using some example letters so students are clear about how and what to do. Then, have the students trade letters and write back to a classmate as if they were the classmate's chosen character. For example, if a child receives a letter addressed to Wilbur, she would write a letter back as if she were Wilbur and answer the question asked. Be prepared to differentiate this for students who really struggle with make-believe. If this is not possible for a student, have him/her write another letter or a letter to a child in the class. (4,5,6,7,12)
9. Find examples of figurative language in *Charlotte's Web* and discuss how they make the story better. You could do a concept attainment activity for this by writing 3 or 4 examples of figurative language from the book and 3 or 4 non-examples. On a chalkboard or whiteboard, post "yes" and "no." Read the text and have the class decide, is this a yes or no? Have each student or pairs of students do a short presentation on examples of friends in *Charlotte's Web* including what makes them friends. Be sure to explain and distribute a rubric for this presentation so the students are clear about your expectations. (3,9)
10. Have students read *George and Martha* individually or with a partner depending on the students' comfort with this reading level. (12)
11. The Bible tells us in the gospel of Luke "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Find the places in the story where you would have been angry, annoyed or upset if your friend was like either George or Martha. What would you have done? How do George and Martha show friendship? Students will have these discussions in small groups. The teacher will model and/or role-play what these discussions will look like so students are clear about the expectations. (9)
12. As students read the *Henry and Mudge* books, challenge them to look closely at the characters. Before the first chapter, ask the students to be ready to describe Henry and Mudge. Using sticky notes or whiteboards, require each student to write down two characteristics of each character. Although one of the characters is a dog and one is a boy, they have a wonderful friendship. Have students share at least two words to describe Henry and two words to describe Mudge. Discuss what can be learned about friendship through these stories. (4,12)
13. Students then reread the text in small groups to better understand the story. In the sessions that follow, students use sentence strips to practice high-frequency words, distinguish between a base word and a suffix, write new sentences using high-frequency and story words, and read a new passage. (12)
14. How did Henry and Mudge know, right from the start that they were meant to be friends? (9)
15. Introduce *Snow in Jerusalem* (da Costa, Hu, and Van Wright) by reviewing how unlikely friends become friends by finding something in common. Tell the students that they are going to hear a book about two children who were not friends but who found something in common anyway. After hearing the story, have the students focus on how the children find something in common to make a friendship. Talk about how these two characters faced a challenge and made a hard choice. (4,12)

16. Do the two boys become friends? Explain. (4,12)
17. Listen to the story of David and Jonathan from the bible (1 Sm 18.1-3ff). Are David and Jonathan anything like the boys in *Snow in Jerusalem*? (4,9,12)
18. Read Aloud: *Tarra and Bella*. Compare the two stories and how the two friendships were alike and different. (4,12)
19. How did the story *Tarra and Bella* give evidence of the line from the bible “A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth.” (Sir 6.15)? (9)
20. Use the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Baltimore Museum of Art's websites to explore the tradition of album quilts. Discuss with students the reasons behind making such quilts. How would quilting build strong friendships? What types of images do you see in these quilts? What do the images tell us about the people who made these quilts? You could use the Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) by asking these three questions: What’s going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can we find? (11)
21. Using paper squares and cut-out images, divide the class into heterogeneous groupings of three to four students. Have them discuss what type of album quilt they would like to produce as a group—what event should they commemorate? Create with the students or provide a list of examples. Model and guide students through direct instruction and role-playing how to use teamwork to decide what their event will be. Then each group should produce a small “quilt” of images. Samples should be provided so students are clear about the expectations of this assignment. (11)
22. To encourage communication among unlikely friends, arrange for your students to communicate with students from another class in the school or in another place near or far away. Begin e-mail/pen-pal/Skype correspondence with students from another class. Setting parameters for what can be shared, ask students to write letters introducing themselves and asking the other student about him/herself. The purpose of this activity would be to find ways the students are similar and the ways the students are different from one another. This writing activity could also be done writing from whole class to whole class instead of students writing to one another. Provide examples and do at least one example as a whole group and maybe one as a small group or partnership. (6,7)
23. Begin a class discussion by asking the students: “If a real hippopotamus had no other companions, what other kind of animal could you imagine her having for a friend?” Be sure to require good reasons for their opinions as they answer. Be sure to explain and model what a good reason is. Read the book *Owen and Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* (Isabella Hatkoff) aloud. When you are finished reading, have the students discuss what the author (a six-year-old girl) wanted to accomplish by publishing the book, using questions such as: “What did she want to explain? Describe? What questions did she want to answer? Why are there so many photographs?” Ask students to write a paragraph explaining how the two animals in the story became friends. Writing prompt: “We just read about these unlikely friends (i.e., Owen and Mzee). Remember, unlikely means that they probably would not be friends if something didn’t happen to bring them together. Turn and talk to a partner to explain how these two became friends. Now write a paragraph explaining how the two animals in the story became friends. Remember that a paragraph starts with...” Have students read their paragraph to two other students and discuss how the paragraphs are alike and different. (12)
24. As you read from the poetry collection *If Not for the Cat* (Jack Prelutsky), explain to students the Haiku style of poetry. Point out to the students that these poems are very short, but they make you think. As you read a poem, keep the accompanying illustration hidden until students try to guess the animal being described. These poems are filled with words that may be new to your students. When you are finished reading (reciting) each poem, ask students to choose one new word to save in the word bank. (3,4,10,12)
25. Students read *The Fire Cat* to examine the power of friendship, the meaning of responsibility and the concept of happiness. Students make a short presentation giving an example from Jesus’ life of when he was a friend, was responsible and was happy. (3,4,9,12)
26. Students write a paragraph that discusses how Pickles’ determination helps him become a firehouse cat and a friend. (4,9)

Summative Assessments

- Write a paragraph describing who is a good friend. Use an example from one of the stories read to show the qualities of friendship. Include some figurative language.
- Write a friendly letter to a book character describing how you might become friends.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Children's Bible *Charlotte's Web* (White) *Pop's Bridge* (Bunting) *Tales of Virtue* (Baker)
Owen and Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship (Hatkoff) *Snow in Jerusalem* (da Costa)

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINK(S)

This unit teaches: Art: Structural art (e.g., architecture and symmetry), quilts; Geography: World geography (e.g., as related to settings such as Jerusalem); Science: Animals (e.g., habitats)

This unit could be extended to teach:

Science: Animals (e.g., classification)

As a subscriber of Common Core™ Curriculum Maps, this unit was adapted from resources found on their website.