

“The Land—Ever-Changing and Forever”

We, by default, must be part of the land, yet it is too easy to forget our changing relationships with the land throughout history and how they have brought us to where we are today. “The Land—Ever-Changing and Forever” highlights this relationship as a running theme through four character’s stories. Another major theme involves characters having to face difficult situations and choices, and what is involved in “growing up.”

Rich in description and built on character rather than message, the module immerses the students in the Michigan Grade Level and Content Expectations for the fourth and fifth grade in that the students “analyze how characters’ traits and setting define plot, climax, the role of dialogue, and how problems are resolved” **(R.NT.04.03)** Through classroom instruction, the module can build explanation of “how authors use literary devices including exaggeration and metaphors to develop characters, themes, plot, and functions of heroes, anti-heroes, and narrators” **(R.NT.05.04)** (https://www.michigan.gov/documents/Reading_x-Grade_12_144925_7.12.05.pdf)

The Land itself speaks to provide a frame for the story. Achak, an Ottawa boy in the 1700’s, learns about his family through his relationship to the land. Violet, a girl in 1850’s Grand Rapids, has a different point of view in this saw mill town, leading towards agriculture. At roughly the same time, Alpha Wolf must lead his pack when there is a bounty on their heads. Finally, in modern day, city girl Latoya gets a glimpse of the peace of a waterfall.