

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

## ***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy**

### **English Language Arts, 12th Grade**

#### WHAT'S THE STORY?

*The Road* describes the journey south taken by a young boy and his father after an unnamed catastrophe has struck the world. The man and the boy, who also remain unnamed throughout the entire novel, travel through the rough terrain of the southeastern United States. The conditions they face are unforgiving: rotted corpses, landscapes devastated by fire, abandoned towns and houses. These two travelers are among the few living creatures remaining on earth who have not been driven to murder, rape, and cannibalism.

The father and his son struggle to survive in the harsh weather with little food, supplies, or shelter. Along the way, they must escape from those who might seek to steal from them or, even worse, to kill them for food. Despite their hardships, the man and the child remain determined to survive, reaffirming to themselves that they are the "good guys" who do not seek to harm others. The boy in particular retains his unquenchable humanity against all odds.

#### CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM\*

*The following are some, but not all, of the connections to curriculum for this novel.*

- **Unit 3: Personal Responsibility**
  - Essential Question: "How does personal responsibility affect not only the individual but also the world as a whole?"
- **Unit 4: Universal Human Experience**
  - Essential Question: "How can reading reveal universal truths about the human experience?"

#### KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems. RL.12.13
- Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. RL.12.2
- Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. RL.12.5
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including

- determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. RL.12.1
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. RL.12.11
  - Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. RL.12.12