

# ***Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card** (Published by Tom Doherty Associates)

Approved for use in Contemporary Communications

## **Summary**

It is 2070, forty years since a devastating alien invasion was barely turned back, and the world is desperately searching for soldiers to lead them to victory when the "Buggers" (aliens) return. To save earth, the world government drafts young children to pass a rigorous screening; after sending them to Battle School, they graduate having been trained in the technology of warfare. Six-year-old Andrew Ender Wiggin heads the class in his ability to cope with the technology and strategies to defeat the invaders. Conflict arises externally as a peer and a teacher vie for leadership among the combatants. Internally he battles to not become the same as the alien foes who are monsters. In the end his decent human instincts win, and the world is saved.

## **Connection to the Curriculum**

This novel contains several science fiction motifs and themes that require close inspection by the reader and the ability to transfer thinking about these ideas from a literal to a metaphorical level. Deciphering the main character's motivations, abilities, and genius helps the reader identify with drastic conflicting issues. Connecting the subconscious to reality in the story line develops a stronger reader and critical thinker. The novel, on the surface, seems just to tell an exciting science fiction story. However, it does invite a high level of critical thinking and analysis of rhetorical strategies. For example, the book manifests archetypes that have existed in the past, do exist in the present, and will exist in the future. The work is full of examples of Card's command of descriptive language and his unflinching ear for what goes on in the mind of a person faced with choosing between right and wrong. In Contemporary Communications class, it connects technology to literature (a very hard genre to find) with a vivid character who displays amazing insights about computers, technology, and human conditions. Understanding how humans psychologically function is a necessary trait in all fields of life, but especially in the business and technical world on which the Contemporary Communications curriculum focuses.

## **Standards**

### **Course Objectives (Benchmarks)**

**Reading:** 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary.

**Literature:** 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

**Writing:** 3.1- The students use writing as a tool for learning throughout the curriculum. 3.2- The students use a writing process that includes preparing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to produce a written text.

### **Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)**

#### **Reading:**

1.4.7- The student identifies characteristics of narrative texts.

1.4.9- The student uses prior knowledge, content, and text type features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential evaluative, and critical thinking questions before, during and after reading the text.

1.4.17- The student analyzes and evaluates how an author's style and use of literary devices works together to achieve his or her purpose for writing text.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student identifies and describes different types of characters and analyzes the development of characters.

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and their influence on characters and events in the story or literary text.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices in a text.

#### **Writing:**

3- The student writes effectively for a variety of audiences, purposes, and contexts.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*In this futuristic setting, the society is creating "warriors" at very early ages. The battle scenes contain some mild violent images. While positive concepts are portrayed alongside the negative, the book allows the critical reader to extend the true-life lessons in his or her society as a means of reflecting on, questioning, and understanding his/her world.*

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon