

***Hot Zone* by Richard Preston (Published by Washington Square Press)**

Approved for use in Communication Arts IV

Summary

In *Hot Zone*, Richard Preston gives the account of an outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., in 1980. Secret government forces are mobilized to stop the spread of the “hot” virus from the rain forest of Africa. USAMRID (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases) and the civilian operated CDC (Center for Disease Control) are locked in a struggle to deal with a situation for which neither is prepared. Preston provides enough riveting information about the enigmatic Ebola virus to arouse the reader’s curiosity as well as foster proper respect for micro biotic life.

Connection to the Curriculum

Because *Hot Zone* is based on true events yet reads like fiction, student interest and involvement with the text is high. Information is provided about lethal viruses and their effect on individuals as well as whole populations. Connections can be made with current events as newspapers and magazines carry information about outbreaks of Ebola in Africa on a regular basis. During the reading of *Hot Zone*, many questions are generated by students, and this book provides an excellent springboard for research.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Research: 4.1- The students use effective research practices.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.2.1- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.3.5- The student identifies, interprets, and analyzes the use of figurative language including similes, metaphors, analogies, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, personification, idioms, imagery, and symbolism.

1.3.6- The student discriminates between connotative and denotative meanings and interprets the connotative power of words.

1.4.7- The student identifies characteristics of narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.8- The student understands the purpose of text features (e.g., title, graphs/charts and maps, table of contents, pictures/illustrations, boldface type, italics, glossary, index, headings, subheadings, topic and summary sentences, captions, sidebars, underlining, numbered or bulleted lists, footnotes, annotations) and uses such features to locate information in and to gain meaning from appropriate-level 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.

1.4.11- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.13- The student compares and contrasts varying aspects (characters’ traits and motives, ideas, themes, problem-solution, cause-effect relationships, ideas and concepts, procedures, viewpoints, authors’ purposes, themes, persuasive techniques, use of literary devices, thoroughness of supporting evidence) in one or more appropriate-level texts.

1.4.15- The student uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information (stated and implied main ideas, main events, important details, underlying meaning) from appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts in logical or sequential order, clearly preserving the author’s intent.

1.4.17- The student analyzes and evaluates how an author’s style (word choice, sentence structure) and use of literary devices (foreshadowing, flashback, irony, symbolism, tone, mood, satire, imagery, point of view, allusion, overstatement, paradox) work together to achieve his or her purpose for writing text.

Research:

4.1.1- The student generates relevant, investigating, and researchable questions in order to create a thesis.

4.1.2- The student locates appropriate material from a variety of sources for use in research.

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

Due to its topic of the Ebola virus, this text contains graphic, disturbing descriptions of death that result from the outbreak. It also contains profanity (including the “f” word) in conjunction with the panic, fear, and tragedy.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon