

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

English Language Arts, 12th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Joseph Heller's satirical novel follows the character Ocarina as he bumbles his way through World War II attempting to determine either his sanity or his insanity. While his companions stationed on the small island of Pianosa try to convince him that he is the only one who does not see the value of war, Yossarian somehow suspects that he perceives the war concept differently than his associates. Through satire and a series of mishaps in a wartime setting, Heller is able to address such issues as greed and the attainment of great wealth at the expense of others, the establishment of authority through titles only, and the loss of identity which people experience during periods of crisis.

CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM*

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

- **Unit 1: Language and Perspective**
 - Essential Question: "How does language influence perspective?"

KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama. RL.12.3
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. RL.12.4
- Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant. RL.12.6
- Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem, evaluating how each version interprets the source text. RL.12.7
- Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of American and world literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics. RL.12.9
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading. RL.12.10