

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

***The Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson**

English Language Arts, 12th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

This non-fiction text tells the story of the World's Fair in Chicago, 1893. Readers learn of Chicago's battle to "win" the fair, the competition between architects and other design teams, and the triumphs and tragedies of the fair itself (including the first Ferris Wheel). Parallel to the fair's story is the tragic account of a serial murderer who uses the nation's economy, along with the circumstances created by the fair to manipulate his victims.

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?"
- **Unit 3: Personal Responsibility**
 - Essential Question: "How does personal responsibility affect not only the individual but also the world as a whole?"

KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- 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. RI.12.5
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in media or formats as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. RI.12.7
- Read and comprehend grade-level appropriate nonfiction literature. RI.12.13
- 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
- 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. RI.12.1
- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text. RI.12.2
- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. RI.12.3
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. RI.12.6