

Using the Throughline Strategy

BASICS OF THROUGHLINE

- ▶ A Throughline is a theme, plot, or characteristic that connects stories together.
- ▶ Authors use Throughlines for stories that have a lot of elements going on.
- ▶ Throughlines help the viewer or reader do a few things: understand the theme/character better over time, layer experiences, make predictions, and become invested in the story.
- ▶ Throughlines help the author do a few things, too: chunk out a story so as to not overwhelm the viewer/reader, get deeper with a theme/character, make their content super engaging. Throughlines are directly connected to open loops. Open loops allow you to hook a viewer/reader and gives you a reason to circle back.

HOW TO USE THROUGHLINES IN YOUR CLASSROOM

- ▶ For lesson planning, use your yearly scope and sequence to find when you're circling back to specific topics to add or expand on them throughout the year. This is the point of a spiral curriculum model. Once you know when each of these topics/themes/ideas occurs, you can design a throughline concept. For example, if you know you'll be looking at place value multiple times throughout the year, explore the idea of a digit value throughline because Place value refers to the value of each digit in a number. Try to create a place value story that you can add onto throughout the year.
- ▶ For Pulling in Various Artforms: Look for overarching themes in your curriculum and use them as artistic throughlines. For example, try looking at elements like form, rhythm, or color. These cross artform boundaries, and also connect with other content areas very easily.
- ▶ When you have a specific throughline, it provides a homebase you can keep coming back to throughout the year. Use those open loops!



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EXPANDING STUDENT AUTONOMY WITH THROUGHLINES

- ▶ Student autonomy instantly provides more ownership in the learning process. When students own their learning, they are more willing to engage and stay focused.
- ▶ Ask students to create their own Throughlines they'd like to explore this year.
- ▶ Select a few Throughlines on a specific unit you're working on and have students get into small groups to select one of the Throughlines available. Students can then learn the content of the unit through the lens of their specific Throughline.

NOTES:

