Once I started brainstorming ideas for this literature theme, I couldn’t stop!

Once I had decided that it was meaty enough to make into a unit, I created the planning web below.

After developing that first literature theme, I discovered Perfection Learning Company’s Beyond the Basal series of teacher’s guides and Scholastic Inc.’s Innovations, each devoted to a noted piece of children’s literature. These guides helped me develop literature themes more quickly and got me thinking about how I could make the themes more expansive, especially where skills were concerned.

### Literature
- The Cloud Book
- Questions and Answers About Weather
- Weather Words and What They Mean
- Storms
- Could Be Worse
- Grandpa’s Too-Good Garden
- Song and Dance Man
- Blackberries in the Dark
- The War with Grandpa
- What Happens to a Hamburger?
- Roxaboxen
- My Little Island

### Reading
- Fact and fantasy
- Alphabetical order (alphabetize foods)
- Alliteration
- Cause and effect
- Imagery
- Comparatives and superlatives
- Vowel dipthongs [ou/ow (cloud), oi/oy (joy), ew (blew)]

### Math
- Graphing (favorite foods, trends)
- Reading a thermometer
- Adding calories from food cards to determine an appropriate meal
- Subtracting food prices in newspaper ads from $10 to get as close to $0 as possible
- Making change at class “grocery” store
- Geometry of food objects
- Symmetry of food objects
- Spaghetti and meatball storyboards

### Science, Health, Social Studies
- Weather
- Mapping an imaginary land
- Families (Adopt-a-Grandparent)
- Communities
- Nutrition
- Properties (sink or float)

### Art, Music, P. E.
- Building stacked sandwiches
- Learning a tap dance (“Song and Dance Man”)
- Building a model of a town
- Preparing a concert for a senior citizens’ home

### Extended Theme
As you become more comfortable with integration, you may create a theme that will last a month or so. At this point, the theme must be grounded in a concept. Month-long themes based on a topic rather than a concept and rationale can become tiresome for students and teachers, and often fail to result in deep understanding of anything meaningful, as they may focus on learning facts related to the topic rather than creating connections to be carried over into life.