

The

GIVER



Nonfiction
Connections

Overview of Contents

- 6 Informational Texts
 - Variety of Text Features
 - A & B Response Formats
- 7 Extension Activities & Final Project
 - Pair with Informational Texts
- Learn about the Science of Memory
- Google Slides™ Links for Google Drive™
- Standards-Aligned Resources
- Answer Keys for Informational Texts

Texts & Activities Topics

Informational Texts

- What Is Memory?
- Types of Memory
- Memory & the Brain
- From the First Memories...
- ...To the Last Memories
- The Malleability of Memories

Extension Activities

- Brain vs. Computer
- Working on Memory
- Mapping Memories
- First Memories
- Creating Collective Memories
- Text Connections
- Neuroplasticity
- Final Project: *The Giver* Memory Book

Informational Texts

What Is Memory?

Informational Text 1

Name:

In today's modern world, it is easy to associate the idea of memory with technology. It seems as if every new gadget and gizmo can store all types of information, access it when needed, and download it when requested. Advancements in technology even allow computers to recognize patterns from past actions and suggest a future course of action. In truth, the basic function and processes behind computer memory are not all that different from human memory; they both store, make sense of, and transmit information. It's an incredible feat,¹ and the functions that allow humans to accomplish it are still being investigated. Scientists continue to study the human mind and memory processes, learning even more about the complexity of the brain. Like with most things, they are also learning there is far more to discover than has been already found.

Defining Memory

In the simplest of terms, **memory** is the process of acquiring,² keeping, and recalling information. While the definition is straightforward, the importance of memory cannot be understated. Memory helps people make sense of their world and act in the present. A person's memory makes them who they are. However, memory is not a tangible³ thing like your fingers, eyes, or head. Common metaphors or images for memory also don't quite fit. People do not have a mini-computer or filing cabinet in their brain that stores information. Rather, memory involves a complex process that uses all parts of the brain.

Memory Processes 101

There are three main processes that involve memory: encoding, storage, and retrieval. **Encoding** is the means by which a person learns information and has that information altered in a way that allows it to be stored in memory. An individual's perception⁴ of an experience travels through the brain's connections, between **neurons** (nerve cells) and synapses,⁵ finding a home in the memory's storage. When the connections between neurons are strengthened or new ones are created, memories form. People learn information through their senses, and they make meaning from those inputs.

- 6 Nonfiction Readings
- Educational Text Features
- Glossary of Key Vocabulary
- 2-3 Pages Per Reading

Memory Capacity



Scientists estimate the memory capacity of the brain is around 2.5 petabytes (1 million gigabytes)

vs.



A MacBook Pro can have up to 24 gigabytes of memory and 2 terabytes of storage (2,048 gigabytes)

Informational Texts

Storing a memory begins with the perception of the memory (the sensory experience). Then, important memories are stored in short-term memory. However, short-term memory's storage capacity is limited. Therefore, the most important information is transferred to long-term memory. If information continues to be repeated or used, such as a telephone number or how to ride a bike, then it will eventually be transferred to long-term memory and stored indefinitely.

Finally, the last process involving memory is the retrieval⁶ from long-term memory storage. When an individual retrieves a memory, they bring the information stored in long-term memory to their conscious⁷ mind. For short-term memories, retrieval happens in the order in which information is stored, such as a list of numbers. For long-term memories, retrieval occurs by association, such as where a person last put their house keys. This memory process is perhaps the most complex and mysterious to scientists, especially since many factors influence the memory-making system. Distractions, not paying attention, failure to store information, or an inability to retrieve a memory can all play a part in the experience of remembering. Or forgetting.

As you can see, memory-making is a complex process. Do you remember what you ate this morning? What about the clothing you wore yesterday? Last week? Think about what you just read. Now, see if you can recall something you read last week. Comparing those two instances help illustrate the fact that your ability to retrieve information to your conscious mind is no simple task. The last paragraph you read may be easy to remember but remembering what you read last week may depend on many other factors – was the TV on? Were you interested in what you read? To recall anything, even “simple” memories, requires the retrieval of information from many different places in your brain. The complexity of that process is what makes humans distinct⁸ from computers. While the basics of memory processes may seem to closely reflect the way computers gather, store, and retrieve information, humans' ability to do so in a much more nuanced⁹ way is what makes people who they are.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

¹ Feat: an achievement that requires great courage, skill, or strength

² Acquiring: learn or develop (a skill, habit, or quality)

³ Tangible: clear and definite; real

⁴ Perception: the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses

⁵ Synapses: a junction between two nerve cells

⁶ Retrieval: the process of getting something back from somewhere

⁷ Conscious: aware of and responding to one's surroundings; awake

⁸ Distinct: recognizably different in nature from something else of a similar type

⁹ Nuanced: characterized by subtle shades of meaning or expression

➤ Appropriate Spacing to Allow for Annotation

➤ Common Core-Aligned

➤ Informational Texts and Science Standards

➤ Critical Thinking Opportunities

Informational Texts

Informational Text Analysis A
Name: _____

What Is Memory?

Text Features Directions: Fill out the following organizer, identifying the key features of the informational text.

Feature 1: Memory Capacity		
What is it? Name/describe the feature.		
How does this feature contribute to your understanding of the whole article?		

Terms & Vocabulary Directions: Define the key terms below by using context clues from the text.

Memory		
Encoding		
Neurons		

Main Idea & Details Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer below in order to determine the main idea of the text.

Title:		
Key Detail 1:	Key Detail 2:	Key Detail 3:
Main Idea: What is the article mostly about?		

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➤ Comprehension & Analysis Questions

➤ Format A – Text Features, Main Idea

➤ Format B – Analysis Questions

➤ Depth of Knowledge Prompts

Informational Texts

Informational Text Analysis B

Name: _____

What Is Memory?

1. What is human memory? What purpose does memory serve for individuals? Support with textual evidence.

2. Why might the author compare the brain and memory to a computer? How is this metaphor effective in the text? What idea or concept does it help highlight or emphasize? Support with details.

3. How do people create or form memories? Describe the processes involved in memory formation and support with details from the text.

4. What are some of the factors that influence the memory process? What do these factors suggest about the memories that are formed and stored? Explain and support with evidence from the text.

5. How do the explanations about memory formation support the generalization that human memory is complex? Explain at least two ways and support with evidence from the text.

6. How does the text feature "Memory Capacity" deepen your understanding of human memory? What questions does this text feature raise for you? Support with details.

- 2 Formats to Allow for Differentiation
- Use for Centers or Rotation Model
- Pair with Novel – Cross-Text Connections
- Answer Key & Google Slides™ Links

Extension Activities

Brain vs. Computer

Extension Activity 1

Name:

Computers have been at the forefront of cutting-edge technology for decades. They're able to complete incredible tasks at record speed, leading many to ponder whether computers are, in fact, more sophisticated and capable than the human brain.

What Are *Your* Thoughts About The Abilities of Computers & The Human Brain?

Consider your own opinions about computers and the human brain. Do you believe computers are more capable and intelligent than human brains? Do you think computers are just better? Or are human brains better? In the chart below, write down your opinions about computers versus human brains.

+ Computer + How do you think the computer is better than human brains?	+ Human Brain + How do you think the human brain is better than computers?
+ Computer – vs. + Human Brain – Which do you think is superior – the computer or the human brain? Why?	

- 7 Extension Activities
- Variety of Materials – Research, Brain Games, Journaling
- Engage with Different Activities
- Comprehension & Analysis Questions

Extension Activities

Working on Memory

Extension Activity 2

Name: _____

One characteristic of the human brain is that it can adapt and change. The brain is not fixed; it can continue to grow over time. A person can alter the structure of their brain to improve its function, especially when it comes to memories, by purposefully engaging in certain activities.

For this activity, you will participate in a series of games that are designed to help improve your working memory. While these games are certainly fun, they are also an excellent way to help recall information from working memory more accurately and efficiently.

Activity 1: Instant Replay

In Instant Replay, a slide or image will display on the screen. Your goal is to remember as many of the numbers, letters, or objects displayed on the screen. For each "round," write down what you remember seeing. Then, reflect on your experience.

Round	Items You Recall	Total Items on Slide
1		
2		
3		
4		

1. What did you find easy about the activity? What did you find difficult? How does the activity shape or change your understanding of working memory? Support with details.

- Allows for Differentiation
- Standards-Aligned – Informational & Science Texts
- Pair with Informational Texts
- Make Connections Between Texts

Extension Activities

Mapping Memories

Extension Activity 3

Name:

When a person recalls a memory, they activate various parts of the brain to retrieve information stored in those different regions. For this activity, you will connect the science of memories to your own experiences. First, in the chart below, write down what kinds of memories or information is stored in the parts of the brain listed.

Part of the Brain	What kind of information or memories are stored in this region?
Prefrontal Cortex	
Basal Ganglia	
Cerebellum	
Hippocampus	
Amygdala	
Neocortex	

For the next part of this activity, brainstorm two long-term memories of your own you would be comfortable writing about. They can be memories from earlier today, yesterday, last week, last year, or many years ago. Summarize the memories below, then make a final selection.

Long-Term Memory Brainstorm	
Summarize Memory 1	
Summarize Memory 2	
Which memory do you want to write about? Why?	

➤ Foster Rich Discussion

➤ Examination of Science of Memories

➤ Prompts Require Evidence-Based Responses

➤ Cross-Curricular Learning

Extension Activities

First Memories

Extension Activity 4

Name:

Long-term memories help shape a person's identity and contribute to what makes them human. As a person gets older, their first memories become even more significant as some remain while others are lost. For this activity, you will write a narrative, capturing the essence of your first memory as vividly as the memories included in *The Giver*. First, take some time to brainstorm your earliest memories. Jot down these moments in the box below. Once completed, circle the memory you believe to be the first.

Memory Brainstorm

Now, write down specific details about the memory, including sensory information, emotions, and other details in the graphic organizer below.

Category	Details
Sensory – Smell, taste, touch, sound, sight	
Physical – location, objects, people, time / year	
Emotion – feelings associated with memory	
How is this memory important to you? How does it contribute to your sense of self or identity?	

➤ Encourage Critical Thinking

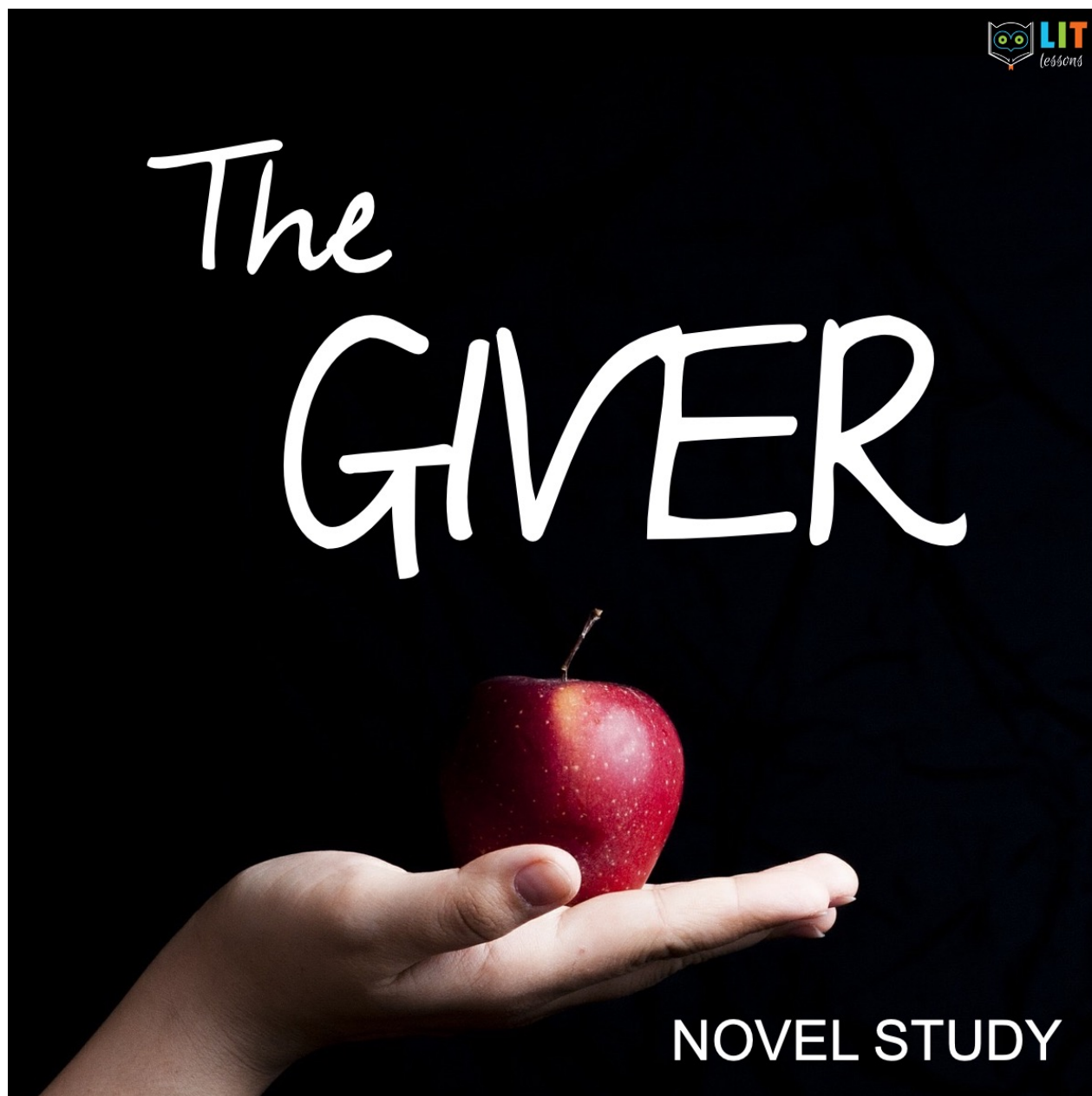
➤ Scaffold Learning with Graphic Organizers

➤ Google Slides™
Links for Google Drive™

➤ Rubrics for Applicable Resources

Bundle & Save

This resource is part of a comprehensive unit on *The Giver*! Click the cover below to preview all the resources available.



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