

## Unit 2.1 • Bearing Witness

# Unit Overview

In this unit, students consider the meaning of justice, the importance of bearing witness to acts of injustice, and whether bearing witness can be a form of justice.

### Unit texts

The unit's nonfiction text, *The Murder of Emmett Till*, provides background knowledge on Emmett Till's life and murder, and the important contributions his story made to the Civil Rights movement. *A Wreath for Emmett Till* offers a response to this tragedy in poetry. The unit novel, *Ghost Boys*, is an engaging magical realist text about a young African-American boy who is shot by a White police officer in modern-day Chicago. His ghost then meets the ghost of Emmett Till. The novel explores themes of race-based violence, justice and bearing witness.



### Literature Used in Unit 2.1:

- *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- *The Murder of Emmett Till* by Henrietta Toth
- *A Wreath for Emmett Till* by Marilyn Nelson

### Unit skills and topics

Literary analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interrelation of character, plot and setting</li> <li>• Comparing and contrasting a fictional portrayal and a historical account of the same event</li> </ul>
Reading comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizing and clarifying as components of Reciprocal Teaching</li> <li>• Using 5 Ws (who, did what, when, etc.) as a scaffold for summarizing</li> <li>• Using and citing evidence from a text</li> </ul>
Decoding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying base words and chunking compound words</li> <li>• Recognizing and chunking words with a base plus a prefix or suffix</li> </ul>
Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What could bring justice for Jerome?</li> </ul>
Fluency topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trayvon Martin, Jim Crow, the KKK, Civil Rights, Tamir Rice, the South Side of Chicago, Peter Pan, polio, the Negro Leagues, anti-Semitism, Day of the Dead, Thurgood Marshall, George Floyd</li> </ul>