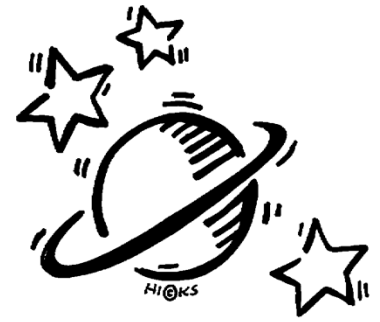


RATIONALE for
A Wrinkle in Time

Madeleine L'Engle

New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for
Young Readers: 1962



I chose *A Wrinkle in Time*, not only because it is an award-winning novel, but because it simultaneously addresses all of the petty heartbreaks of adolescence as well as some of the greatest questions of the universe. Although it is primarily categorized in the science fiction genre, it contains the elements of an action novel, a romance, a suspenseful mystery, and even some philosophy. It is a wonderful coming-of-age journey, but because of the complexity of its concepts, it is an intriguing read for any age.

Many teachers have found it appropriate to teach this in grades as low as fourth or fifth, and L'Engle herself believes that it is perfectly comprehensible for a sixth grade classroom. Although the storyline and vocabulary load is quite reader-friendly, the scientific, universal, and philosophic concepts are rather complex, even for an adult. Even though I have designed this particular unit with a sixth grade class in mind, it should not be implied that it is a simplistic book. If it is used in younger grades, the coming of age themes and adolescent struggles could be emphasized over the meditation of the time and space continuum.

Due to the many layers of complexity in this novel, it should take about two to three weeks to teach, especially if difficult vocabulary is covered and if cross-curricular science learning is to take place. If there is time, this unit could

be easily expanded to allow the students to participate in a final research project including: historical figures mentioned in the books, cross-curricular applications in researching Utopian societies in history, or in creating their own science fiction story. Other teachers have suggested that this book (along with the other books in the tetralogy) could be used along with other units to teach allegory, symbol, foreshadowing, and fantasy.

Most importantly, *A Wrinkle in Time* addresses one of the most important issues that is dealt with in adolescence: the concept of free will and the role of choice. Through her story, Madeleine L'Engle truly emphasizes that our ability to choose is precious, and describes the horrors of the alternative in the dystopian society of Camazotz. L'Engle truly brings the battle of good and evil to life in making it real and applicable in our modern society. This book has remained a classic for so long because the issues and characters are timeless, and nothing in its writing style nor its story marks it as an "older" or "out-dated" piece of literature.