Grade 6 English Language Arts, Unit 1
Title: Analyze Informational Text

Overview

**Number of instructional days:** 25  (1 day = 50-60 minutes)

**Unit Summary**

In this unit, students will read several pieces of literary non-fiction and examine the presentation and structure. They identify and summarize the central idea of the text and closely examine how it is developed through details. They look in detail at how a key individual, event or idea is presented; such as recognizing that an idea is elaborated through examples or anecdotes. Close study of structure is emphasized, with students analyzing how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section contributes to the development of ideas. Students not only recognize an author’s point of view or purpose, they explain how it is revealed through the details and elements of the text.

In collaborative discussion groups, students share such ideas. They write routinely to summarize and answer questions about the texts. Through both oral and written communication, students cite textual evidence to support their analysis. Students determine figurative, connotative and technical meanings of words. In addition, they are provided with strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words. As part of this unit, students also interpret information that is presented in diverse media or formats, such as visually. They analyze how particular words, scenes, or sections of a text/media contribute to the development of ideas.

In the following unit, students will apply what they have learned about how informative texts are developed and structured to write their own explanatory/informative piece.

**Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used**

- ANALYZE what text says **explicitly**
  - CITE textual evidence to support analysis
  - DRAW inference to support analysis

- DETERMINE central idea through details
  - SUMMARIZE text **distinct from personal opinions or judgment**

- ANALYZE in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is INTRODUCED, ILLUSTRATED, and ELABORATED
• DETERMINE the meaning of words and phrases
  • Figurative language
  • Connotative meanings
  • Technical meanings

• ANALYZE how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into overall structure of text

• ANALYZE how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section CONTRIBUTES to the development of ideas

• DETERMINE an author's point of view/purpose and EXPLAIN how it is conveyed

• DRAW evidence from informational text to SUPPORT analysis, reflection, and research

• ENGAGE in collaborative discussions with diverse partners including one-on-one, small groups, teacher led
  • READ/STUDY required material in preparation for discussion
  • DRAW on evidence and REFLECT on ideas
  • DEFINE roles, SET specific goals and deadlines, FOLLOW rules for collegial discussions
  • POSE AND RESPOND with elaboration and detail to specific questions under discussion
  • REVIEW key ideas
  • REFLECT and PARAPHRASE to DEMONSTRATE understanding of multiple perspectives

• INTERPRET information presented in diverse media and formats
  • EXPLAIN how it CONTRIBUTES to topic

• DETERMINE/CLARIFY the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words/phrases from a range of strategies
  • USE context as clue
  • USE common grade appropriate Greek/Latin affixes and roots
  • USE reference materials (print and digital)
  • VERIFY preliminary determination of the meaning of a word/phrase

Essential Questions
This section lists 2 – 6 essential questions students should be able to answer by the end of this unit of study. While these questions will relate directly to the unit and represent the big ideas of the unit, they should be relatively broad and open-ended in nature, and should not be easily answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.

- How is information effectively organized within literary nonfiction? How do text structures and features help a reader better understand the meaning?
- How do vocabulary, particular details, and relevant evidence combine to create the central idea of an informational piece?
- How does discussing or writing about informational text help to sharpen our thinking?

### Written Curriculum

#### Grade-Level Expectations

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

#### Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:

RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.3 Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples and anecdotes)

RI.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

RI.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

RI.6.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
  b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction

SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
  b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
  c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
  d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.6.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

L.6.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
  a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible).
  c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
  d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:

None

Standards that Recur through many/all of the Units of Study:

None

Clarifying the Standards
Key: RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards

RL – There are no Focus Standards in this unit.

RI – RI.1. In grade 5, students quoted from a text when explaining what it says explicitly and implicitly. In grade 6, they cite text evidence to support analysis (not just explanation) of text. In grade 7, they will cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis.

RI.2 In grade 5, students determined two or more main ideas in a text, explaining how they are supported by key details; they summarized text. In grade 6, students determine how a central idea is conveyed through particular details. They can summarize a text without including personal opinions. In grade 7, they will analyze the development of two or more central ideas over the course of a text and will be able to provide an objective summary.

RI.3 In grade 5, students explained the relationships between two or more individuals, events, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text. In grade 6, they move from explaining relationships to analyzing in detail how a key individual, event or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text; for example, an analysis might include recognizing that an idea is elaborated through examples or anecdotes. In grade 7, students will focus on analyzing the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas; for example, they might analyze how ideas influence individuals.

RI.4. In grade 5, students determined the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases related to grade level subject matter. In grade 6, they also determine figurative, connotative, and technical meanings of words and phrases. In grade 7, they will continue to do the same, and they will also analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.5 In grade 5, students compared the structure (e.g., chronology) of events, ideas or information in two or more texts. In grade 6, they now analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the structure of a text and contributes to the development of ideas. In grade 7, they will analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text and develop ideas.

RI.6. In grade 5, students analyzed multiple accounts of the same event or topic for differences in point of view. In grade 6, they determine an author’s point of view or purpose and explain how it is conveyed in the text. In grade 7, they will do the same and also analyze how the author distinguishes his position from that of others.

W – W.9.b

W.2 -

SL – SL.1. In grade 5, students engaged effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics. (1a) They came to discussions prepared, (1b) followed rules and assigned roles, (1c) posed and responded to questions by commenting and elaborating. (1d) They also reviewed key ideas and drew conclusions.
In grade 6, students continue to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. (1a) They still come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material, but now they draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. (1b) When they follow rules and roles, it will be rules for collegial discussions, and they will set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (1c) When they pose and respond to questions, it is now with elaboration and detail and in this grade their comments specifically contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion. (1d) When they review key idea and draw conclusions, they demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing. In grade 7, these expectations will continue with some additions. (1b) When students will track progress toward goals and deadlines. (1c) They will pose questions that elicit elaboration and they will respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. (1d) When reviewing and concluding, they will acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

SL.2. In grade 5, students summarized a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats. In grade 6, students now interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (such as, visually, quantitatively, orally) and they also explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue. In grade 7, they will analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and explain how the ideas clarify the topic or issue.

L–L.4. In grade 5, students chose from a range of strategies to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases. (a) They used context. (b) They used Greek and Latin affixes and roots. (c) They consulted reference materials. In grade 6, students continue to choose from a range of strategies to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content. (a) They use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence). (b) They use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots. (c) They consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital. (d) They verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). In grade 7, students will continue to (a) use context and (b) use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots. (c) They will consult both general and specialized reference materials. (d) They will continue to verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.

Resources:
References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms
• Informational/Explanatory Writing
Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers’ knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept. Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and precis writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and resumes. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue. Because an argument deals with whether the main claim is true, it demands empirical descriptive evidence, statistics, or definitions for support. When writing an argument, the writer supports his or her claim(s) with sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

**Editing** – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with improving the clarity, organization, concision, and correctness of expression relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to **revising**, a smaller-scale activity often associated with surface aspects of a text; see also **revising**, **rewriting**

**Evidence** – Facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis and that can be evaluated by others; should appear in a form and be derived from a source widely accepted as appropriate to a particular discipline, as in details or quotations from a text in the study of literature and experimental results in the study of science

**Revising** – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with a reconsideration and reworking of the content of a text relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to **editing**, a larger-scale activity often associated with the overall content and structure of a text; see also **editing**, **rewriting**
Standard English – In the Standards, the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States; used in the Standards to refer to formal English writing and speaking; the particular focus of Language standards 1 and 2 (CCSS, pp. 26, 28, 52, 54)

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars for Informational Texts: English Language Arts, pages 90-92
Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave, Written by Himself
Petry, Ann. Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad
Steinbeck, John. Travels with Charley: In Search of America

Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts: English Language Arts, page 93
• Students analyze in detail how the early years of Harriet Tubman (as related by author Ann Petry) contributed to her later becoming a conductor on the Underground Railroad, attending to how the author introduces, illustrates, and elaborates upon the events in Tubman’s life. [RI.6.3]

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars for Informational Texts: History/Social Studies, pages 93-95
United States. Preamble and First Amendment to the United States Constitution (1787, 1791)
Lord, Walter. A Night to Remember
Isaacson, Phillip. A Short Walk through the Pyramids and through the World of Art
Murphy, Jim. The Great Fire
Greenberg, Jan, and Sandra Jordan. Vincent Van Gogh: Portrait of an Artist
Partridge, Elizabeth. This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie
Monk, Linda R. Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution
Freedman, Russell. Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott

Macaulay, David. Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction
Mackay, Donald. The Building of Manhattan
Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. The Number Devil: A Mathematical Adventure
Peterson, Ivars and Nancy Henderson. Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone
Katz, John. Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho
“Geology.” U*X*L Encyclopedia of Science
“Space Probe.” Astronomy & Space: From the Big Bang to the Big Crunch
“Elementary Particles.” New Book of Popular Science
California Invasive Plant Council. Invasive Plant Inventory

Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts: History/Social Studies & Science, Mathematics, and Technical Subjects, page 100
• Students analyze the governmental structure of the United States and support their analysis by citing specific textual evidence from primary sources such as the Preamble and First Amendment of the U.S.
Constitution as well as secondary sources such as Linda R. Monk’s *Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution.* [RH.6–8.1]

- Students evaluate Jim Murphy’s *The Great Fire* to identify which aspects of the text (e.g., loaded language and the inclusion of particular facts) reveal his purpose; presenting Chicago as a city that was “ready to burn.” [RH.6–8.6]
- Students *describe how* Russell Freedman in his book *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* integrates and presents information both sequentially and causally to explain how the civil rights movement began. [RH.6–8.5]
- Students *integrate* the quantitative or technical information expressed in the text of David Macaulay’s *Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction* with the information conveyed by the diagrams and models Macaulay provides, developing a deeper understanding of Gothic architecture. [RST.6–8.7]
- Students construct a holistic picture of the history of Manhattan by *comparing and contrasting the information gained from* Donald Mackay’s *The Building of Manhattan* with the multimedia sources available on the “Manhattan on the Web” portal hosted by the New York Public Library (http://legacy.www.nypl.org/branch/manhattan/index2.cfm?Trg=1&d1=865). [RST.6–8.9]
- Students learn about fractal geometry by reading Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson’s *Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone* and then generate their own fractal geometric structure by *following the multistep procedure* for creating a Koch’s curve. [RST.6–8.3]

**Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing**

**Terminology**

**Challenging Concepts**

**Online Resources**

- RIDE [http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/CommonCoreMaterials.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/CommonCoreMaterials.aspx)
- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
- PARCC [http://www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org)
- Common Core State Standards Initiative [http://www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)
- Achieve the Core [http:www.achievethecore.org](http:www.achievethecore.org)

**Other Resources**
Grade 6 English Language Arts Unit 2
Title: Writing to Explain and Inform

Overview

Number of instructional days: 30  (1 day = X minutes)

Unit Summary
Students will apply their knowledge of the structure and presentation of nonfiction texts to plan, develop, and revise a piece of informative or explanatory writing while demonstrating their command of standard English conventions. Students will be exposed to different authors’ presentations of the same events/ideas. When writing their pieces, student will present a clear topic and use compare/contrast and other strategies to organize their ideas and information. They will include headings and decide what other formatting, graphics or multi-media to include. They will expand their ideas by including facts, definitions, quotations and examples. Their writing process will emphasize revising and editing their work to improve transitions, precise language and vocabulary, and maintaining a formal style.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

COMPARE and CONTRAST one author’s presentation of events with that of another author’s presentation of events.

SELECT, ORGANIZE, ANALYZE content to WRITE informative/explanatory text to EXAMINE a topic and CONVEY ideas, concepts, and information
- USE strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect
  - INCLUDE formatting, graphics, and multimedia when useful for comprehension
- DEVELOP topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or examples
- USE appropriate transitions
- USE precise language and domain specific vocabulary
- ESTABLISH and MAINTAIN a formal style
- PROVIDE concluding statement

DEVELOP and STRENGTHEN writing by PLANNING, REVISIGN, EDITING, REWRITING or TRYING a new approach.

USE technology including the Internet to PRODUCE and PUBLISH writing as well as to INTERACT and COLLABORATE with others.

CONDUCT short research project
• DRAW on several resources
• NARROW/REFINE the inquiry as necessary

GATHER relevant information from multiple print and digital sources
• EVALUATE credibility of each source
• QUOTE/PARAPHRASE data and conclusions
• AVOID plagiarism
• PROVIDE bibliographic information

DEMONSTRATE command of the conventions of Standard English: capitalization, punctuation (commas, parenthesis, and dashes), and spelling when WRITING

Essential Questions
This section lists 2 – 6 essential questions students should be able to answer by the end of this unit of study. While these questions will relate directly to the unit and represent the big ideas of the unit, they should be relatively broad and open-ended in nature, and should not be easily answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.

• How can you as an author effectively paraphrase and cite evidence gathered from multiple sources to convey information?
• What are the steps required in the writing process?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Level Expectations
The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:

RI.6.9 Compare and contrast one author’s presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
   b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

W.6.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

W.6.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

W.6.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

L.6.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*

b. Spell correctly.

Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:

RI.6.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

SL.6.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

Standards that Recur through many/all of the Units of Study:
Clarifying the Standards

Key:  RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards

RL – RI.9 In grade 5, students integrated information from several texts on the same topic. **In grade 6, they now compare/contrast one author’s presentation of events with that of another.** In grade 7, they will analyze how two or more writers on the same topic shape their presentation by advancing different evidence or interpretations of facts.

RF –

W – W.2. In grade 5, students wrote informative and explanatory texts to examine and convey ideas and information. They introduced a topic clearly, provided a focus, and grouped information logically. They included formatting, illustrations and multimedia. They developed a topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, examples. They used words, phrases and clauses to link ideas and precise language and vocabulary to inform or explain. They provided a concluding statement related to the topic. **In grade 6, students write informative and explanatory texts that examine and convey concepts as well as ideas and information, and they now do this through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.** When they organize, they use strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect. They continue to include formatting and multimedia, but their illustrations now include graphics such as charts and tables. The facts, details, etc. they use to develop the topic now must be relevant. Students still use precise language and domain specific vocabulary to inform or explain. Added to the expectations are that they use appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts and that they maintain a formal style. In addition, **their concluding statement or section must follow from the information or explanation presented.** In grade 7, students will continue the expectations of the previous grade with a few additions. They will introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow. They will use transitions to create cohesion as well as clarify relationships. Their concluding statement will support, not simply follow from, the information or explanation presented.

W.4., W.5, W.6. In previous grades and grade 5, students were expected to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the task, purpose and audience. They also were expected to revise and edit (with guidance and support from peers and adults) writing when necessary and to use technology (with guidance and support from adults) to support the writing process. **(W.5) With a lesser amount of guidance and support, they continue to develop and strengthen writing by planning, revising, rewriting or trying a new approach, and by editing for conventions as indicated in Language standards 1-3.** **(W.6) With independence, they can use technology, including the Internet, to produce and**
publish writing and interact with others. They can type a minimum of three pages in one sitting. In grade 7, these expectations will continue. In addition (W.5), students’ planning, revising, and editing, will focus on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. Also (W.6), they will use technology to link to and cite sources.

W.7. In grade 5, students conducted short research projects using several sources to investigate different aspects of a topic. In grade 6, they conduct short research projects in order to answer a question. They continue to draw on several sources, but now they also refocus the inquiry when appropriate. In grade 7, they will do the same but they will also generate additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

W.8. In grade 5, students recalled relevant information or gathered relevant information from print and digital sources; they summarized or paraphrased in notes and finished work, and provided a list of sources. In grade 6, they use multiple print and digital sources to gather relevant information. Now they also assess the credibility of each source. Other additions to the grade, are that students quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. In grade 7, will do the same, but they will also use search terms effectively, assess not only the credibility but also the accuracy of each source, and follow a standard format for citation.

SL –

L – L.2. In grade 5, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing. (a) They used punctuation for items in a series. (b) They used a comma for introductory element. (c) They used a comma to set off the words yes and no. (d) They used underlining, quotation marks or italics for titles of works. (e) They spelled grade-appropriate words and consulted spelling references. In grade 6, students continue to demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (a) They use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. (b) They spell correctly. In grade 7, students will continue to demonstrate command of capitalization, punctuation and spelling. They will apply a previously introduced skill (L.6.1a) to more sophisticated writing. The will also use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.

Resources:
References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks
Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

Terminology

Challenging Concepts

Online Resources

Other Resources
Grade 6 English Language Arts Unit 3

Title: Evaluating and Writing an Argument from Nonfiction

Overview

Number of instructional days: 35 (1 day = X minutes)

Unit Summary

In this unit, students will be provided with models and exemplars to aid in their understanding of how a clear, organized argument is structured. They will read and analyze the arguments to recognize the importance of including relevant evidence to support a claim. Within these models, students will follow the line of the arguments, map them out, and identify the supported claims. To apply their understanding, students will write an argumentative piece based on an unbiased informational text provided by the teacher. They will consider the evidence presented in the text, introduce a claim, provide supporting evidence and develop a concluding statement that follows from the evidence presented. Vocabulary and style will be appropriate to the task. Transitional words will be used to clearly connect ideas. Students will be expected to demonstrate command of standard English conventions.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

TRACE the arguments and specific claims in a text
EVALUATE the arguments and specific claims in a text
• DISTINGUISH supported claims from unsupported claims

WRITE arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence
• INTRODUCE claims and ORGANIZE reasons
• SUPPORT claims and USE credible sources
• CLARIFY relationships among claims and reasons
• ESTABLISH and MAINTAIN a formal style
• PROVIDE a concluding statement

DRAW evidence from informational text to SUPPORT analysis and reflection

DETERMINE speaker’s arguments/claims
• DISTINGUISH between supported and unsupported claims
DEMONSTRATE command of the conventions of standard English when WRITING

- USE pronouns in proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive)
- USE intensive pronouns
- RECOGNIZE/CORRECT inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person
- RECOGNIZE/CORRECT vague pronouns (i.e., unclear or ambiguous antecedents)
- RECOGNIZE variations from standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking
- IDENTIFY AND USE strategies to IMPROVE expression

Essential Questions
This section lists 2 – 6 essential questions students should be able to answer by the end of this unit of study. While these questions will relate directly to the unit and represent the big ideas of the unit, they should be relatively broad and open-ended in nature, and should not be easily answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.

- How are arguments structured?
- What makes information relevant to an argument?
- How are arguments strengthened when supported with relevant information which comes from credible sources?
- In an argument, how does the writer ensure evidence is relevant to the claim?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Level Expectations
The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:

RI.6.8 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

W.6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
  a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
  b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
  c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
  d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
  e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).

L.6.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
b. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).
c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*
d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*
e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:
RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
W.6.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)
W.6.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).
SL.6.3 Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
SL.6.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
L.6.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to
comprehension or expression.

Standards that *Recur* through many/all of the Units of Study:

**RI.6.10** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**W.6.10** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### Clarifying the Standards

**Key:**  
**RL** = Reading Standards for Literature, **RI** = Reading Standards for Informational Text, **RF** = Foundational Skills, **W** = Writing Standards, **SL** = Speaking & Listening Standards, **L** = Language Standards

**RL**

**– RI.8** In grade 5, students explained how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. In *grade 6, the term argument is introduced*. Students trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text and say which claims are supported by reason and evidence and which are not. In grade 7, they will not simply say which claims are supported but will assess whether the reasoning is sound and evidence relevant.

**RF**

**– W.1.** In grade 5, students wrote opinion pieces supporting a point of view with reasons and information. They introduced a topic, stated an opinion, and created an organizational structure with ideas logically grouped to support a purpose. They used words, phrases and clauses to link opinion and reasons, and provided a concluding statement. In *grade 6, they write arguments about topics or texts, using the more formal style of argument*. They introduce claim(s) and support them with clear reasons and relevant evidence from credible sources to demonstrate understanding. Rather than just linking opinion and reasons, they use words, phrases and clauses to clarify relationships among claims and reasons. They provide a concluding statement or section follows from the argument rather than just being related to an opinion. In grade 7, students will do the same, but also acknowledge alternate or opposing claims. Their sources will be accurate as well as credible, and they will use words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships among ideas within the argument.

**W.9a.** In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to literature. In *grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to literature*. In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.
SL – SL.3. In grade 5, students summarized a speaker’s points and explained how each claim was supported by reasons and evidence. In grade 6, they now delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims. They also distinguish claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. In grade 7, they will continue to delineate the speaker’s argument but they will also evaluate the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

L – L.1. In grade 5, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (a) They explained conjunctions, prepositions and interjections. (b) They formed and used perfect verb tenses. (c) They used verb tense to convey times, sequence, etc. (d) They recognized and corrected inappropriate shifts in verb tense. (e) They used correlative conjunctions.

In grade 6, students continue to demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. They give continued attention to recognizing and correcting inappropriate shifts in verb tense, which was introduced in grade 5 (L.5.1d) and continues to be applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. Other expectations are added to this grade. (a) Students ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive) and (b) they use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). (c) They also recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. (d) They recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). (e) They recognize variations from standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language. In grade 7, students will continue to demonstrate command of conventions of grammar and usage by explaining and using types of phrases and clauses and types of sentences. They will also apply skills introduced previously to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking; these will include L.6.1c (recognizing inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person), L.6.1d (correcting vague pronouns with unclear antecedents), and L.6.1e (recognizing their own and others variations from standard English).

Resources:
References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

- **Argument**: Arguments are used for many purposes—to change the reader’s point of view, to bring about some action on the reader’s part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer’s explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief, or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about. In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple primary and secondary sources to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically or empirically situated interpretation. In science, students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence and
draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to argue in support of their claims. Although young children are not able to produce fully developed logical arguments, they develop a variety of methods to extend and elaborate their work by providing examples, offering reasons for their assertions, and explaining cause and effect. These kinds of expository structures are steps on the road to argument. In grades K–5, the term “opinion” is used to refer to this developing form of argument.

• **Three Tiers of Words**
  Isabel L. Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, and Linda Kucan (2002, 2008) have outlined a useful model for conceptualizing categories of words readers encounter in texts and for understanding the instructional and learning challenges that words in each category present. They describe three levels, or tiers, of words in terms of the words’ commonality (more to less frequently occurring) and applicability (broader to narrower). While the term tier may connote a hierarchy, a ranking of words from least to most important, the reality is that all three tiers of words are vital to comprehension and vocabulary development, although learning tier two and three words typically requires more deliberate effort (at least for students whose first language is English) than does learning tier one words.

  • **Tier One words** are the words of everyday speech usually learned in the early grades, albeit not at the same rate by all children. They are not considered a challenge to the average native speaker, though English language learners of any age will have to attend carefully to them. While Tier One words are important, they are not the focus of this discussion.

  • **Tier Two words** (what the Standards refer to as general academic words) are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. They appear in all sorts of texts: informational texts (words such as relative, vary, formulate, specificity, and accumulate), technical texts (calibrate, itemize, periphery), and literary texts (misfortune, dignified, faltered, unabashedly). Tier Two words often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example. Because Tier Two words are found across many types of texts, they are highly generalizable.

  • **Tier Three words** (what the Standards refer to as domain-specific words) are specific to a domain or field of study (lava, carburetor, legislature, circumference, aorta) and key to understanding a new concept within a text. Because of their specificity and close ties to content knowledge, Tier Three words are far more common in informational texts than in literature. Recognized as new and “hard” words for most readers (particularly student readers), they are often explicitly defined by the author of a text, repeatedly used, and otherwise heavily scaffolded (e.g., made a part of a glossary).

• **Editing** – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with improving the clarity, organization, concision, and correctness of expression relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to revising, a smaller-scale activity often associated with surface aspects of a text; see also revising, rewriting
• **Evidence** – Facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis and that can be evaluated by others; should appear in a form and be derived from a source widely accepted as appropriate to a particular discipline, as in details or quotations from a text in the study of literature and experimental results in the study of science.

• **Revising** – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with a reconsideration and reworking of the content of a text relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to editing, a larger-scale activity often associated with the overall content and structure of a text; see also editing, rewriting.

• **Source** – A text used largely for informational purposes, as in research.

• **Standard English** – In the Standards, the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States; used in the Standards to refer to formal English writing and speaking; the particular focus of Language standards 1 and 2 (CCSS, pp. 26, 28, 52, 54).

**Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks**

**Informational Texts: English Language Arts, page 91**

**Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts: English Language Arts**

• Students trace the line of argument in Winston Churchill’s “Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat” address to Parliament and evaluate his specific claims and opinions in the text, distinguishing which claims are supported by facts, reasons, and evidence, and which are not. [RI.6.8]

**Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing, pages 36 - 40**

**Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument, “Dear Mr. Sandler”**
This argument was written as homework after a class in which grade 6 students viewed a movie titled *Benchwarmers* and discussed how movie writers and producers promote smoking. The letter is addressed to the producer of a film in which smoking appears.

Dear Mr. Sandler,

Did you know that every cigarette a person smokes takes seven minutes off their life? I mentioned this because I just watched the movie, Benchwarmers, and I noticed that Carlos smoked. Why did you feel the need to have one of the characters smoke? Did you think that would make him look cool? Did you think that would make him look older? It did neither of those things. As a matter of fact, I think it made him look stupid and not very cool. Especially when he put out a cigarette on his tongue.

If I were producing a movie, I would want my characters to be strong, healthy and smart. I would not have any smokers in my movies for many reasons. The first reason is it sets a bad example for children. An estimated 450,000 Americans die each year from tobacco related disease. In fact, tobacco use causes many different types of cancers such as lung, throat, mouth, and tongue. Another reason not to promote smoking is it ages and wrinkles your skin. Who wants to look 75 if you are only 60? It turns your teeth yellow and may lead to gum disease and tooth decay.
Lastly, smoking is a very expensive habit. A heavy smoker spends thousands of dollars a year on cigarettes. I can think of better things to spend money on.

So Mr. Sandler, I urge you to take smoking out of all future movies you produce. Instead of having your characters smoke have them do healthy things. That will set a positive influence for children instead of poisoning their minds. Thanks for reading my letter. I hope you agree with my opinion.

Sincerely, __________
P.S. I love your Chanukah song.

Annotation
The writer of this piece
• introduces a claim.
  o I would not have any smokers in my movies for many reasons.
• organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.
  o The first reason is it sets a bad example for children.
  o Another reason not to promote smoking is it ages and wrinkles your skin.
  o It turns your teeth yellow and may lead to gum disease and tooth decay.
• supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.
  o Lastly, smoking is a very expensive habit. A heavy smoker spends thousands of dollars a year on cigarettes.
• uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationship between the claim and reasons.
  o The first reason . . . Another reason . . . Lastly . . .
• establishes and maintains a formal style (except for the postscript).
  o Dear Mr. Sandler . . . Thanks for reading my letter. I hope you agree with my opinion . . . Sincerely...
• provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented.
  o Instead of having your characters smoke have them do healthy things. That will set a positive influence for children instead of poisoning their minds.
• demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).

Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument “A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus”
For the complete sample and annotation, see page 38 of Appendix C.

Student Sample: Grade 7, Argument “Video Cameras in Classrooms”
For the complete sample and annotation, see page 40 of Appendix C.

Terminology

Challenging Concepts

Online Resources

Other Resources
Grade 6 English Language Arts Unit 4
Title: Analyzing Literary Text and Writing Narratives

Overview

Number of instructional days: 35  (1 day =  X minutes)

Unit Summary
This section contains a description of the standards covered in the unit that shows how the various strands interconnect with each other and what students should know and be able to do at the end of the unit. See the Written Curriculum section for a listing of all standards included in this Unit of Study.

In this unit, student will analyze either a full-length literary text or a selection of shorter pieces and identify the literary elements, point of view, author’s craft, and figurative language. Throughout the unit, they will engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions to examine the text. Students will be able to recognize the sequence of events and how the plot unfolds. Additionally, they will determine themes, both explicit and inferred.

As a culminating activity, students will utilize the writing process to plan, develop, and revise their own narrative. The narrative could either be imagined or an emulation of the piece, style, or author they analyzed in this unit. Students will incorporate narrative techniques such as dialogue, sensory details, and description to engage the reader. A narrator and characters will be introduced, and the story organized using appropriate transitional words and phrase that enable it to unfold naturally and resolve in a logical conclusion. There will be an expectation that student demonstrate a command standard English conventions.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

ANALYZE text

- CITE textual evidence to support analysis
- DRAW inference to support analysis
- DETERMINE central idea through details
- SUMMARIZE text distinct from personal opinions or judgment
- DESCRIBE how story’s/drama’s plot UNFOLDS in a series of episodes
- DESCRIBE how characters RESPOND or CHANGE as plot toward resolution
DETERMINE the meaning of words and phrases

- Figurative language
- Connotative meanings

ANALYZE impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone

ANALYZE how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza FITS into the overall text structure and CONTRIBUTES to the development of the theme, setting, or plot

EXPLAIN how and author DEVELOPS the point of view of the narrator/speaker

COMPARE and CONTRAST the experience of READING a story, drama, or poem to LISTENING/VIEWING a live version of the text

COMPARE AND CONTRAST texts in different forms/genres to similar themes and topics (e.g., stories and poems; historical novel and fantasy stories)

DEMONSTRATE understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- INTERPRET figures of speech
- USE the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- DISTINGUISH among the connotations of words with similar denotations (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty).

WRITE narratives to DEVELOP real or imagined experiences/event

- ESTABLISH a context
- ORGANIZE event sequence that UNFOLDS naturally and logically
- INTRODUCE narrator/characters
- USE narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, pacing, and descriptive)
- USE variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to MANAGE sequence of events
- USE precise word/phrases, relevant details, and sensory language
- PROVIDE a conclusion

USE technology to PRODUCE and PUBLISH a narrative writing with a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

USE knowledge of language and conventions.

- VARY sentence patterns
- MAINTAIN consistent style and tone.
- USE correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes)
USE a range of strategies to DETERMINE/CLARIFY the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases
- USE context clues
- USE Greek/Latin affixes and root
- CONSULT reference materials
- VERIFY preliminary determination of meaning

Essential Questions
In this unit, students will read a variety of literary texts. They will engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions. Students will identify the literary elements and determine the explicit and inferred themes. Students will analyze how the plot unfolds and how characters change as a result of the conflicts they face and resolve. They will examine how the author develops the point of view and use context clues to unlock the meaning of unknown words and figurative language.

- What are the literary elements? How can the elements contribute to how a story unfolds?
- What lessons do we learn about human nature as we analyze literary characters and their struggles?
- How do we as reader infer the underlying themes in a story?
- Why does an author use figurative language? How does figurative language enhance the story?
- How does use of sensory language enhance a narrative piece?
- How do writers generate ideas from personal or literary experiences to convey their story?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Level Expectations
The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:
RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences
RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RL.6.3 Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RL.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.7 Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

W.6.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
   a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
   b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
   c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
   d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
   e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.6.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
   a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).

L.6.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
b. Spell correctly.

**L.6.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.*

b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.*

**L.6.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.

b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.

c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty*).

**Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:**

**W.6.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

**W.6.5** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

**SL.6.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 6 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
Standards that *Recur* through many/all of the Units of Study:

L.6.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
   b. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., *myself*, *ourselves*).
   c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*
   d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*
   e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

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**Clarifying the Standards**

**Key:**  
RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF= Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards,  
SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards

**RL - RL.6.1.**

In grade 5, students quoted from a text when explaining what it says explicitly and implicitly. **In grade 6, they cite text evidence to support analysis (not just explanation) of text.** In grade 7, they will cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis.

RL. 6.2 In grade 5, students determined a theme in a story, drama or poem from details such as a character’s response to challenges. They summarized texts. **In grade 6, students determine how a theme or a central idea is conveyed through particular details. They summarize a text without including personal opinions or judgments.** In grade 7, they will analyze the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a text and will be able to provide an objective summary.

RL. 3. In grade 5, students compared and contrasted two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama. **In grade 6, they move from comparing and contrasting literary elements to describing how the plot unfolds through a series of episodes and how the characters respond and change as the plot progresses.** In grade 7, they will analyze how particular literary elements interact, such as how setting may shape characters.
RL.4. In grade 5, students determined the meaning of words and phrases including figurative language such as metaphor and simile. In grade 6, they do the same but also determine connotative meanings. In addition, they analyze the impact of an author’s specific word choice on meaning and tone. In grade 7, they will continue to determine figurative and connotative meanings and they will analyze the impact of repetition of sounds, such as alliteration, in poetry, story or drama.

RL.5. In grade 5, students explained how chapters, scenes or stanzas fit together to provide structure in a work of literature. In grade 6, they now analyze how the same elements, with the addition of sentences, fit into the structure of a text and also how they contribute to the development of the theme. In grade 7, they will analyze how form or structure (such as soliloquy, sonnet) contribute to the meaning of a story or poem.

RL.6. In grade 5, students described how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences the description of events. In grade 6, they now explain how an author develops the point of view of a narrator or speaker. In grade 7, they will analyze how an author contrasts points of view of different characters/narrators.

RL.7. In grade 5, students analyzed how visuals and multimedia contribute to a text. In grade 6, they compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to that of listening to/viewing a version of the text; they contrast what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when listening/watching. In grade 7, they will compare and contrast the text to the audio/visual, or live version by analyzing the effects of the techniques of each medium.

RL.9 In grade 5, students compared and contrasted stories in the same genre in terms of how they approach a similar theme or topic. In grade 6, they now compare/contrast stories in different genres

W– W.3. In grade 5, students wrote narratives of real or imagined experiences or events. They oriented the reader by establishing a situation, narrator, and characters. They developed an event sequence that unfolds naturally and used narrative techniques such as dialogue to develop experiences and events. They used transitional words, phrases, clauses to manage sequence and used concrete and sensory details to develop experiences/events. Their conclusion followed from events. In grade 6, their narratives still use effective technique, but their descriptive details are now relevant and their event sequences are well-structured. Students both engage and orient the reader and they establish a context as well as narrator and characters. Their event sequences now unfold logically as well as naturally. Students continue to use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences and events, but now they also use them to develop characters. Students now use the variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. Students’ word choice is now precise, and they use relevant, descriptive details and sensory language. Their conclusion still follows from the narrated events. In grade 7, students will continue all of the same with a few additions. To engage and orient the reader, they will establish a point of view, not just a context. Their use of sensory language will be to capture

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the action as well as convey experience or events. Their conclusion will not only follow but also reflect on the narrated experiences and events.

W.6. In previous grades and grade 5, students were expected to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the task, purpose and audience. They also were expected to revise and edit (with guidance and support from peers and adults) writing when necessary and to use technology (with guidance and support from adults) to support the writing process. **With independence, they can use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and interact with others. They can type a minimum of three pages in one sitting.** In grade 7, these expectations will continue. In addition, students’ planning, revising, and editing, will focus on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. Also, they will use technology to link to and cite sources.

W.9a. In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to literature. In **grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to literature.** In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.

SL – L.2. In grade 5, students demonstrated command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing. (a) They used punctuation for items in a series. (b) They used a comma for introductory element. (c) They used a comma to set off the words yes and no. (d) They used underlining, quotation marks or italics for titles of works. (e) They spelled grade-appropriate words and consulted spelling references. In **grade 6, students continue to demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.** (a) They use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. (b) They spell correctly. In grade 7, students will continue to demonstrate command of capitalization, punctuation and spelling. They will apply a previously introduced skill (L.6.1a) to more sophisticated writing. The will also use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.

L.3. In grade 5, students used knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. (a) They varied sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. (b) They maintained consistency in style and tone. In **grade 6, students use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.** (a) They vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. (b) They maintain consistency in style and tone. In grade 7, they will (a) choose language precisely and concisely, eliminating wordiness.

L.5. In grade 5, students demonstrated understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings in the following ways. (a) They interpreted figurative language. (b) They recognized and explained the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs. (c) They used the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs). In **grade 6, students demonstrated understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings in the following ways.** (a) They interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in
context. (b) They use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. (c) They distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty). In grade 7, students will demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meaning in the following ways: (a) They will interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context. (b) They will use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words. (c) They will distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).

Resources:
References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

• Narrative Writing
  Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain. In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator’s and characters’ personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense. In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information. In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.

  Creative Writing beyond Narrative
  The narrative category does not include all of the possible forms of creative writing, such as many types of poetry. The Standards leave the inclusion and evaluation of other such forms to teacher discretion.

• Editing – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with improving the clarity, organization, concision, and correctness of expression relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to revising, a smaller-scale activity often associated with surface aspects of a text; see also revising, rewriting

• Point of view – Chiefly in literary texts, the narrative point of view (as in first- or third-person narration); more broadly, the position or perspective conveyed or represented by an author, narrator, speaker, or character

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Revising – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with a reconsideration and reworking of the content of a text relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to editing, a larger-scale activity often associated with the overall content and structure of a text; see also editing, rewriting

Rewriting – A part of writing and preparing presentations that involves largely or wholly replacing a previous, unsatisfactory effort with a new effort, better aligned to task, purpose, and audience, on the same or a similar topic or theme; compared to revising, a larger-scale activity more akin to replacement than refinement; see also editing, revising

Standard English – In the Standards, the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States; used in the Standards to refer to formal English writing and speaking; the particular focus of Language standards 1 and 2 (CCSS, pp. 26, 28, 52, 54)

Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars: Stories
Alcott, Louisa May. Little Women
Twain, Mark. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
L’Engle, Madeleine. A Wrinkle in Time
Cooper, Susan. The Dark Is Rising
Yep, Laurence. Dragonwings
Taylor, Mildred D. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Paterson, Katherine. The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks
Cisneros, Sandra. “Eleven.”
Sutcliff, Rosemary. Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad

Sample Performance Tasks for Stories, Drama, and Poetry, page 89
• Students cite explicit textual evidence as well as draw inferences about the drake and the duck from Katherine Paterson’s The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks to support their analysis of the perils of vanity. [RL.6.1]
• Students explain how Sandra Cisneros’s choice of words develops the point of view of the young speaker in her story “Eleven.” [RL.6.6]
• Students analyze how the opening stanza of Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken” structures the rhythm and meter for the poem and how the themes introduced by the speaker develop over the course of the text. [RL.6.5]

Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

Terminology

Challenging Concepts
Online Resources

Other Resources
Overview

Number of instructional days: 20 (1 day = X minutes)

Unit Summary
This section contains a description of the standards covered in the unit that shows how the various strands interconnect with each other and what students should know and be able to do at the end of the unit. See the Written Curriculum section for a listing of all standards included in this Unit of Study.

In this unit, students will read a selection of fiction and nonfiction text on a similar topic to compare how texts of different genres and multimedia approach similar themes. Additionally, they will analyze accounts of the topic using different mediums (multimedia). By integrating information from multiple sources, students will heighten their understanding of a topic which will enhance the development of critical thinking. For example, a historical or science fiction will be supplemented with both nonfiction accounts and/or selections of a different author/genre of a similar theme.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used
ANALYZE text
- CITE textual evidence to support analysis
- DRAW inference to support analysis

DETERMINE central idea through details
- SUMMARIZE text distinct from personal opinions or judgment

DETERMINE the meaning of words and phrases
- Figurative language
- Connotative meanings
ANALYZE impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone
COMPARE and CONTRAST the experience of READING a story, drama, or poem to LISTENING/VIEWING a live version of the text

COMPARE AND CONTRAST texts in different forms/genres to similar themes and topics (e.g., stories and poems; historical novel and fantasy stories)

DRAW evidence from informational text to SUPPORT analysis and reflection

INTERPRET information presented in diverse media and formats
  • EXPLAIN how it CONTRIBUTES to topic

ACQUIRE AND USE domain specific words/phrases

Essential Questions
This section lists 2 – 6 essential questions students should be able to answer by the end of this unit of study. While these questions will relate directly to the unit and represent the big ideas of the unit, they should be relatively broad and open-ended in nature, and should not be easily answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.

• How do readers use text features to develop a clear understanding of the topics in fiction and nonfiction text?
• How is reading nonfiction text different from reading fiction?
• What is changed when we hear or see a piece of literature performed compared to the experience of reading it?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Level Expectations
The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:

RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

RL.6.7 Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

RL.6.9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
   a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).
   b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).

SL.6.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

L.6.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:

W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.6.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document].)

SL.6.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 6 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document] for specific expectations.)
Standards that *Recur* through many/all of the Units of Study:

**RL.6.10** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**RI.6.10** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**W.6.10** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**L.6.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.*
   b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.*

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**Clarifying the Standards**

**Key:** RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF = Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards

**RL.6.1.**

In grade 5, students quoted from a text when explaining what it says explicitly and implicitly. **In grade 6, they cite text evidence to support analysis (not just explanation) of text.** In grade 7, they will cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis.

**RL.6.2** In grade 5, students determined a theme in a story, drama or poem from details such as a character’s response to challenges. They summarized texts. **In grade 6, students determine how a theme or a central idea is conveyed through particular details. They summarize a text without including personal opinions or judgments.** In grade 7, they will analyze the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a text and will be able to provide an objective summary.

**RL.6.4.** In grade 5, students determined the meaning of words and phrases including figurative language such as metaphor and simile. **In grade 6, they do the same but also determine connotative meanings. In addition, they analyze the impact of an author’s specific word choice on meaning and tone.** In grade 7, they will continue to determine figurative and connotative meanings and they will analyze the impact of repetition of sounds, such as alliteration, in poetry, story or drama.

**RL.6.7** In grade 5, students analyzed how visuals and multimedia contribute to a text. **In grade 6, they compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to that of listening to/viewing a version of the text; they contrast what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to...**
what they perceive when listening/watching. In grade 7, they will compare and contrast the text to the audio/visual, or live version by analyzing the effects of the techniques of each medium.

RL.9 In grade 5, students compared and contrasted stories in the same genre in terms of how they approach a similar theme or topic. In grade 6, they now compare/contrast stories in different genres or forms in terms of how they approach a similar theme or topic; the different genres or forms might be a story and a poem, for example, of an historical novel or fantasy story. In grade 7, they will compare/contrast a fictional portrayal and an historical account of the same period in order to understand how authors of fiction use history.

RI – RI.1.

In grade 5, students quoted from a text when explaining what it says explicitly and implicitly. In grade 6, they cite text evidence to support analysis (not just explanation) of text. In grade 7, they will cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis.

RI.2 In grade 5, students determined two or more main ideas in a text, explaining how they are supported by key details; they summarized text. In grade 6, students determine how a central idea is conveyed through particular details. They can summarize a text without including personal opinions. In grade 7, they will analyze the development of two or more central ideas over the course of a text and will be able to provide an objective summary.

RI.4. In grade 5, students determined the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases related to grade level subject matter. In grade 6, they also determine figurative, connotative, and technical meanings of words and phrases. In grade 7, they will continue to do the same, and they will also analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.7. In grade 5, students were able to draw information from multiple print/digital sources to answer a question or solve a problem. In grade 6, they integrate information presented in words with information presented in different media or formats, such as visually or quantitatively, in order to develop coherent understanding of a text. In grade 7, they will compare and contrast a text to an audio/video/media version analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject.

RI.9 In grade 5, students integrated information from several texts on the same topic. In grade 6, they now compare/contrast one author’s presentation of events with that of another. In grade 7, they will analyze how two or more writers on the same topic shape their presentation by advancing different evidence or interpretations of facts.

RF –

W – W.9a. In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to literature. In grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to literature. In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.
W.9b. In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts. **In grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to the specific category of literary nonfiction.** In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.

SL – SL.2. In grade 5, students summarized a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats. **In grade 6, students now interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (such as, visually, quantitatively, orally) and they also explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue.** In grade 7, they will analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and explain how the ideas clarify the topic or issue.

L – L.6. In grade 5, students acquired and used accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition). **In grade 6, they continue to acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.** In addition, they gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. **In grade 7, they will continue to do the same.**

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**Resources:**

**References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources**

**Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms**

- **Point of view** –Chiefly in literary texts, the narrative point of view (as in first- or third-person narration); more broadly, the position or perspective conveyed or represented by an author, narrator, speaker, or character

**Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks**

**Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars: Stories**

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

L’Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*

Cooper, Susan. *The Dark Is Rising*

Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings*

Taylor, Mildred D. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*


Paterson, Katherine. *The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks*
Cisneros, Sandra. “Eleven.”
Sutcliff, Rosemary. Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars: Drama
Fletcher, Louise. Sorry, Wrong Number
Goodrich, Frances and Albert Hackett. The Diary of Anne Frank: A Play

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars: Poetry
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. “Paul Revere’s Ride.”
Whitman, Walt. “O Captain! My Captain!”
Carroll, Lewis. “Jabberwocky.”
Navajo tradition. “Twelfth Song of Thunder.”
Dickinson, Emily. “The Railway Train.”
Frost, Robert. “The Road Not Taken.”
Sandburg, Carl. “Chicago.”
Hughes, Langston. “I, Too, Sing America.”
Soto, Gary. “Oranges.”
Giovanni, Nikki. “A Poem for My Librarian, Mrs. Long.”

Sample Performance Tasks for Stories, Drama, and Poetry, page 89
• Students compare and contrast the effect Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem “Paul Revere’s Ride” has on them to the effect they experience from a multimedia dramatization of the event presented in an interactive digital map (http://www.paulreverehouse.org/ride/), analyzing the impact of different techniques employed that are unique to each medium. [RL.6.7]
• Students analyze how the opening stanza of Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken” structures the rhythm and meter for the poem and how the themes introduced by the speaker develop over the course of the text. [RL.6.5]

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars for Informational Texts: English Language Arts, pages 90-92
Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave, Written by Himself
Petry, Ann. Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad
Steinbeck, John. Travels with Charley: In Search of America

Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts: English Language Arts, page 93
• Students trace the line of argument in Winston Churchill’s “Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat” address to Parliament and evaluate his specific claims and opinions in the text, distinguishing which claims are supported by facts, reasons, and evidence, and which are not. [RI.6.8]
• Students analyze in detail how the early years of Harriet Tubman (as related by author Ann Petry) contributed to her later becoming a conductor on the Underground Railroad, attending to how the author introduces, illustrates, and elaborates upon the events in Tubman’s life. [RI.6.3]

Grades 6–8 Text Exemplars for Informational Texts: History/Social Studies, pages 93-95
United States. Preamble and First Amendment to the United States Constitution (1787, 1791)

Macaulay, David. Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction
Mackay, Donald. The Building of Manhattan
Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. The Number Devil: A Mathematical Adventure
Peterson, Ivars and Nancy Henderson. Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone
Katz, John. Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho
“Geology.” U*X*L Encyclopedia of Science
“Space Probe.” Astronomy & Space: From the Big Bang to the Big Crunch
“Elementary Particles.” New Book of Popular Science
California Invasive Plant Council. Invasive Plant Inventory

Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts: History/Social Studies & Science, Mathematics, and Technical Subjects, page 100

• Students analyze the governmental structure of the United States and support their analysis by citing specific textual evidence from primary sources such as the Preamble and First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution as well as secondary sources such as Linda R. Monk’s Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution. [RH.6–8.1]
• Students evaluate Jim Murphy’s The Great Fire to identify which aspects of the text (e.g., loaded language and the inclusion of particular facts) reveal his purpose; presenting Chicago as a city that was “ready to burn.” [RH.6–8.6]
• Students describe how Russell Freedman in his book Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott integrates and presents information both sequentially and causally to explain how the civil rights movement began. [RH.6–8.5]
• Students integrate the quantitative or technical information expressed in the text of David Macaulay’s Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction with the information conveyed by the diagrams and models Macaulay provides, developing a deeper understanding of Gothic architecture. [RST.6–8.7]
• Students construct a holistic picture of the history of Manhattan by comparing and contrasting the information gained from Donald Mackay’s The Building of Manhattan with the multimedia sources available on the “Manhattan on the Web” portal hosted by the New York Public Library (http://legacy.www.nypl.org/branch/manhattan/index2.cfm?Trg=1&d1=865). [RST.6–8.9]
• Students learn about fractal geometry by reading Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson’s Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone and then generate their own fractal geometric structure by following the multistep procedure for creating a Koch’s curve. [RST.6–8.3]

Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing

Terminology
Challenging Concepts

Online Resources

Other Resources
Grade 6 English Language Arts, Quarter, Unit 6
Title: Gathering and Presenting Research

Overview

Number of instructional days: 20  Does not include reading of the selected text. (1 day = X minutes)

Unit Summary
In this unit, students will read an extended text and identify a topic for further investigation. They will then gather information on their chosen topic from other literary and informational sources and create a multi-media research based presentation. They will draw relevant information, assess each source’s credibility, analyze the evidence, cite sources without plagiarizing, and will clearly, concisely, and logically present their projects to an audience. Students will use digital media in their presentation to enhance the product.

Examples of possible research projects:

Students may read Chinese Cinderella and further investigate the history of foot binding.

Students may read Dragonwings and further investigate other aviators and the science and history of flight.

Concepts to Be Learned and Skills to Be Used

DETERMINE central idea through details

• SUMMARIZE text distinct from personal opinions or judgment

EXPLAIN how and author DEVELOPS the point of view of the narrator/speaker

COMPARE AND CONTRAST texts in different forms/genres to similar themes and topics (e.g., stories and poems; historical novel and fantasy stories)

ANALYZE in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is INTRODUCED, ILLUSTRATED, and ELABORATED

DETERMINE an author’s point of view/purpose and EXPLAIN how it is conveyed

INTERPRET information presented in diverse media and formats

• EXPLAIN how it CONTRIBUTES to topic
SELECT, ORGANIZE, ANALYZE content to WRITE informative/explanatory text to EXAMINE a topic and CONVEY ideas, concepts, and information

- USE strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect
- INCLUDE formatting, graphics, and multimedia when useful for comprehension
- DEVELOP topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or examples
- USE appropriate transitions
- USE precise language and domain specific vocabulary
- ESTABLISH and MAINTAIN a formal style
- PROVIDE concluding statement

USE technology including the Internet to PRODUCE and PUBLISH writing as well as to INTERACT and COLLABORATE with others.

CONDUCT short research project

- DRAW on several resources
- NARROW/REFINE the inquiry as necessary

GATHER relevant information from multiple print and digital sources

- EVALUATE credibility of each source
- QUOTE/PARAPHRASE data and conclusions
- AVOID plagiarism
- PROVIDE bibliographic information

DRAW evidence from informational text to SUPPORT analysis and reflection

PRESENT claims and findings

- SEQUENCE ideas logically
- USE important facts, descriptions, and details
- USE appropriate eye contact, volume, and pronunciation

INCLUDE multimedia components and visual displays in presentation

Essential Questions:

- How are characters, events, or themes revealed in literature and informational texts?
- What organizational strategies can I use to pull together the information I gathered in research when creating the final product?
- How do multiple sources of information enhance the strength of a research project?
- How can I effectively weave information gathered from a variety of sources in to my final research product?
• How can I enhance my presentation to engage my audience?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Level Expectations

The Common Core standards for this unit are listed in their complete form, including all numbering and strand information and exactly as they appear in the CCSS. Any portions of the standard(s) not addressed in this unit will be marked with a strikethrough to clarify the focus of this unit’s activities. There will most likely be standards from more than one strand in this section.

Standards that are the Focus in the Unit of Study:

RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RL.6.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

RI.6.3 Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

RI.6.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
   b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
   c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

e. Establish and maintain a formal style.

f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

W.6.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

W.6.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

   a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).

   b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).

SL.6.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

SL.6.5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

Standards that Reinforce the Unit of Study Standards:

RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RI.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

RI.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

SL.6.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 6 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 [of the full ELA Common Core State Standards document] for specific expectations.)

L.6.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
   b. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).
   c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*
   d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*
   e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

L.6.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*
   b. Spell correctly.

L.6.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.*
   b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.*

Standards that Recur through many/all of the Units of Study:

W.6.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Clarifying the Standards

Key:  
RL = Reading Standards for Literature, RI = Reading Standards for Informational Text, RF= Foundational Skills, W = Writing Standards, 
SL = Speaking & Listening Standards, L = Language Standards

RL - RL. 6.2 In grade 5, students determined a theme in a story, drama or poem from details such as a character’s response to challenges. They summarized texts.  
In grade 6, students determine how a theme or a central idea is conveyed through particular details. They summarize a text without including personal opinions or judgments. In grade 7, they will analyze the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a text and will be able to provide an objective summary.

RL.6. In grade 5, students described how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences the description of events.  
In grade 6, they now explain how an author develops the point of view of a narrator or speaker. In grade 7, they will analyze how an author contrasts points of view of different characters/narrators.

RL.9 In grade 5, students compared and contrasted stories in the same genre in terms of how they approach a similar theme or topic.
In grade 6, they now compare/contrast stories in different genres or forms in terms of how they approach a similar theme or topic; the different genres or forms might be a story and a poem, for example, of an historical novel or fantasy story. In grade 7, they will compare/contrast a fictional portrayal and an historical account of the same period in order to understand how authors of fiction use history.

RI – RI. 3. In grade 5, students explained the relationships between two or more individuals, events, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text.  
In grade 6, they move from explaining relationships to analyzing in detail how a key individual, event or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text; for example, an analysis might include recognizing that an idea is elaborated through examples or anecdotes. In grade 7, students will focus on analyzing the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas; for example, they might analyze how ideas influence individuals.

RI.6. In grade 5, students analyzed multiple accounts of the same event or topic for differences in point of view.  
In grade 6, they determine an author’s point of view or purpose and explain how it is
conveyed in the text. In grade 7, they will do the same and also analyze how the author distinguishes his position from that of others.

RI.7. In grade 5, students were able to draw information from multiple print/digital sources to answer a question or solve a problem. In grade 6, they integrate information presented in words with information presented in different media or formats, such as visually or quantitatively, in order to develop coherent understanding of a text. In grade 7, they will compare and contrast a text to an audio/video/media version analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject.

RF –

W – W.2. In grade 5, students wrote informative and explanatory texts to examine and convey ideas and information. They introduced a topic clearly, provided a focus, and grouped information logically. They included formatting, illustrations and multimedia. They developed a topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, examples. They used words, phrases and clauses to link ideas and precise language and vocabulary to inform or explain. They provided a concluding statement related to the topic. In grade 6, students write informative and explanatory texts that examine and convey concepts as well as ideas and information, and they now do this through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. When they organize, they use strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect. They continue to include formatting and multimedia, but their illustrations now include graphics such as charts and tables. The facts, details, etc. they use to develop the topic now must be relevant. Students still use precise language and domain specific vocabulary to inform or explain. Added to the expectations are that they use appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts and that they maintain a formal style. In addition, their concluding statement or section must follow from the information or explanation presented. In grade 7, students will continue the expectations of the previous grade with a few additions. They will introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow. They will use transitions to create cohesion as well as clarify relationships. Their concluding statement will support, not simply follow from, the information or explanation presented.

W.6. In previous grades and grade 5, students were expected to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the task, purpose and audience. They also were expected to revise and edit (with guidance and support from peers and adults) writing when necessary and to use technology (with guidance and support from adults) to support the writing process. (W.6) With independence, they can use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and interact with others. They can type a minimum of three pages in one sitting. In grade 7, these expectations will continue. In addition (W.5), students’ planning, revising, and editing, will focus on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. Also (W.6), they will use technology to link to and cite sources.

W.7. In grade 5, students conducted short research projects using several sources to investigate different aspects of a topic. In grade 6, they conduct short research projects in order to answer a question. They continue to draw on several sources, but now they also refocus the inquiry when appropriate. In grade 7, they will do the same but they will also generate additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
W.8. In grade 5, students recalled relevant information or gathered relevant information from print and digital sources; they summarized or paraphrased in notes and finished work, and provided a list of sources. In grade 6, they use *multiple* print and digital sources to gather relevant information. Now they also assess the credibility of each source. Other additions to the grade, are that students quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. In grade 7, will do the same, but they will also use search terms effectively, assess not only the credibility but also the accuracy of each source, and follow a standard format for citation.

W.9a. In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to literature. In grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to literature. In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.

W.9b. In grade 5, students drew evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. To do this, they applied grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts. In grade 6, they continue to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, now by applying grade 6 Reading standards to the specific category of literary nonfiction. In grade 7, they do the same, by applying grade 7 Reading standards.

SL – SL.4. In grade 5, students reported on a topic, text or opinion. They sequenced ideas logically and used appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes. They spoke clearly at an understandable pace. In grade 6, they present claims and findings rather than just report or express an opinion. They continue to sequence ideas logically, but now they also use *pertinent descriptions* (along with facts and details) to *accentuate* their ideas or themes. They use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation when speaking. In grade 7, when they present claims and findings, they will emphasize salient points in a focused, coherent manner and they will now also include examples.

SL.5. In grade 5, students included multimedia and visual displays in oral presentations appropriately to enhance the main ideas and themes. In grade 6, they include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations for the purpose of clarifying information. The multimedia previously included graphics or sound, but now also includes images or music. In grade 7, their purpose for including multimedia and visuals will be to clarify claims and findings and to emphasize salient points.

Resources:
References to Appendices A, B, and C and Other Resources
Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards and Glossary of Key Terms

• Three Tiers of Words
Isabel L. Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, and Linda Kucan (2002, 2008) have outlined a useful model for conceptualizing categories of words readers encounter in texts and for understanding the instructional and learning challenges that words in each category present. They describe three levels, or tiers, of words in terms of the words’ commonality (more to less frequently occurring) and applicability (broader to narrower).

While the term tier may connote a hierarchy, a ranking of words from least to most important, the reality is that all three tiers of words are vital to comprehension and vocabulary development, although learning tier two and three words typically requires more deliberate effort (at least for students whose first language is English) than does learning tier one words.

• Tier One words are the words of everyday speech usually learned in the early grades, albeit not at the same rate by all children. They are not considered a challenge to the average native speaker, though English language learners of any age will have to attend carefully to them. While Tier One words are important, they are not the focus of this discussion.

• Tier Two words (what the Standards refer to as general academic words) are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. They appear in all sorts of texts: informational texts (words such as relative, vary, formulate, specificity, and accumulate), technical texts (calibrate, itemize, periphery), and literary texts (misfortune, dignified, faltered, unabashedly). Tier Two words often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example. Because Tier Two words are found across many types of texts, they are highly generalizable.

• Editing – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with improving the clarity, organization, concision, and correctness of expression relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to revising, a smaller-scale activity often associated with surface aspects of a text; see also revising, rewriting

• Evidence – Facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis and that can be evaluated by others; should appear in a form and be derived from a source widely accepted as appropriate to a particular discipline, as in details or quotations from a text in the study of literature and experimental results in the study of science

• Point of view – Chiefly in literary texts, the narrative point of view (as in first- or third-person narration); more broadly, the position or perspective conveyed or represented by an author, narrator, speaker, or character

• Revising – A part of writing and preparing presentations concerned chiefly with a reconsideration and reworking of the content of a text relative to task, purpose, and audience; compared to editing, a larger-scale activity often associated with the overall content and structure of a text; see also editing, rewriting
• **Short research project** – An investigation intended to address a narrowly tailored query in a brief period of time, as in a few class periods or a week of instructional time

• **Source** – A text used largely for informational purposes, as in research.

• **Standard English** – In the Standards, the most widely accepted and understood form of expression in English in the United States; used in the Standards to refer to formal English writing and speaking; the particular focus of Language standards 1 and 2 (CCSS, pp. 26, 28, 52, 54)

**Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks**

**Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing**

**Terminology**

**Challenging Concepts**

**Online Resources**

**Other Resources**