

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

English Language Arts, 12th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

In 1959 in the small rural community of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family are killed in an attempted robbery. Other than the pursuit of ready cash in the home, there is no apparent motive for the crime. Few clues are left by the killers. In this “true crime novel,” Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation that eventually leads to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers. The impact on the community is devastating, but the overall impact on the Midwest and the country is enormous.

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?”
- **Unit 2: Complex Issues**
 - Essential Questions: “How can examining complex issues from different perspectives influence people?” “How can we effectively present ideas and address other viewpoints?”

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
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an

author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms. RI.12.4

- 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. RI.12.10
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. RI.12.12