In this unit students will read a variety of informative and literary nonfiction texts focusing on the tragedy and discovery of the Titanic. The readings will provide them with the opportunity to uncover the understandings that discovery is the illumination of information, discovery leads us to understand the truth, and discovering types and features of nonfiction makes us more effective readers. Through discussion with their classmates and creation of several graphic organizers, students will answer the question “what is discovery and what is it not?” As students read the nonfiction books 882 ½ Amazing Answers to Your Questions About the Titanic and Exploring the Titanic accompanied by various newspaper articles, biographies, autobiographies and essays, they will explore the questions “how does discovery affect our understanding?” and “to what extent is reading nonfiction different from reading fiction and to what extent is it the same?” The unit will conclude with a project in which students will apply what they have learned to create an informational and a literary nonfiction text. The texts will be intended for a time capsule to help people in the future discover the people and place of the student’s middle school in the current year.

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