

Grade 8: Unit 6

In the Time of the Butterflies: Connected Text Seminars

Seminar 1: Connected Text

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars understand the history behind Trujillo, the former dictator of the Dominican Republic and overarching antagonist of *In the Time of the Butterflies*.

Seminar 1: “Rafael Trujillo” from The History Channel (Nonfiction)

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday’s seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Tell scholars that today they will be reading about Trujillo, the former dictator of the Dominican Republic and villain of Alvarez’s novel *In the Time of the Butterflies*.

Read and Discuss — 30 minutes

Display “Rafael Trujillo.”

Preview the Text (2 minutes):

- Have scholars read the title and scan the article to frame their thinking.
- Call on scholars to share what they noticed about the text and what they will think about as they are reading.

Read (3 minutes):

- Say: *As you are reading, think, What is this text mostly about?*
- Read the article aloud while scholars follow along on their digital copies.

Discuss (3 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What is this text mostly about? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Read (10 minutes):

- Say: *As you are rereading, think, Why did the author write this article?*
- Read the article aloud as scholars follow along on their digital copies. While reading aloud, pause to ask the questions below:
 - Stop after line 10, "... determined to topple his regime."
 - Partner Talk: What is the significance of Trujillo's assassination attempt on Romulo Betancourt?
 - Stop after line 23, "... the 'Era of Trujillo.'"
 - Partner Talk: How did Trujillo rise to power?
 - Stop after line 47, "... government."
 - Partner Talk: What did Trujillo do to "retain ultimate control over the Dominican Republic for 31 years" (lines 37–38)?
 - Discuss: Why did the author write this text?

Main Idea Jot (2 minutes):

- Scholars jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars are working, circulate to determine which scholars have a bull's-eye main idea jot and which do not.

Discuss (8 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions as a whole class: What is the author's point of view on Trujillo? How does the author make his argument convincing?

Give scholars 2 minutes to revise their main idea jots based on the discussion.

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- Imagine that the president wants to extend his term limit beyond what is constitutionally allowed. Would the author agree that term limits should be enforced? Why or why not? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.