



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2026 Volume IV: Resistance from Aristotle to Star Wars

Voices of Resistance: Letters from the Dragon World

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by Julian Lopez Carmona

Voices of Resistance: Letters from the DragonWorld is a fifth-grade English Language Arts unit that uses Tui T. Sutherland's *Wings of Fire: The Dragonet Prophecy* as the interest anchor text to explore the concepts of power, tyranny, and resistance. The unit centers on one guiding question: **When is it right to say no?** Because fifth-grade students are beginning to question rules, expectations, and limitations placed on them by adults, this unit gives them a meaningful way to examine authority, control, legitimacy, and justice through literature.

Students read selected scenes from the novel alongside short, adapted ideas from political philosophy and resistance literature, including Plato, Sophocles, Livy, Tacitus, The Red Nation, David Walker, C.L.R. James, and John Lewis. Through discussion protocols, close reading, and guided writing, students learn to distinguish authority from domination, protection from control, and resistance from revenge. By embodying the voices of characters in the story, students write letters from the perspective of characters in the dragon world. These letters ask students to use evidence, audience, purpose, and voice to show how power feels from the inside and how language can become a tool for reflection, argument, and change.

(Developed for ELD, grade 5; recommended for ELA, grades 5-7, and Writing, grades 4-7)

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