ACAP
Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program
SUMMATIVE

Grade 6
English Language Arts

Alabama Educator Instructional Supports

Alabama Course of Study Standards

DATA RECOGNITION CORPORATION

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Introduction

The *Alabama Instructional Supports: English Language Arts* is a companion to the 2016 *Revised Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts* for Grades K–12. Instructional supports are foundational tools that educators may use to help students become independent learners as they build toward mastery of the *Alabama Course of Study* content standards. **Instructional supports are designed to help educators engage their students in exploring, explaining, and expanding their understanding of the content standards.**

The content standards contained within the course of study may be accessed on the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) website: https://www.alabamaachieves.org/. When examining these instructional supports, educators are reminded that content standards indicate minimum content—what all students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level or course. Local school systems may have additional instructional or achievement expectations and may provide instructional guidelines that address content sequence, review, and remediation.

The instructional supports are organized by standard. Each standard's instructional support includes a statement of the content standard, instructional outcomes, guiding questions and instructional activities, key academic terms, and additional resources.

Content Standards

The content standards are the statements from the 2016 *Revised Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts* that define what all students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of a given grade level or course. Content standards contain minimum required content and complete the phrase "Students will _____."

Each grade-level content standard integrates, builds on, and leads to broader, more comprehensive skills. The standards collectively guide educators in preparing students with the content and skills students should know by the end of high school.

The **Reading** standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also ensured through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts.

The **Writing** standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades while using increasingly demanding content and sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to

writing. Students must produce numerous pieces, over short and extended time frames, that are integrated across all curricular areas.

The skills developed through the **Language** standards require attention to conventions of standard English, language, and vocabulary. As with all content domains, the Language standards are cumulative, building throughout the years with increased sophistication and complexity.

Instructional Outcomes

The instructional outcomes are statements that describe essential learning that learners should achieve at the end of instruction.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities

Guiding questions are designed to create a framework for the given standards and to engage students in exploring, explaining, and expanding their understanding of the content standards provided in the 2016 *Revised Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts*. Therefore, each guiding question is written to help educators convey important concepts within the standard. By utilizing guiding questions, educators are engaging students in investigating, analyzing, and demonstrating knowledge of the underlying concepts reflected in the standard.

Each guiding question includes a representative set of sample activities and examples that can be used in the classroom. The set of activities and examples is not intended to include all the activities and examples that would be relevant to the standard.

Key Academic Terms

These academic terms are derived from the standards and are to be incorporated into instruction by the educator and used by the students.

Additional Resources

Additional resources are included that are aligned to the standard and may provide additional instructional support to help students build toward mastery of the designated standard. Please note that while every effort has been made to ensure all hyperlinks are working at the time of publication, web-based resources are impermanent and may be deleted, moved, or archived by the information owners at any time and without notice. Registration is not required to access the materials aligned to the specified standard. Some resources offer access to additional materials by asking educators to complete a registration. While the resources are publicly available, some websites may be blocked due to Internet restrictions put in place by a facility. Each facility's technology coordinator can assist educators in accessing any blocked content. Sites that use Adobe Flash may be difficult to access after December 31, 2020, unless users download additional programs that allow them to open SWF files outside their browsers.

Printing This Document

It is possible to use this entire document without printing it. However, if you would like to print this document, you do not have to print every page. First, identify the page ranges of the standards or domains that you would like to print. Then, in the print pop-up command screen, indicate which pages you would like to print.

Reading

RL.6.1

Reading Standards for Literature
Key Ideas and Details
RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex literary texts.
- Analyze what a text says explicitly.
- Draw inferences using analysis of a text.
- Select and cite textual evidence to support analysis about what a text says explicitly.
- Select and cite textual evidence to support the inferences drawn through analysis of the text.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

How do you analyze what a text means? What is textual evidence? How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis?

1. Introduce the idea of analysis to the class. Have students look at the definition of the term *analysis*. Discuss why it is important for students to analyze or make a detailed examination of what they read. Explain that when analyzing text, students will make statements or draw conclusions about what they have read and then support that statement or conclusion with textual evidence. Review the concept that textual evidence is the way an analysis is supported or proven.
2. Select a short literary text (two or three paragraphs) and lead students through a reading of the text. Present students with a statement or conclusion about the text. Lead a discussion with students about textual evidence that supports this statement and conclusion. Highlight textual evidence that supports the statement or conclusion, and have students explain to a partner why the textual evidence supports the statement or conclusion.
3. Have students read a short literary text (e.g., excerpt from a novel, short story). Present students with a list of statements and/or conclusions about the text and have students select one to support. Have students work independently to select textual evidence to

support the statement or conclusion independently. When students are finished, they should share their responses with a partner or small group and explain why their textual evidence supports the analysis. Encourage students to use a sentence frame such as "*XYZ* supported the analysis because_____." Lead a classroom discussion in which students answer the question "Why does analyzing a text by drawing a conclusion and supporting it with textual evidence help me as a reader?"

What does it mean to cite?

1. Introduce the idea of citing textual evidence. Share the meaning of the term *cite* and ask students to think of times when they have been asked to cite. Explain to students how citing text is similar to quoting text, which was introduced in grade 5. Lead a classroom discussion around the question "Why is it important for me to cite textual evidence when I make a statement or draw a conclusion?"
2. Review with students about how to highlight or record as many pieces of textual evidence as possible to support analysis. Project or display an anchor chart (e.g., Evidence-Based Terms Anchor Chart) to model appropriate ways to cite textual evidence when writing.
3. Project or display a short literary text that is long enough to support analysis about characters, setting, or plot. Before reading the text, provide a prompt to students that will require analysis such as "What do you know about *XYZ* from the text? What parts of the text support your thinking?" Working in small groups or pairs, have students use a highlighter or sticky notes to record textual evidence from the text and draw a conclusion about the text. Have students use the anchor chart (e.g., Evidence-Based Terms Anchor Chart) to cite textual evidence to support their conclusions. Lead a classroom discussion around student responses.

How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis of what a text says explicitly? How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis of the inferences you draw?

1. Review the difference between what the text says explicitly and what the text says implicitly, or "between the lines." Explain that sometimes students will be asked to think about what literary text states very clearly. Provide students with examples of texts that explicitly state ideas (e.g., "Maria was feeling miserable now that she knew Dana was moving to Tampa."). Identify a reading text that will support three to five questions about what the text says explicitly. Have students practice answering those questions independently while citing textual evidence to support their answers.
2. Review the concept of *inference*. Remind students that sometimes the answer to a question or the support for analysis of a text will not be stated explicitly. Provide students with examples of texts that implicitly suggest ideas (e.g., "Tears rolled down Maria's cheeks as

she watched Dana's furniture being loaded onto the moving truck."). Identify a reading text that will support three or five questions about what the text says implicitly.

3. Have students use a graphic organizer (e.g., Making Inferences, Drawing Conclusions) to organize information from the text. Have students practice using a sentence frame to organize their answers such as "I think XYZ because the text states _____. It also states _____. This supports my conclusion because _____."
4. Have students read longer literary texts. Provide students with prompts that may require them to use explicit and implicit details when drawing conclusions. Have students practice using a combination of both types of details when responding to prompts when writing.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, analysis, textual evidence, explicit analysis, draw inferences, cite

Additional Resources:

Common Sense Education Lesson Plan—Citing Textual Evidence

Great Books Foundation: Six strategies to help students cite and explain evidence

Great Books Foundation: Sample Anchor Chart

Read*Write*Think: Citation Hunt

Tulane University—Teaching Analysis

RL.6.2

Reading Standards for Literature
Key Ideas and Details
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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex literary texts.
- Identify the characteristics of a theme and a central idea.
- Identify a theme or central idea of a text.
- Identify details and examples that show the intended theme(s) of the text.
- Identify details and examples that show the intended central idea(s) of the text.
- Write a summary distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a theme? What is a central idea of a text? How are themes and central ideas similar and different? How do you use details to determine the theme or central idea?

1. Review the meaning of *theme*. Students learn about theme beginning in fourth grade but will need to review the concept. Present theme (e.g., forgiveness, hope, teamwork) as one or two words that describe the underlying idea, moral, message, or lesson of a text. Lead a discussion about the themes from popular culture (e.g., current movies, popular fiction, television shows). Have students brainstorm common themes and create a list to be posted in the classroom (e.g., Theme).
2. Select a short literary text that will support students determining a common theme (e.g., forgiveness, hope, teamwork). Lead a reading of the short literary text. Lead a discussion where students identify details that provide clues to determining the theme or themes. Collect and organize the theme and textual evidence to post in the classroom. Remind students that there may be more than one theme in a text.
3. Introduce the concept of a central idea. Present central idea as a sentence that describes what the text is mostly about. Select a short literary text that will support students

determining a central idea. Lead a reading of the short literary text. Have students work in pairs or small groups to determine the central idea. Lead a discussion about the central idea of the text.

4. Using the same short story used to practice determining the central idea, have students work in pairs or small groups to determine the theme(s) of the text. Lead a discussion to share the theme(s). While discussing the theme(s), have students use sentence frames such as "A theme of the text is _____. Some evidence for this is _____." Create an anchor chart that compares the central idea of the text to the theme(s). Help students conclude that a theme is an idea, moral, message, or lesson of the story expressed in one or two words, and a central idea is a sentence that summarizes what a story is mostly about.

Graphic Organizer: Theme vs. Central Idea

Theme vs. Central Idea	
Theme:	Textual Evidence:
Central Idea:	Textual Evidence:

5. Help students select a longer literary text (e.g., novel, longer short story). As students read sections of the text, have them use graphic organizers (e.g., Searching for a Theme, What's the Big Idea?) to help determine the theme and central idea of the text.

What is a personal opinion? What is a judgment? How do you write a summary that is distinct from personal opinions or judgments?

1. Select a short literary text that will support students having a strong response to something a character does. Have students read the short literary text and respond to a prompt in writing such as "When *XYZ* did_____, how did you feel? Do you agree with what *XYZ* did? Why?" Allow students to make opinions and judgments in this writing. Lead a discussion where students share their responses; make a list of them. Review the idea of a personal opinion. Explain to students that they have been asked to provide a personal opinion and make judgments about a character. Discuss why this was appropriate for this prompt.

2. Review the meaning of *summary*. Students learn about summarization beginning in fourth grade, but they will need to review the concept. Remind students that a well-written summary presents the central idea and a brief description of the events. Select a short literary text. Lead a reading of the text where students help determine the central idea and important details. As a class, write a brief model summary of the text. Remind students that personal opinions and judgments are not appropriate for a summary.
3. Help students select a longer literary text (e.g., novel, longer short story). As students read sections of the text, have them use a journal or complete a task (e.g., Sum It Up) to collect and organize ideas about the central idea. Have students share these summaries with a partner or a small group to check for personal opinions and judgments.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, theme, central idea, details, examples, summary, summarize, personal opinion, judgment, convey, determine, distinct

Additional Resources:

Literary Devices: Definition and Examples of Literary Terms

Read*Write*Think: The Literary Element of Theme

Understanding Theme: Literary Analysis

Scholastic: Identifying Theme

Scholastic: Finding the Message: Grasping Themes in Literature

Reading Rockets: Summarizing Lesson

RL.6.3

Reading Standards for Literature
Key Ideas and Details
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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of complex stories and dramas.
- Identify the characteristics of plot, including episodes, development, and resolution.
- Map the plot development of texts.
- Describe how a story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes.
- Describe the way characters respond and change as a plot develops.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a plot? What is the difference between a plot and an episode?

1. Review the meaning of *plot*. Students learn about plot beginning in second grade but will need to review the concept. Remind students that plot is a literary element that is the structure and arrangement of actions and events in a story. Explain that within a plot there are many episodes such as actions and events that take place. Select a short literary text that has several clear events or actions within it. Lead a reading of the text, and model how to highlight key episodes (actions or events) within the plot as a whole. Through a class discussion, work together to write a plot summary from the list of key episodes.
2. Select a short story with a clear plot. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to read the story, highlighting important plot episodes as they read. Have students list the plot episodes sequentially using a simple plot diagram (e.g., Simple Plot Diagram). Lead a classroom discussion about these episodes and check that students have them listed sequentially.
3. Have students read a longer literary text. As students read a section, have them complete a simple plot diagram like those used in activity 2 in preparation for developing a better understanding of complex plot analysis.

How do you describe the way a plot unfolds? What is plot resolution? How do characters respond or change as a plot unfolds and is resolved?

1. Project or display a presentation of plot structure (e.g., Plot Structure). Explain to students the differences between beginning or exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Have students brainstorm the major events and actions of a well-known story, movie, television show, or other storyline. Model for students how to use a plot diagram (e.g., Plot Diagram Interactive) to show where the actions and events discussed fall within the plot.
2. Select a short story for students to analyze on a plot diagram. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to read and analyze the major episodes of the plot. Have students write each action on an index card or half-sheet of paper. Have students label each card or sheet with the following terms: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Project or display a blank plot diagram. Have students affix each card to the plot diagram where they think it belongs. Use this activity to gauge student understanding of the plot map. Lead a classroom discussion of the story and its plot, gaining consensus over the various episodes and where they fall within the plot diagram.
3. Have students look at the same short story and the plot diagram that they prepared in activity 2. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to number each episode from the short story and write a sentence describing how characters responded to the episode or changed during the episode. Have students practice using a sentence frame when writing such as “When _____ in the plot occurred, the effect on (character’s name) was _____.” Once complete, have students write a summary of how the characters responded or changed as the plot unfolded and was resolved.
4. Have students read a longer literary text (e.g., a novel or longer short story). Have students complete a plot diagram independently. For each episode, have students practice thinking about and summarizing the effect of the episode on the characters. Have students create a written response to the prompt “Think about the plot as a whole. Select one character and think about how this character responded or changed as the plot unfolded and was resolved.”

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, plot, episodes, development, resolution, plot map, character, unfold, describe, map

Additional Resources:

Sequencing/Story Map Graphic Organizers

Read*Write*Think Plot Structure: A Literary Elements Mini-Lesson

For the Teachers: Plot Diagram Sequencing

Characters and Plots

RL.6.4

Reading Standards for Literature
Craft and Structure
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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex literary texts.
- Understand the concepts of literal meaning and figurative or connotative meaning.
- Identify words and phrases in a text that have figurative or connotative meaning.
- Define and distinguish between the literal and figurative or connotative meaning of words and phrases.
- Use context and reference to determine literal and figurative or connotative meaning.
- Understand tone in a text.
- Identify words and phrases in text that can help determine the tone of a text.
- Analyze the impact of words and phrases on the meaning and tone of a text.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a figurative meaning? How do you determine the figurative meaning of words and phrases in a text? What is a connotative meaning? How do you determine the connotative meaning of words and phrases in a text? How do you distinguish between a literal meaning and a figurative or connotative meaning? How do you analyze the impact of word choice on meaning?

1. Review the concept of figurative meaning. Figurative meaning is meaning that goes beyond the literal definition. Students learn about figurative meaning through a study of metaphors and similes beginning in fifth grade but will need to review the concept. Review the difference between literal and figurative language by sharing examples (e.g., Literal vs. Figurative Language). Explain to students that literal language will mean exactly what it says, while figurative language will describe and create an image to help the reader picture

what is being said. Students will be familiar with metaphors and similes but will need to be introduced to other forms of figurative language, including alliteration, idiom, onomatopoeia, personification, and puns. Provide definitions of other types of figurative language (e.g., Some Types of Figurative Language)

2. Select several short literary texts that contain many examples of figurative language. Have students work in small groups or pairs and have students work on a scavenger hunt to find examples of figurative language in text. Have students write each example on an index card or sticky note and label it with its type of figurative language. Create an anchor chart (e.g., Figurative Language Anchor Chart) that defines each type of figurative language and has a column for the example. Have students affix their examples onto the column. Read through each example during a whole class discussion and gain consensus around the classification of each example. Select one to record on the anchor chart.
3. Introduce the concept of connotative meaning. Explain to students that sometimes words or phrases have implied feelings or ideas that are associated with them. Provide a definition and some examples of connotative meanings of words (e.g., What is Connotation?) Explain to students that connotations may be positive, negative, or neutral (e.g., aroma = positive, smell = neutral, stench = negative). Have students work in small groups or pairs to use their background knowledge and classroom resources to develop a list of words with positive connotations, negative connotations, and neutral connotations. Lead a classroom discussion to brainstorm a classroom list that may be posted in the classroom.
4. Select a short literary text that has words with positive, neutral, and negative connotations. Compile a list of the words. Lead the students through a reading of the text. Have students think about each word and its literal meaning. Have students decide if each word has a positive (+), negative (–) or neutral (o) connotation and write the symbol by each word. Ask students to select one of the words from the list and write the sentence in which it is found. Ask students to write a response to a prompt such as “Write the sentence in which the word is found. What is the literal meaning of the sentence? What is the connotative meaning of the word you selected? How does the connotation of this word affect the meaning of the sentence?”
5. Have students read a longer literary text (e.g., a novel, longer short story). As students read a section, have them record examples of figurative and connotative language. Have students explain how the figurative and connotative language differs from the literal meaning by responding to a prompt: “What is the literal meaning of this example? What is the figurative or connotative meaning of this example? How does the figurative or connotative meaning change your understanding as a reader?”

What is tone? How do you analyze the impact of word choice on tone?

1. Introduce the concept of *tone*. Explain to students that tone is the author's attitude toward the subject or audience of the text. Provide examples of texts with different tones and explain that there are many different tones in text, including formal, informal, humorous, serious, fearful, optimistic, or angry. Explain to students that the words an author chooses and their literal, figurative, and connotative meanings affect the tone of a text. Select a short literary text with a clear tone. Lead a reading of the text where you model examples of word choice that may provide clues to the tone. Ask students "Are the highlighted words mainly positive, neutral, or negative?" Show students an anchor chart with examples of common literary tones. As a class, determine which word best describes the tone of the text. Have students share their ideas using a sentence frame such as "I think the tone of the text is *XYZ* because _____."
2. Select a longer literary text (e.g., novel, longer short story). As students read each selection from the text, have them underline textual clues that will help them determine the tone. Students can use the graphic organizer to record the clues.

Graphic Organizer: Textual Clues

Textual Clue	Literal Meaning	Connotative or Figurative Meaning	What Does This Clue Imply about the Tone?

Have students use these clues to respond to a written prompt such as "What is the tone of this selection? How does the author's choice of words help you understand the tone?"

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, word study, literal meaning, figurative meaning, connotation, tone, analysis, determine, impact, analyze

Additional Resources:

Figurative Language Rap Video

Common Sense Understanding Figurative Language

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language 2

Connotation Examples

Convey Tone with Word Connotations

Tone and Mood

Loaded Words Chart

Tone

RL.6.5

Reading Standards for Literature
Craft and Structure
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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of complex literary texts.
- Identify the structure of a text using the way sentences, chapters, scenes, or stanzas fit together.
- Analyze the effect of sentences, chapters, scenes, or stanzas on theme development.
- Analyze the effect of sentences, chapters, scenes, or stanzas on setting development.
- Analyze the effect of sentences, chapters, scenes, or stanzas on plot development.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What are the differences between sentences, chapters, scenes, or stanzas in a text? How do you identify the structure of a text? How do you determine the way a sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of the text? How do you determine the way a sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza contributes to the development of a plot?

1. Students learn about text structure for stories, dramas, and poems beginning in third grade but will need to review the concept. Each subsequent year builds upon understanding the parts that make up these three different types of literary texts. When teaching a story, focus the lesson on individual sentences and chapters. When teaching a drama, focus the lesson on scenes. When teaching a poem, focus the lesson on stanzas. Prior to any new instruction, review with students what a sentence, chapter, scene, and stanza are and make sure that students can identify them in a text. If necessary, use a section of the assigned selection to help students delineate where each sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza is within the text.
2. Teaching structure in stories and dramas: Select a short literary text (e.g., short story or one-act drama) that has a plot structure that clearly has a problem and a solution. Lead a

reading of the text with students and have them use a graphic organizer (e.g., Plot Diagram) to map out the plot of the selection. Have students note where the problem is presented on the plot diagram. Model for students how individual sentences or scenes from the selection are connected to the problem. Have students note where the solution to the problem is presented, and have them discuss which sentences or scenes from the text connect to the problem's solution. Lead a discussion about the structures in literary texts, and share that problems and solutions are one of the common literary plot structures. Make sure that students understand that literary texts may be episodic, parallel, or have flashbacks. Project or display examples of plot diagrams for different types of plot structures (e.g., Different Plot Structures). As students read different and longer texts, they should consider which plot structure they are reading and use different plot diagrams to discern the plot structure.

3. Teaching structure in poems: Select several different types of poems with different forms and structures (e.g., haiku, sonnet, lyric, quatrain). Review with students that line length, stanzas, and language all provide structure to the poem. In small groups or pairs, assign different poems with different forms. Have students use the graphic organizer to analyze the structure of the poem. Have students use a graphic organizer that is set up like this:

Graphic Organizer: Structure of a Poem

Poem Title	Number of Lines	Number of Stanzas	Number of Lines per Stanza	Do the Lines Rhyme? How?	Do the Rhyming Lines Follow a Pattern?

Show each poem and discuss the structure of the poem. Look for patterns within different types of poem forms. Have students discuss the effect of different structures on poems.

How do you determine the way a sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza contributes to the development of a theme? How do you determine the way a sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza contributes to the development of a setting?

1. Review the concept of *theme* with students. Students learn about themes in literary texts beginning in fourth grade but will need to review the concept of theme. Remind students that a theme is a one- or two-word message shared in the story. Many times a literary text will have more than one theme. Project or display a list of common themes (e.g., Theme). Select a short literary text (e.g., short story, short play, short poem) with a clear theme. Provide students with a T-chart (e.g., Read*Write*Think: T-Chart). One side of the T-chart should have space for a theme(s), while the other side should provide space for students to prove it with textual evidence. Depending on the type of literature, students should be encouraged to use sentences, lines from a drama, descriptions of scenes, or stanzas from

the text as proof. Lead a discussion around the theme and discuss how the structure of the literary text helps to develop the theme.

2. Review the concept of *setting* with students. Students learn about settings in literary texts beginning in kindergarten but will need to review what a setting is. Remind students that a setting is the time, place, or environment in which the text is set. Remind students that a setting may change within a text and that as students are reading, they should note changes in setting. Remind students that some plot structures have flashbacks. Remind students that they should be aware of these time shifts in setting. Select a short literary text (e.g., short story, short play, short poem). Model for students appropriate use of a note-taking guide (e.g., Setting Notes Handout). Depending on the type of literature, students should be encouraged to use sentences, lines, scenes, or stanzas from the text as proof of the setting. Lead a discussion around the setting, and discuss how the structure of the literary text helps to develop the setting.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, sentence, chapter, scene, stanza, structure, theme, setting, plot, analyze, contribute

Additional Resources:

Structure in Literature Video

What Is Structure In A Poem?

Scholastic Blog: Helping Students Grasp Themes in Literature

11 Essential Tips for Teaching Theme in Language Arts

Readworks: Sample Setting Lesson

Read*Write*Think: Plot Structure: A Literary Elements Mini-Lesson

RL.6.6

Reading Standards for Literature
Craft and Structure
RL.6.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex literary texts.
- Identify the narrator or speaker in texts.
- Determine the point of view of the narrator or speaker in texts read.
- Explain what literary devices the author uses to develop point of view.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is point of view? What is a narrator? What is a speaker? What is the difference between a narrator and a speaker? What are the devices an author can use to develop point of view in a text?

1. Review the concept of point of view with students. Students learn about point of view in literary texts beginning in third grade but will need to review what point of view is. Remind students that by determining the point of view, they will understand who is telling the story. Review the difference between a narrator in a story and a speaker in a poem. Lead a discussion about the different points of view based on students' background knowledge. Explain to students that literature is usually told in one of the following points of view: first person, third person omniscient, third person limited, or third person objective. Project or display a flow chart that students can use to determine a narrator's point of view (e.g., Narrator's Point of View Flow Chart). Project or display re one-paragraph excerpts of literary text, and model for students how to use the flow chart to determine the narrator's point of view.
2. Select excerpts from several short literary texts (e.g., short story) that represent each of the types of point of view (e.g., first person, third person omniscient). Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to look for clues about the point of view of each narrator. Have students use the chart to record at least three pieces of textual evidence that support their conclusions about point of view for each text.

Chart: Point of View and Textual Evidence

Title of Selection	Narrator's POV	POV Evidence #1	POV Evidence #2	POV Evidence #3	POV Conclusion

Once students have completed the chart, have them present their findings to the class and discuss their conclusions. Students should answer using a sentence frame such as "I think the point of view is _____. Some textual evidence that supports this is _____." Students may need extra practice discerning between the different forms of third person point of view.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, point of view, narrator, speaker, events, explain, develop, literary devices

Additional Resources:

Read*Write*Think: The Big Bad Wolf: Analyzing Point of View in Texts

Point of View Lesson Ideas

Point of View: Who Is Telling the Story?

5 Easy Activities for Teaching Point of View

RL.6.8

Reading Standards for Literature
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
RL.6.8 Differentiate among odes, ballads, epic poetry, and science fiction.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of literary text, including odes, ballads, epic poetry, and science fiction.
- Identify the characteristics of odes.
- Identify the characteristics of ballads.
- Identify the characteristics of epic poetry.
- Identify the characteristics of science fiction.
- Use characteristics of texts to determine whether they are odes, ballads, epic poetry, or science fiction.
- Differentiate between odes, ballads, epic poetry, and science fiction when reading texts.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is an ode? What is a ballad? What is epic poetry?

1. Remind students that poetry comes in many forms. Have students review the different forms of poetry they have studied in the past. Project or display the terms *ode, ballad*, and *epic poetry*. Lead a discussion in which students access their prior knowledge about the terms. Students may have heard these terms in popular culture, so allow them to draw conclusions about the forms of the poetry. Explain to students that they will be learning about these three forms of poetry.
2. Select a grade-appropriate ode, preferably one with modern language. Read the poem aloud to students once. Project or display the poem or hand it out to students. Have them read the poem to themselves. Have students circle the subject of the poem. Ask students to highlight the details the author shares about the subject. Finally, have students underline any lines that indicate how the author feels about the subject. After reading, lead a discussion about the subject and details of the poem. At the end of the discussion, ask students to answer the prompt “This poem is an ode. What do you notice about it?” Through the course of the

discussion of this prompt, makes sure that students understand that an ode is a reflective, lyric poem that shares an author's feelings about a particular subject. Usually it is a celebration of the subject and sometimes the title itself opens with the word "ode." Project or display major characteristics of odes (e.g., Ode).

3. Select a grade-appropriate ballad, preferably one with modern language. Read the poem aloud to students once. Project or display the poem or hand it out to students. Have them read the poem to themselves. Explain to students that a ballad is a poem that tells a story about a major event. Project or display the characteristics of ballads (e.g., Characteristics of Ballads). Explain that there are songs called ballads and this type of poetry is very musical. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to underline the words or phrases that create a musical quality. Lead a discussion about how the poet creates musicality in the poem.
4. Have students re-read the same ballad from the previous lesson. Have students practice summarizing the event that is recounted in the ballad by responding to the following prompt: "What is the story this ballad tells? Summarize the story of the ballad in two or three sentences."
5. Select an epic poem or a retelling of an epic poem. Before reading the poem, ask students to work in small groups or pairs to discuss a prompt: "What is a hero? What characters from movies, television, or books are heroes? What do all heroes have in common?" Have students share their conclusions. Explain to students that they will be reading epic poetry, written to tell the story of a hero's journey. Explain that there are elements that most epic poems share (e.g., Elements of the Epic Hero Cycle). Lead a reading of the beginning of an epic poem. Lead a whole class discussion to determine who the hero is, what the qualities of the hero are, and what the hero's quest will be. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to read the remainder of the poem and find examples of the other elements of the epic hero cycle. Lead a classroom discussion about student findings.

What is science fiction?

1. Select a short science fiction text that clearly illustrates the elements of science fiction. Before reading the selection, review with students the meaning of the term *fiction*. Lead a discussion about what the term *science fiction* makes them think about. Ask students if they are familiar with any popular science fiction stories in movies, television, and literature. Begin to brainstorm conclusions about the characteristics of science fiction. Project or display an anchor chart with the elements of science fiction (e.g., Analyze the Features of a Science Fiction Story (Anchor Chart)) and a blank column for examples from the text. Lead a reading of the science fiction selection. Have students highlight examples from the text of each of the science fiction features as you read. Lead a discussion about the student findings and use these findings to fill in the anchor chart.

2. Have students read a short science fiction story. Have students use textual evidence to fill in the graphic organizer.

Graphic Organizer: Textual Evidence

Science Fiction Features	Examples from the Text
Setting: Realistic Futuristic Setting OR Fantastic Futuristic Setting	
Tone: Dark, Mysterious	
Central Ideas: Life in Space, Parallel Universe, Time Travel, Aliens, Technology	
Based on Scientific "Information and Facts" ("It might be possible.")	

How do you differentiate between odes, ballads, epic poetry, and science fiction?

1. Once students have been introduced to all four literature genres, have them use the graphic organizer to keep an ongoing record in which they determine the genre of assigned reading and use textual evidence to support their choice.

Graphic Organizer: Identify Genre and Textual Proof

Title of Selection	Genre (Ode, Ballad, Epic Poetry, Science Fiction)	Genre Proof (Textual Evidence that Demonstrates Genre)

2. As students encounter new text, help them determine the genre and lead classroom discussions about what textual evidence supports this determination.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, genre, ode, ballad, epic poetry, science fiction, differentiate

Additional Resources:

Scholastic: Explore Poetry That Turns the Ordinary Into the Extraordinary: Write an Ode!

Poets.org: Teach This Poem: "Ode to My Socks" by Pablo Neruda

6 Tips for Writing an Ode Video

Teaching the Five Elements and Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind"

Sample Lesson Plan: The Ballad

A Story of Epic Proportions: What makes a Poem an Epic?

The Elements of Science Fiction

Genre Lesson: Science Fiction

RL.6.9

Reading Standards for Literature
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of pairs and groups of texts from different genres that have similar themes and topics.
- Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes across pairs of literary text from different genres.
- Compare and contrast the treatment of similar topics across pairs of literary text from different genres.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a genre? What are the characteristics of different genres of literature?

1. Students learn about genre of literature beginning in fifth grade but will need to review the concept. Review the concept of genre with students by explaining that the genre of literature is the category of literature and is defined by certain characteristics. Review the characteristics of mysteries and adventure stories, two genres studied in fifth grade. Share with students that they will be focusing on different genres of literature in sixth grade, including historical fiction and fantasy stories. Provide students with several short literary selections that are examples of mysteries, adventure stories, historical fiction, and fantasy stories. Project or display the characteristics generally associated with each genre (e.g., Genre Characteristics). Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to analyze one of the selections. Ask students to think about the characteristics of the text they are reading and how they relate to its genre. Have students think about the setting, themes, characters, plot, and structure of the text. Lead a discussion where students use a sentence frame to share ideas about their text such as “I think my selection is in the _____ genre. I think this because its setting/theme/characters/plot structure is _____.”

2. As a class, complete an anchor chart about genres.

Anchor Chart: Genres

Literary Genre	Features of Genre
Mysteries	
Adventure Stories	
Historical Fiction	
Fantasy Stories	

Once students have filled out the features as much as possible, have students use a resource (e.g., Genre Characteristics) to help complete the chart.

How do you compare and contrast the way the same theme is treated in two different genres? How do you compare and contrast the way the same topic is treated in two different genres?

1. Students learn about themes and topics beginning in third grade. Review how to identify the theme and topic of a literary text. Lead a discussion about how to compare and contrast. Explain to students that when the reader compares one literary text with another, the reader is looking for similarities. Explain to students that when two literary texts are contrasted, the reader is looking for differences. Show students a graphic organizer designed for comparing and contrasting (e.g., Venn Diagram). Model for students where to record similarities and where to record differences.
2. The following activity can be used to address theme or topic. Select two short literary texts that share a similar theme but are either different forms or different genres (e.g., a short story and poem; a historical fiction short story and a fantasy short story). Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to read the two selections. Explain to students that they will need to determine a theme that both of these selections share. Have students highlight textual evidence from each of the texts to support conclusions about the theme. Once students have determined a shared theme, lead a discussion with students about shared themes in the text. Project or display a Venn diagram. Write the shared theme above the Venn diagram. Write the title of one selection below the left-hand circle, and write the title of the second selection below the right-hand circle. Then ask students to identify the similarities in the way both texts treat the theme. Record these in the center of the Venn diagram. Then write a separate list of the differences for each title. Lead a discussion with students about how form or genre may affect the way a theme is handled in a text.

3. Select two longer literary texts that are either different forms or different genres but share a similar theme or topic. Have students read the two selections independently, highlighting textual clues about the theme or topic. Have students respond in writing to a prompt such as “Think about the two selections. What is a theme or topic that both selections share? What is a similarity between the way the theme or topic is treated in both texts? What is a difference between the way the theme or topic is treated in both texts?”

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, genre, theme, topic, compare, contrast, fantasy, historical novel

Additional Resources:

Genre Study Book List

Children’s Genres

RI.6.11

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Key Ideas and Details
RI.6.11 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex informational texts.
- Analyze what a text says explicitly.
- Draw inferences using analysis of a text.
- Select and cite textual evidence to support analysis about what a text says explicitly.
- Select and cite textual evidence to support the inferences drawn through analysis of the text.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

How do you analyze what a text means? What is textual evidence? How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis?

1. Introduce the idea of *analysis* to the class. Have students look at the definition of the word analysis. Discuss why it is important for students analyze or make a detailed examination of what they read. Explain that when analyzing reading, students will make statements or draw conclusions about what they have read and then support that statement or conclusion with textual evidence. Review evidence is the way an analysis is supported or proven.
2. Select a short scientific or historical text (two or three paragraphs) and lead students through a reading of the text. Present students with a statement or conclusion about the text. Lead a discussion with students about textual evidence that supports this statement and conclusion. Highlight textual evidence that supports the statement or conclusion and have students explain to a partner why the textual evidence supports the statement or conclusion.
3. Have students read a short informational text (e.g., science article, historical account). Present students with a list of statements and/or conclusions about the text and have students select one to support. Have students work independently to select textual evidence

to support the statement or conclusion. When students are finished, they should share their responses with a partner or small group and explain why their textual evidence supports the analysis. Encourage students to use a sentence frame such as *"XYZ* supported the analysis because _____." Lead a classroom discussion in which students answer the question "Why does analyzing a text by drawing a conclusion and supporting it with textual evidence help me as a reader?"

What does it mean to cite?

1. Introduce the idea of citing textual evidence. Share the meaning of the term *cite,* and ask students to think of times when they have been asked to cite in the past. Lead a classroom discussion around the question "Why is it important for me to cite textual evidence when I make a statement or draw a conclusion?"
2. Review with students how to highlight or record as many pieces of textual evidence as possible to support analysis. Project or display an anchor chart (e.g., Evidence-Based Terms Anchor Chart) to model the appropriate ways to cite textual evidence when speaking or writing.
3. Project or display a short informational text that is long enough to support analysis about central ideas and details. Before reading the text, provide a prompt to students that will require analysis such as "What do you know about *XYZ* from the text? What parts of the text support your thinking?" Have students work in small groups or pairs to fill in a graphic organizer (e.g., Two-Column Notes [page 99]). Have students use the anchor chart from the previous activity to cite textual evidence to support their conclusions. Lead a classroom discussion around student responses.

How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis of what a text says explicitly?
How do you choose textual evidence to support analysis of the inferences you draw?

1. Review the difference between what the text says explicitly and what the text says implicitly, or between the lines. Explain that sometimes students will be asked to think about what informational text states clearly. Provide students with examples of informational texts that explicitly state ideas (e.g., "Nine-tenths of all solid waste in the United States does not get recycled."). Identify an informational text that will support three to five questions about what the text says explicitly. Have students practice answering those questions independently while citing textual evidence to support their answers.

2. Review the concept *inferring*. Remind students that sometimes the answer to a question or the support for analysis of a text will not be stated explicitly. Provide students with examples of informational texts that implicitly suggest ideas (e.g., "The average person has

the opportunity to recycle more than 25,000 cans in a lifetime."). Identify a reading text that will support three or five questions about what the text says implicitly.

3. Have students use a graphic organizer (e.g., Read*Write*Think: Citation Hunt) to organize information from the text. Have students practice using a sentence frame to organize their answers such as "I think XYZ because the text states _____. It also states _____. This supports my conclusion because _____."
4. Have students read longer informational texts. Provide students with prompts that may require them to use explicit and implicit details when drawing conclusions. Have students practice using a combination of both types of details when responding to prompts when speaking and writing.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, analysis, textual evidence, explicit analysis, draw inferences, cite

Additional Resources:

Reading Strategies for Informational Texts

Common Sense Education Lesson Plan – Citing Textual Evidence

Great Books Foundation – Six strategies to help students cite and explain evidence

Great Books Foundation – Sample Anchor Chart

Tulane University—Teaching Analysis

RI.6.12

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Key Ideas and Details
RI.6.12 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex informational texts.
- Identify the characteristics of a central idea.
- Identify a central idea of a text.
- Identify details and examples that show the intended central idea(s) of the text.
- Write a summary distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a central idea of a text? How do you use details to determine the central idea of a text?

1. Introduce the concept of a central idea. Present central idea as a sentence that describes what the text is mostly about. Select a short informational text that will support students determining a central idea. Lead a reading of the text. Point out to students that they should pay attention to common features of informational texts, including title, heading, and subheadings, and bold and italicized words. These features may point students towards the central idea. Have students work in pairs or small groups to determine the central idea. Lead a discussion about the central idea of the text.
2. Select short informational texts (e.g., news article, science/social studies passage). Have students work independently, in pairs, or in small groups to read the informational text. Have students determine the central idea of the text. Lead a discussion to share the central ideas. While sharing about the central idea, have students use a sentence frame such as "The central idea of the text is _____. Some evidence for this is _____." Create a chart like the one shown that records students' central idea statements. Help students conclude that a central idea is a sentence that summarizes what a text is mostly about.

Graphic Organizer: Central Idea

Central Idea
Central Idea Student #1:
Central Idea Student #2:
Central Idea Student #3:
Central Idea Student #4:
Central Idea Student #5:

3. Help students select a longer informational text (e.g., nonfiction book, biography). As students read sections of the text, have them use a graphic organizer (e.g., Finding the Central Idea and Supporting Details) to help determine the central idea of the text.

What is a personal opinion? What is a judgment? How do you write a summary that is distinct from personal opinions or judgments?

1. Select a short, informational text that will support students having a strong reaction to the information presented within. Have students read the text and respond to a prompt in writing such as "When the text said _____, what did this make you think? Do you agree with what the text said here? Why?" Allow students to make opinions and judgments in this writing. Lead a discussion where students share their responses, while putting them into a list. Review the idea of a personal opinion. Explain to students that they have been asked to provide a personal opinion and make judgments about what they have read. Discuss why this was appropriate for this prompt.
2. Review the meaning of *summary*. Students learn about summarization beginning in fourth grade but will need to review the concept. Remind students that a well-written summary shares the central idea and a brief description of the events. Select a short informational text. Lead a reading of the text and provide opportunities for students to engage in discussions to help determine the central idea and important key details. As a class, write a brief model summary of the text. Remind students that personal opinions and judgments are not appropriate for a summary.
3. Help students select a longer informational text (e.g., nonfiction book, longer science article). As students read sections of the text, have them use a journal or complete a task (e.g., Sum It Up) to collect and organize ideas about the central idea. Have students share

their ideas with a partner or a small group to check for personal opinions and judgments. Have students then write a summary based on their ideas.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, central idea, details, examples, summary, summarize, personal opinion, judgment, convey, determine, distinct

Additional Resources:

CPALMS–"Breaking the Code" to Central Idea

Common Sense Education: Main Idea–Informational Text

eSpark Learning: How Main Idea is Introduced and Developed

Read*Write*Think*: Scaffolding Comprehension Strategies Using Graphic Organizers

Reading Rockets–Summarizing Lesson

RI.6.13

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Key Ideas and Details
RI.6.13 Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex informational text.
- Identify a key individual, event, or idea in a text.
- Identify and understand anecdotes.
- Recognize text that introduces, illustrates, or elaborates a key individual, event, or idea.
- Describe how examples or anecdotes can introduce, illustrate, or elaborate.
- Analyze how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, or elaborated, based on examples and anecdotes from the text.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

How do you determine key individuals, events, or ideas in a text? How are key individuals, events, or ideas introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text?

1. Select a short informational text (e.g., magazine article or newspaper article) that includes key individuals, events, or ideas. Students learn about the importance of individuals, events, or ideas beginning in first grade, but it is important to review this topic. Explain that in order to analyze in detail an informational text, students must be able to identify those key individuals, events, and ideas introduced in the text and think about how the author presents them. Select three different colors to highlight (electronically or physically) the reading. Project or display the text. Lead a reading of the text. As you encounter key individuals, events, or ideas, use different colors to highlight them by type.
2. Use the same short informational text from activity 1. Ask students to think about the words that the author has used to introduce, illustrate, or elaborate about the individuals, events, or ideas. Using the same color, box those words. Lead a discussion with students to summarize what they have learned about those key individuals, events, or ideas. Model for

students how to fill out a concept map (e.g., Concept Map Graphic Organizer) about one of the key individuals, events, or ideas.

3. Select another short informational text. Have students practice selecting and highlighting key individuals, events, or ideas throughout the text. Have students select one and analyze how the author has introduced, illustrated, or elaborated about the key individual, event, or idea. Have students respond to a prompt in writing such as "Select one key individual, event, or idea from the text. Where in the text does the author introduce this individual, event, or idea? How does the author illustrate or elaborate about the individual, event, or idea in the text?"

What is an anecdote? How do you support your analysis of the way a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated with examples or anecdotes from a text?

1. Introduce the concept of an anecdote. Explain that an anecdote is a very short description of something that has happened, and it is used to provide some personal experience to a topic being described. Project or display examples of anecdotes used in texts (e.g., What is an Anecdote?). Share that there are different types of anecdotes (e.g., humorous, nostalgic, philosophical, inspirational, cautionary) and they can be used to influence the reader's response to the text. Select several informational texts with anecdotes (e.g., newspaper article, magazine article), and have students read them and highlight the places where anecdotes are included. Lead a discussion to create consensus about what type of anecdote is included and why the author included that anecdote.
2. Select a longer informational text that includes at least one or two anecdotes or examples in the text. Have students read the text and choose one key individual, event, or idea to analyze. Have students think about the anecdotes and examples in the text. Have students respond in writing to the prompt "Select a key individual, event, or idea from the text. Choose one anecdote or example the author uses to introduce, illustrate, or elaborate about that key individual, event, or idea. Explain the anecdote or example and analyze why the author includes it in the text."

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, key individual, key event, key idea, introduce, illustrate, elaborate upon, example, anecdote, analyze

Additional Resources:

Reading Rockets: Concept Map Graphic Organizer 2

Reading Rockets: Concept Map Graphic Organizer 3

Read*Write*Think: Webbing Tool

Library of Congress: Writing: Using Anecdotes

Grade 6 Informational Mini-Assessment

RI.6.14

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Craft and Structure
RI.6.14 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of informational texts to identify words and phrases with figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
- Understand the concept of figurative meaning.
- Understand the concept of connotative meaning.
- Understand the concept of technical meaning.
- Determine the figurative meaning of words and phrases, using context and other resources.
- Determine the connotative meaning of words and phrases, using context and other resources.
- Determine the technical meaning of words and phrases, using context and other resources.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a figurative meaning? How do you determine the figurative meaning of words and phrases in a text?

1. Review the concept of figurative meaning. Students learn about figurative meaning through a study of metaphors and similes beginning in fifth grade, but they will need to review the concept. Remind students that figurative language is found not only in literary texts but is also used as a device in informational texts. Review the difference between literal and figurative language by sharing examples (e.g., Literal vs. Figurative Language). Explain to students that literal language will mean exactly what it says, while figurative language will describe and create an image to help the reader picture what is being said. Students will be familiar with metaphors and similes but will need to be introduced to other forms of figurative language, including alliteration, idiom, onomatopoeia, personification, and puns.

Provide definitions of other types of figurative language, (e.g., Some Types of Figurative Language).

2. Select several short informational texts that contain many examples of figurative language. Have students work in small groups or pairs and have students work on a scavenger hunt to find examples of figurative language in text. Have students write each example on an index card or sticky note and label it with the type of figurative language it is. Create an anchor chart (e.g., Figurative Language Anchor Chart) that provides a definition of each type of figurative language and has a column for the example. Have students affix their examples onto the column. Read through each example during a whole class discussion and gain consensus around the classification of each example. Select one to record on the anchor chart.

What is a connotative meaning? How do you determine the connotative meaning of words and phrases in a text?

1. Introduce the concept of connotative meaning. Explain to students that sometimes words or phrases have implied feelings or ideas that are associated with them. Provide a definition and some examples of connotative meanings of words (e.g., What is Connotation?) Explain to students that connotations may be positive, negative, or neutral (e.g., aroma = positive, smell = neutral, stench = negative). Have students work in small groups or pairs to use their background knowledge and classroom resources to develop a list of words with positive connotations, negative connotations, and neutral connotations. Lead a classroom discussion to brainstorm a classroom list that may be posted in the classroom.
2. Select a short informational text that has words with positive, neutral, and negative connotations. Compile a list of the words. Lead the students through a reading of the text. Have students think about each of the words and its literal meaning. Have students decide if each word has a positive (+), negative (-), or neutral (0) connotation and write the symbol by each word. Ask students to select one of the words from the list and write the sentence in which it is found. Ask students to write a written response to a prompt such as “Write the sentence in which the word is found. What is the literal meaning of the sentence? What is the connotative meaning of the word you selected? How does the connotation of this word affect the meaning of the sentence?”

What is a technical meaning? How do you determine the technical meaning of words and phrases in a text?

1. Introduce the concept of technical meaning. Explain to students that when writing about a particular subject area, an author may need to use words that are technical or associated with the subject. Select a commonly known subject and project or display it. Lead a discussion with students about what technical terms an author might choose when writing

about that topic, and help students define the words either using background knowledge or a dictionary reference. Record this in the chart.

Chart: Topic, Terms, and Definitions

TOPIC:	
Technical Term:	**Definition:**
Technical Term:	**Definition:**

A completed example might look like this:

TOPIC: Music	
Technical Term: note	**Definition:** a tone made by an instrument
Technical Term: scale	**Definition:** an arrangement of musical notes

It is important to note to students that there are some words that have technical meanings that are different from their common meanings. Note these in the chart you have created.

2. Select a short informational text about a subject (e.g., a science or history article). Lead students through a reading of the text to determine technical terms. Underline the sentence in which the word is found. Explain to students that sometimes the context around the word will help define the technical term. If the term cannot be defined by the context, model with students how to use the dictionary reference to find the definition. Model and practice finding the definition that matches the technical use of the term. Have students note if the word has a different meaning than the common use of the word.
3. Select a longer informational text about a subject with technical terms. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to highlight four or five technical terms. Have students use context to try to determine the meaning. If students are unable to use context, have students use the dictionary reference to find the meaning. Have students individually practice using the technical form of the word in a sentence they write on their own.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, figurative meaning, connotative meaning, technical meaning, context, determine

Additional Resources:

Figurative Language Rap Video

Common Sense Figurative Language Lesson

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language 2

Connotation Examples

Convey Tone with Word Connotations

Content Area Vocabulary Learning

RI.6.15

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Craft and Structure
RI.6.15 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of complex informational texts.
- Identify the structure of a text using the way sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or sections fit together.
- Analyze the effect of sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or sections on the development of ideas.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What are the differences between sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or sections in a text? How do you identify the structure of a text? How do you determine the way a sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of the text? How do you determine the way a sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section contributes to the development of ideas?

1. Students learn about text structure for informational texts beginning in fourth grade. Each subsequent year builds upon understanding of the common structures for informational texts. Prior to any new instruction, review with students what a sentence, paragraph, chapter, and section are, and make sure that students can identify them in a text. If necessary, model for students using a section of the assigned selection, and help them delineate where each sentence, paragraph, chapter, and section is within the text.
2. Review with students the common text structures found in informational texts: description/list, cause and effect, problem/solution, comparison/contrast, order/sequence. Select short informational texts that represent each of the common text structures. Show students an anchor chart that presents information about each of the text structures (e.g., Text Structures Anchor Chart). Present students with a list of signal words for each type of text structure (e.g., Signal Words). Have students work in small groups or pairs and have them read one of the texts and look for signal words and other textual clues that will help

them determine the text structure. Have students record their evidence and share it in a classroom discussion. Have students draw conclusions about each of the common text structures. (Note: This lesson can also be broken out into separate lessons for each type of text structure depending on the needs of the students).

3. Select a short informational text with one of the common text structures. Have students read the text and use signal words and other textual clues to determine the text structure. Highlight particular sentences and/or paragraphs that contribute to their understanding of the structure. Discuss any common patterns that the text follows based on its structure. Provide students with a graphic organizer (e.g., Graphic Organizers p.2) that matches the text structure of the text. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to determine how the author develops ideas within the text. Have students note particular sentences, paragraphs, and/or sections of the text that contribute to this development of ideas. Lead a discussion about the way the author develops ideas using the text structure based on the information students have recorded in the graphic organizer. Have students use sentence frames such as "The structure of the text is _____. I know this because _____. The author uses the structure to develop ideas by _____. Some evidence for this is _____."
4. Select a longer informational text that has sections or chapters (e.g., nonfiction book). As students read the text, have them think about the structure of the text in each selection, whether it be a section or chapter. As students read, have them determine the text structure and select an appropriate graphic organizer for that structure. Students will record the author's development of ideas throughout that selection using the graphic organizer. Have students respond to the following prompt: "What is the structure of the text selection? How does the author use this structure to develop ideas?"

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, structure, sentence, paragraph, chapter, section, idea, development, analyze

Additional Resources:

Text Structure

AdLit: Text Structures

Teach Readers to Discern Text Structure

The 5 Types of Text Structure Video

Using Text Structure

RI.6.16

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Craft and Structure
RI.6.16 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend complex informational texts.
- Understand an author's point of view or purpose.
- Identify an author's point of view in a text, using clues from the text.
- Identify an author's purpose in a text, using clues from the text.
- Describe how the author uses text to convey a point of view or purpose.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is point of view? How do you identify the author's point of view in an informational text? How does a text convey an author's point of view?

1. Review the concept of point of view with students. Students learn about point of view in informational texts beginning in third grade but will need to review what point of view is. Remind students that by determining the point of view they will understand who is speaking in an informational text. Review the difference between a narrator in a story and a speaker in an informational text. Lead a discussion about the different points of view based on their background knowledge. Explain to students that informational text is often in the first person or in the third person objective. In addition, instructive texts may be written in the second person. Project or display one-paragraph excerpts of informational text, and model for students how to use the flow chart (e.g., Narrator's Point of View Flow Chart) to determine the point of view of the speaker.
2. Select excerpts from several short informational texts (e.g., short article, memoir) that represent each of the types of point of view. Have students work individually, in small groups, or in pairs to look for clues about the point of view of each speaker. Have students use the chart to record at least three pieces of textual evidence that support their conclusions about the point of view for each text.

Chart: Point of View and Textual Evidence

Title of Selection	Speaker	POV Evidence #1	POV Evidence #2	POV Evidence #3	POV Conclusion

Once students have completed the chart, have them present their findings to the class and discuss their conclusions. Students should answer using a sentence frame such as "I think the point of view of _____is _____. Some textual evidence that supports this is _____."

What is an author's purpose? How do you identify the author's purpose in a text? How does a text convey an author's purpose?

1. Introduce the concept of author's purpose by asking the following discussion prompt: "Think about a newspaper article. What is the purpose of that article?" Lead a discussion with students and help them draw the conclusion that a newspaper article is written with the purpose to inform the reader. Continue the discussion with the question "Are there different types of nonfiction writing that have different purposes? What kinds of writing have those purposes?" Have students think about different types of writing. At the end of the discussion, Project or display the anchor chart and ask students to think of more examples.

Anchor Chart: Types of Writing and Purpose

PURPOSE: The reason the author is writing the text	
P: to persuade the reader	Editorials, opinion pieces, book reviews
I: to inform the reader	Science journal articles, historical essays
E: to entertain the reader	Travel essays, mystery articles

2. Review the concept of author's purpose with students. Show a presentation (e.g., Author's Purpose) that explains to students some of the common characteristics of writing for different purposes. For example, share with students that a text that is written to inform may include facts, explanations, details, descriptions, or instructions. Remind students that a text may have more than one purpose. Select a short informational text. Lead a reading of the text, prompting students to highlight clues to the author's purpose. When finished reading, ask students to think "What did the author want me to know or feel? What makes me think that?" Record answers and help students draw conclusions about the author's

purpose. Have students repeat the process individually, in small groups, or in pairs, using texts that have different purposes. Have students highlight areas of the text that prove that the selection was written for that purpose. Students should share and discuss their findings as a class.

3. Select a long informational text for students to read independently. As students read a selection, they should identify at least three pieces of textual evidence about the author's purpose for writing the selection. If the author has more than one purpose, the student should note this. Have students respond to the following prompt in writing: "What is the purpose of the text? What textual evidence proves that this is the author's purpose?"

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, point of view, purpose, textual clues, determine, convey, explain

Additional Resources:

Easy Activities for Teaching Point of View

Point of View Lesson Ideas

Clarify Purpose versus Point of View versus Perspective

Author's Purpose Video

Author's Purpose Sample Lesson

RI.6.17

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
RI.6.17 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of different types of text, media, and formats that provide information on the same topic or issue.
- Recognize different types of text, media, and formats that provide information.
- Collect and organize important information from different types of text, media, and formats.
- Integrate ideas about the same topic or issue that are presented in different types of text, media, and formats.
- Develop understandings about a topic or issue based on information collected from different types of texts, media, and formats.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What are different types of media or text formats that provide information? How do you collect information from different types of media or text formats?

1. Beginning in early elementary school, students learn about comprehending and analyzing different media and text formats. They will need to review how to collect information from different types of text, including newspaper or magazine articles, websites, infographics, reference materials, books, and essays. Select a website. Explain to students that you will be modeling how to collect information from different types of texts. Begin by discussing with students how they should collect information from a website. Project or display a website and discuss the common features of a website such as navigation tools, hyperlinks, and dropdown menus. Review with students the importance of skimming and scanning on the web to collect information. Use an Internet reading guide (e.g., Learning to Read on the Web) to help students organize information from the text.

2. Select an infographic (e.g., Media Literacy: How to Close Read Infographics). Remind students that when they are faced with infographics, much of the information will be presented visually, including tables, graphs, and pie charts. Have students look at the title and any headers in the infographic. Have students use the graphic organizer to gather and record information from each of the features in the infographic.

Graphic Organizer: Infographic Features and Understandings

Infographic Feature	What Does It Tell Me?
Title	
Headers	
Charts/Graphs/Tables	
Text	
Images	

3. Select a text that has text features such as headings, sidebars, or images with captions. Students begin reading informational text with these features in prior grades, but remind them of what headings, sidebars, and captions are. Show students a chart of common informational text features (e.g., Text Features Chart), and review their meanings. Lead students through a reading of the text. Point out the different text features for this text. Read each section of the text, and lead a discussion that highlights the key details from this section. Work together as a class to summarize each section.

How do you develop a coherent understanding of a topic or an issue? How do you integrate information from media or text formats together to help develop understanding of a topic or issue?

1. Select three texts (e.g., one article with text features, one infographic, and one website) on the same topic. Explain to students that they will need to integrate information from more than one text to create an understanding of the topic. Provide a prompt to students such as "You will need to write a short informative essay about _____. Use at least one article, one website, and one other type of media or text format to collect information about your topic." Remind students about the different ways to collect and record information from different media and text formats. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read and collect information. Once they have recorded notes, they should write a short essay about the topic. Students who understand how to gather information and

integrate it will have selected information from all of the texts and included it in their response.

2. Have each student select a topic. Using teacher-supported research, have students identify at least three texts about that topic. Encourage students to use what they have learned about collecting information from multiple media or text formats to record and organize information. Have students write or present information on their topics that have been integrated from all of their sources.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, media, format, coherent understanding, topic, issue, collect, organize, integrate, visual, quantitative

Additional Resources:

How to read a webpage

Media Literacy: How to Close Read Infographics

Guiding Students Through Expository Text with Text Feature Walks

Integrate Information from Several Texts

RI.6.18

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
RI.6.18 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading to comprehend informational texts in which an argument and specific claims are made.
- Identify the characteristics of effective arguments and claims.
- Explain how claims are made in texts and the role they play in crafting an argument.
- Trace places within a text where an author builds an argument or makes a claim.
- Examine the text for reasons and evidence that support specific claims made by the author.
- Evaluate the argument and claims in a text.
- Distinguish between claims that are supported by reasons and academic evidence from those that are not.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is an argument? How are arguments presented in texts?

1. Introduce the idea of persuasive and argumentative writing. Explain to students that sometimes an author will attempt to persuade the reader to think or understand something in a particular way. Share with students the differences between persuasive text and argumentative text (e.g., Argumentative vs. Persuasive Writing). In these instances, the author will provide arguments in the text. Students will need to understand and think about those arguments logically to comprehend the text. Explain to students that when making an argument, an author may give evidence or make conclusions. Ask students to brainstorm a list of topics a sixth-grade author might want to write about (e.g., longer summer vacation, more afterschool activities). Have students select one argument and brainstorm how they would make that argument to their peers. Lead a discussion about those arguments and how students might support the argument.

2. Show students a presentation about evaluating an author's argument (e.g., Evaluating an Author's Argument). Select a short argumentative text. Lead students through a reading of the text. Model for students how to highlight places where the author makes an argument. Lead a discussion that summarizes the author's overall point of view about the topic. Highlight textual evidence that supports these conclusions.
3. Select a short argumentative text. Have students read the text individually and respond to a prompt such as "What is the author's overall argument in this text? What textual evidence did you find to support your answer?"

What is a specific claim? How are specific claims made in texts? How are claims supported by reasons and evidence? How do you know when a claim is not supported by reasons and evidence?

1. Select a short argumentative text. Have students read the text individually and respond to a prompt such as "What is the author's overall argument in this text? What textual evidence did you find to support your answer?" Once students have responded to this text, lead a discussion about their findings. Project or display the short argumentative text. Ask students to think about how the author structures the argument. Project or display an anchor chart to show the parts of an argument.

Anchor Chart: Parts of an Argument

Parts of an Argument	
Claim	What does the author think?
Reasons	Why does the author think this?
Evidence	How does the author support the reasons?

2. Model identifying the author's claims throughout the text. Then use a colored highlighter to note each of the reasons the author gives for the claim. Have students work in small groups or pairs to identify the evidence for the reasons. Lead a discussion about each of the components of an argument found within the text.
3. Select a short argumentative text that has several claims supported by reasons and evidence. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to determine the argument, claims, reasons, and evidence in the text. Have students use sticky notes to flag each component of the argument. Students can record their findings in the graphic organizer.

Graphic Organizer: Author's Argument—Claims and Reasons and Evidence

Author's Overall Argument:	
Claim:	**Reasons:**
	Evidence:
Claim:	**Reasons:**
	Evidence:
Claim:	**Reasons:**
	Evidence:

Repeat this activity with students until they are comfortable identifying all components of an argument.

4. Provide students with an argumentative text that is missing reasons or evidence to support a claim. Have students analyze the argument. Lead a discussion with students about what effect an unsupported claim has on the author's credibility.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, argumentative text, claim, reasons, evidence, support, argument, trace, evaluate, distinguish

Additional Resources:

Analyzing an Argument

Understanding and Analyzing Arguments in Nonfiction Texts

Analyze an Argument

Argument, Persuasion, or Propaganda

What Does It Mean to Make a Claim During an Argument?

RI.6.19

Reading Standards for Informational Text
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
RI.6.19 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).

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of multiple informational texts written by different authors about the same events.
- Identify the characteristics of memoirs and biographies.
- Distinguish between the presentation of events in memoirs and biographies and other types of informational texts.
- Describe how an author's perspective can change the way events are presented.
- Compare and contrast memoirs and biographies about the same person.
- Organize similarities and differences about memoir and biography pairs.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a memoir? What is a biography?

1. Explain to students that they will be learning about informational texts that tell a life story. Within this category of texts, there are memoirs, autobiographies, and biographies. Present the anchor chart with these three types of texts.

Anchor Chart: Types of Life Stories

Memoir	Collection of personal memories, written by that person
Autobiography	Life history of a person, written by that person
Biography	Life history of a person, written by someone else

Lead a discussion with students about the differences between each of these types of writing.

2. Select a pair of texts about the same event from a person's life (e.g., excerpt from a memoir and a biography; excerpt from an autobiography and a biography). Lead a reading of the two texts. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to fill out a graphic organizer (e.g., Venn Diagram) comparing the two texts. Lead a discussion about the similarities and differences between the two texts.

How does an author's perspective change the way events are presented? How do you compare and contrast two different presentations of events?

1. Select a pair of texts about the same event (e.g., a memoir and a biography). Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to compare the two texts. Have students respond to the following prompt in writing: "How is the memoir similar to the biography? How is it different?" Lead a classroom discussion outlining the similarities and differences between the two texts. Ask students to respond to the prompt "A memoir is written by the person who experienced the event. A biography is written by someone else. How does this relate to the differences in the text? Which account is truer?" This should lead to a discussion about firsthand versus secondhand accounts. Explain that even with additional research in other texts, it may be difficult or even impossible to establish the truth and a definitive answer.
2. Select another pair of texts (e.g., a firsthand historical account and a secondhand historical account). Explain to students that they will read the two texts and analyze each author's perspective. Identify the person who wrote each text, and describe the person's relationship to the event. Lead a discussion about how the authors' perspectives may differ. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read and to use the graphic organizer to describe each author's perspective.

Graphic Organizer: Author's Perspective

Title	Who Is the Author?	What Is the Author's Perspective?	Textual Evidence to Support Conclusions
Selection 1			
Selection 2			

Lead a classroom discussion about student findings. Ask students to think about how the author's perspective may change the way the event is presented. Have students discuss why it is important to read several perspectives of the same event.

Key Academic Terms:

informational text, multiple sources, memoir, biography, author's perspective, presentation, events, organize, compare, contrast, distinguish

Additional Resources:

Understanding Author's Purpose and Perspective

Purpose vs Point of View

The Differences between Memoir, Autobiography, and Biography

Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizers

Teaching Students to Read & Write a Memoir

Writing

W.6.21

Writing Standards
Text Types and Purposes
W.6.21 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Identify the characteristics of effective argumentative pieces.
- Introduce claims and organize them clearly.
- Explain how to use clear reasons and relevant evidence to support claims.
- Support claims through organized reasons and evidence in writing.
- Use effective word choice for clarifying relationships between claims and reasons.
- Identify the characteristics of a formal writing style and write formally.
- Write a concluding statement or section that relates to the arguments provided.
- Write an argumentative piece.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is an argument? How do you write an argument? What makes an argumentative piece effective?

1. In sixth grade, students move from writing opinions to writing arguments. It is important that students understand that an argument may be based on an opinion, but it must be grounded in claims, reasons, and evidence. Select two mentor texts that are high-quality

and high-interest examples of argumentative writing, (e.g., magazine or newspaper op-ed pieces). Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read the mentor texts, and use the graphic organizer to identify information about the argumentative pieces.

Graphic Organizer: Claims, Reasons, and Evidence

Claims, Reasons, and Evidence	Mentor Text #1 Title:	Mentor Text #2 Title:
What is the main argument?		
What is a claim the author makes? How does the author back up that claim?		
What is another claim the author makes? How does the author back up that claim?		
How convincing is the author? What text convinces you?		

2. Use the anchor chart to lead a classroom discussion about the components of good argumentative writing.

Anchor Chart: Components of Argumentative Writing

Argumentative Writing	
Claim	statement about what the author is arguing
Reason	statement that supports the claim
Evidence	proof from a credible source; facts
Explanation	sentences that explain what the evidence proves and how it supports the claim
Conclusion	summary of the arguments that restates the original claim and explains why readers should align with the writer's position.
Argumentative writing is objective and does not use personal pronouns; it has a formal, serious tone.	

3. Discuss each component of argumentative writing and relate it back to mentor texts that students have read. Using one of the mentor texts, highlight the claims, reasons, evidence, explanation, and conclusions. Explain to students that in an argument, there is usually an introduction that explains the argument, at least three body paragraphs that are devoted to the claims, and a conclusion that summarizes the argument. Explain to students that when they write their own arguments, they will need to include these components.

How do you effectively introduce and organize claims in your writing? How do you support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence?

1. Review with students the concept of claims, reasons, and evidence. Explain to students that when they write an argument, it should be supported by at least three claims that are each supported by two or three reasons and evidence. Show students a graphic organizer for developing an argument (e.g., Persuasion Map). Review with students that in an argument, there is an introduction that explains the argument, body paragraphs that are devoted to the claims, and a conclusion. Within the body paragraphs, students will need to provide reasons and evidence to support the claim, along with an explanation about why those reasons and evidence support the claim. Select a sample issue and model for students how the graphic organizer can be used to build out the blueprint for writing.

2. Provide students with an issue that has two sides (e.g., cell phones in the classroom). Have students read about both sides of the issue. Explain to students that they will be deciding on a position about the issue and will need to make three claims to support their position. Explain to students that they will be building the skeleton for writing an argument before writing. Have students use a graphic organizer (e.g., Persuasion Map) to create a blueprint for their writing. Once all students have completed their graphic organizers, have them trade their work so that their claims, reasons, and evidence can be evaluated. Once students have received feedback, have them make changes where necessary. Students should then write an argument based on their planning.

What is the meaning of the term *credible*? How do you determine if a source is credible? How do you demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text?

1. Explain to students that an argument is only as strong as the foundation on which it is built. Explain that if an argument is constructed using false evidence or data, then the argument will not be strong enough for others to believe it. Share with students the importance of crafting an argument using credible sources. Explain to students how to evaluate a source for credibility (e.g., Evaluating Sources for Credibility). Work with a school or local librarian to develop a scavenger hunt where students look for credible sources in different categories (e.g., website, video, newspaper, magazine, journal, academic book, encyclopedia). If students find a source that is not credible, have them flag it. At the end of the search, lead a whole class discussion about credible sources they found and sources that seemed suspect. Ask students to pinpoint details in the sources that make them credible, monitoring students' understanding of the topic or text.
2. Have students practice the steps to creating an argument (see Anchor Chart: Components of Argumentative Writing in earlier activity with this standard). As students develop their claims through reasons and evidence, have them select credible sources and defend their choices. Have students use the graphic organizer to record the information.

Graphic Organizer: Credible Sources Argument

Credible Sources Argument:		
Claim:	**Reason/Evidence:**	**Source:** **How I know it is credible:**
	Reason/Evidence:	**Source:** **How I know it is credible:**
	Reason/Evidence:	**Source:** **How I know it is credible:**

Have students share their findings with another student to review the credibility of the sources. Lead a discussion about the sources students find and the credibility of those sources. Create an ongoing list of credible sources for students to access when developing arguments.

How do you choose words, phrases, and clauses to clarify relationships among claim(s) and reasons?

1. Select a sample body paragraph that presents an author's claims and reasons but is devoid of transition words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., Example Paragraph). Project or display the paragraph for students and lead a discussion about the quality of writing. Point out to students that because there are no transition words, the writing is choppy and ideas do not seem to flow together. Use the chart of common transition expressions to show how to clarify relationships between claims and reasons.

Chart: Transition Words, Phrases, and Clauses

Transition Words, Phrases, and Clauses: Clarifying Relationships between Claims and Reasons	
for example	also
for instance	additionally
because of this	this can be seen in
given that	this is why
for this reason	

Lead a whole class discussion about ways to revise the paragraph using this list of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Discuss how the use of these words, phrases, and clauses changes the cadence of writing.

2. Have students draft a sample body paragraph for an argument. Remind students that as they write their argument, they will need to use transition words, phrases, and clauses to help clarify the relationships between claims and the supporting reasons. Have students share their drafts during peer-editing conferences to check for the varied and appropriate use of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Have students evaluate their peer feedback and revise their drafts as needed.

What is a formal style in writing? How do you establish and maintain a formal style in writing?

1. Select two mentor texts (e.g., one that is written informally and one that is written formally). Start by introducing the concept of informal writing vs. formal writing. Lead a classroom discussion in which students discuss when formal writing is used (e.g., letter to the principal, essay) and when informal writing is used (e.g., social media posts, email to a friend). Project or display a video about formal vs. informal writing (e.g., Formal vs. Informal Writing). Lead a reading of the two mentor texts. Lead a discussion about formal writing and how it differs from informal writing.
2. Create a sample argumentative writing selection that follows the format of argumentative writing but includes lapses of informal writing style. In small groups or pairs, have students identify the places where the informal writing style is used and revise so that the entire text is formal. Lead a whole class discussion about the text, and have students share how they revised the text.
3. Have students write an argumentative writing piece. After students write their first draft, divide students into peer-editing partnerships focused on style alone. Students should

check for lapses to informal style and should suggest how to revise for a more formal style. Students should evaluate the suggestions and revise their drafts as needed.

How do you provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented?

1. Students have been writing concluding statements since third grade, increasing in sophistication. Writing argumentative texts is new, however, so they will need to review the concept and be introduced to how argumentative texts are concluded. Use the anchor chart to lead a discussion about students' prior knowledge regarding how to write conclusions.

Anchor Chart: How to Conclude an Argumentative Text

How to Conclude an Argumentative Text
1. Restate your topic and why it is important. 2. Restate your argument. 3. Explain why readers should agree with your position.

   Select a mentor text that has a strong conclusion. Lead a discussion with students about the mentor text conclusion. Point out where the author presents each of the three components: restating the topic, restating the argument, and explaining why the reader should be in agreement.

2. Have students select an argumentative text they have previously written. In peer-editing pairs, have students share their concluding statements or sections. Have peer editors analyze the concluding statement and suggest revisions. Students should evaluate the suggestions and revise as needed their concluding sections. They should highlight where they have restated their topic, restated their argument, and explained why readers should agree with the position.

Key Academic Terms:

writing, argumentative pieces, claim, support, credible source, reason, evidence, word choice, formal style, conclusions, organize, clarify, demonstrate, relevant, establish, maintain

Additional Resources:

Argument Writing Sample Lesson

Opinion/Argument Writing Resource

Hoax or No Hoax? Strategies for Online Comprehension and Evaluation

Read*Write* Think: Online Comprehension Strategies Diagram

Transitions: Understanding Signal Words

Purdue Online Writing Lab: Conclusions

W.6.22

Writing Standards
Text Types and Purposes
W.6.22 Write informative or 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 or contrast, and cause and 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Identify the characteristics of effective informative or explanatory pieces.
- Use facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples to develop the topic.
- Organize informative or explanatory writing with strategies such as definition, classification, comparison or contrast, and cause and effect.
- Use formatting, illustrations, and multimedia to aid the reader in comprehension.
- Use appropriate transition words to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use precise or domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

- Identify the characteristics of a formal writing style and write formally.
- Write a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
- Write an informative or explanatory piece.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What are the characteristics of an effective informative or explanatory text? How do you convey ideas, concepts, and information in informative or explanatory texts?

1. While students learn about informative or explanatory texts beginning in the first grade, it will still be necessary to review the characteristics of explanatory or informative texts. Select two mentor texts that are high-quality and high-interest examples of informative or explanatory texts. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read the mentor texts. Students should use the graphic organizer to record information about the texts.

Graphic Organizer: Characteristics of Texts

How does the author . . .	Text 1	Text 2
explain in the text?		
describe in the text?		
illustrate in the text?		
analyze in the text?		

Lead a classroom discussion about what students found. Have students draw conclusions about informative or explanatory writing. Make sure to have students note the use of any formatting, graphics, or other multimedia in the text.

2. Lead a classroom discussion about the structure of informative or explanatory writing. Project or display an anchor chart about informative or explanatory essays (e.g., Informative/Explanatory Writing). Discuss each component of informative or explanatory writing and relate it back to mentor texts that students have read. Using one of the mentor texts, highlight the topic sentence, subtopics, use of formatting, graphics, multimedia, and conclusions. Explain to students that when they write their own informative or explanatory essays, they will need to include these components.

How do you examine a topic and when is it used in writing? How do you introduce a topic in writing? How do you develop a topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples? How do you use strategies such as definition, classification, comparison or contrast, and cause and effect to organize ideas, concepts, and information in your writing?

1. Students learn about the idea of topics beginning in first grade but will need to review the concept. Explain to students that informative or explanatory writing explains something or informs about a topic. Use the anchor chart to lead a classroom discussion about the structure of informational or explanatory writing.

Anchor Chart: Structure of Informative or Explanatory Writing

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Informative or Explanatory Writing</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Paragraph 1: INTRODUCTION
lead/hook/grabber
topic sentence introducing subtopics</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Body Paragraphs</td><td>Paragraph 2: SUBTOPIC 1
topic sentence
supporting details, facts, or evidence
concluding sentence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Paragraph 3: SUBTOPIC 2
topic sentence
supporting details, facts, or evidence
concluding sentence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Paragraph 4: SUBTOPIC 3
topic sentence
supporting details, facts, or evidence
concluding sentence</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Paragraph 5: CONCLUDING SECTION
tie 3 subtopics together
summarize the reason for writing</td></tr>
</table>

2. Discuss each component of informative or explanatory writing and relate it back to mentor texts that students have read. Using one of the mentor texts, highlight the introduction, main topic, subtopics, and conclusion. Explain to students that in an informative or explanatory text, there is usually an introductory paragraph, several paragraphs that provide information and explanation about the subtopic, and a conclusion that summarizes why the topic was selected.
3. Introduce the idea of outlining to students. Explain that prior to writing an informative or explanatory piece, it is helpful to plan out the writing. Introduce the idea of a thesis to students. Explain to students what a thesis is and how to develop one for a selected topic (e.g., How to write a thesis for beginners). Model for students how to write a thesis for a selected topic and integrate it into an introduction. Have students select a topic and write their thesis statements. Have them add a hook, or an opening statement, that grabs the reader's attention before their thesis statements to complete their introductions. Then have students use their thesis statements to begin to plan a written piece about the topic. Students can use the graphic organizer to organize the plan for the writing.

Graphic Organizer: Plan for Writing

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Informative or Explanatory Writing</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Paragraph 1: INTRODUCTION
Thesis statement that introduces 3 subtopics:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Body Paragraphs</td><td>Paragraph 2: SUBTOPIC 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Paragraph 3: SUBTOPIC 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Paragraph 4: SUBTOPIC 3</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Paragraph 5: CONCLUSION
Concluding sentence:</td></tr>
</table>

After completing the graphic organizer, have students continue to flesh out their plan for their writing. For each subtopic, they will need at least three different relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples to support their argument. Model for students how to gather information to support each subtopic,

emphasizing that they may have to do some research to obtain the relevant information. When modeling how to find supporting details, make sure to show students different kinds, including facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information. Have students use a graphic organizer (e.g., Essay Map) to plan their own supporting details about their subtopics.

4. Review with students the different text structures they have encountered in informational reading and mentor texts (e.g., Text Structures Anchor Chart). Model for students how the mentor texts use definition, classification, compare and contrast, and cause and effect to structure supporting details. Have students use a graphic organizer to determine the best structure to use to present their information for each sub-topic. Have students review signal words that help readers understand their structure (e.g., Signal Words). After students draft their body paragraphs, have them work with a peer-editing partner to analyze the use of these structures and make recommendations for revision.

How do you use formatting, graphics, and multimedia in your writing?

1. Select a mentor text that uses formatting, graphics, and/or multimedia. Lead a classroom discussion in which students discuss each text feature and why the author includes it. Project or display commonly used text features (e.g., Text Features Chart), and review what each is and how it is used. Lead a discussion around the question "When should a writer include formatting, graphics, and other multimedia in writing? When should a writer *not* include these?" Explain to students that text features should be used solely to support a point or provide pertinent information and should not distract from the thesis.
2. Create a sample informative or explanatory writing selection that does not use formatting, graphics, or multimedia. In small groups or pairs, have students work to identify the places where formatting, graphics, and multimedia would help support the writing. Lead a whole class discussion about the text, and have students share how they would add formatting, graphics, and multimedia to the text.
3. Have students write an informative or explanatory writing piece. After students write their first draft, have them mark places where formatting, graphics, and multimedia would support their ideas. Have students include at least one example of formatting and one example of graphics or multimedia in the text. Show students how to use captions and citations for graphics and multimedia. Divide students into peer-editing partnerships focused on the use of formatting, graphics, and multimedia. Students should analyze the effectiveness of formatting, graphics, and multimedia and provide suggestions for how to revise for better effect. Students should evaluate the suggestions and revise their drafts as needed.

How do you use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts? How do you use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain a topic?

1. Select a sample body paragraph devoid of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Project or display the paragraph for students and lead a discussion about the quality of writing. Point out to students that because the paragraph does not use transition language, the writing is choppy and ideas do not seem to flow together. Project or display a list of common transition words used to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts (e.g., Linking Ideas and Facts Together). Lead a whole class discussion about ways to revise the paragraph using this list of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Discuss how the use of these words, phrases, and clauses changes the cadence of writing.
2. Have students draft a sample body paragraph for an informative or explanatory writing piece. Remind students that as they write, they will need to use transition words, phrases, and clauses to help link ideas and concepts. Have students share their drafts during peer-editing conferences to check for the varied and appropriate use of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Have students evaluate the feedback and revise their drafts as needed.
3. Select or create a sample body paragraph devoid of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. Project or display the paragraph for students and lead a discussion about the quality of writing. Point out to students that the writing is vague and unconvincing because it does not use precise or domain-specific words. Brainstorm a list of precise or domain-specific vocabulary for the topic. Lead a whole class discussion about ways to revise the paragraph, using this list of words and phrases. Discuss how the use of these words, phrases, and clauses changes the power and impact of the writing.
4. Have students draft a sample body paragraph for an informative/explanatory writing piece. Remind students that as they write, they will need to use precise and domain-specific vocabulary. Have students underline their use in their drafts. Have students share their drafts during peer-editing conferences to check for the use of precise and domain-specific vocabulary for their topic. Have students evaluate peer feedback and revise their drafts as needed.

How do you establish and maintain a formal style in writing?

1. Select two mentor texts (e.g., one that is written informally and one that is written formally). Start by introducing the differences between informal writing and formal writing. Lead a classroom discussion in which students discuss when formal writing is used (e.g., informational article, reference books) and when informal writing is used (e.g., social media posts, email to a friend). Project or display a video about formal and informal writing (e.g., Formal vs. Informal Writing). Lead a reading of the two mentor texts. Lead a discussion about formal writing and how it differs from informal writing.

2. Create a sample informative or explanatory writing selection that follows the format of this form of writing but has lapses in informal writing style. In small groups or pairs, have students work to identify the places where the informal writing style is used and revise so that the entire text is formal. Lead a discussion with the whole class about the text and have students share how they revised the text.
3. Have students write an informative or explanatory writing piece. After students write their first draft, divide students into peer-editing partnerships to focus only on writing style. Students should check for lapses to informal style and should provide suggestions for how to revise for a more formal style. Students should evaluate the suggestions and revise their drafts as needed.

How do you provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented?

1. Students have learned about writing concluding statements or sections with increasing sophistication since third grade; however, they will need to review the components of a concluding statement or section. Lead a discussion about students' prior knowledge regarding how to write conclusions. Select a mentor text that has a strong conclusion. Project or display an anchor chart that looks like the following:

Anchor Chart: Concluding an Informational or Explanatory Text

Concluding an Informational or Explanatory Text
1. Restate the topic and summarize the subtopics. 2. Restate your thesis. 3. Connect back and relate the closing statement to the opening hook.

   Lead a discussion with students about the mentor text conclusion. Point out where the author presents each of the three components.
2. Have students select an informative or explanatory text they have previously written. In peer-editing partnerships, have students share their concluding statements or sections. Have peer editors analyze the concluding statement and make revision suggestions. Students should evaluate the suggestions and revise their concluding sections as needed, highlighting where they have restated their topic and subtopics, restated their thesis, and connected back to the opening hook, or an opening statement that grabs the reader's attention.

Key Academic Terms:

writing, informative writing, explanatory writing, topic, topic development, formatting, illustrations, multimedia, facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, information, examples, conclusion, vocabulary, precise vocabulary, domain-specific vocabulary, formal style, convey, analysis, organize, transition words, classification, relevant, establish, maintain

Additional Resources:

Expository Writing Cake

Guidelines and Resources for Teaching Informative Writing

Read*Write*Think: Essay Map

Informative/Explanatory Writing in the Classroom, Grades 3-12

Purdue Online Writing Lab: Conclusions

W.6.23

Writing Standards
Text Types and Purposes
W.6.23 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, characters, or both; 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Identify the characteristics of effective narratives.
- Explain and use descriptive details when writing narratives.
- Organize and use well-structured event sequences when writing narratives.
- Use context in narrative writing to engage and orient the reader.
- Identify the characteristics of effective narrator and character development.
- Identify and use writing techniques that control pacing in narratives.
- Use dialogue, description, and pacing to help develop characters and events in narratives.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence of events.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another time frame or setting.
- Construct a conclusion that follows from narrated experiences or events.
- Write a narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What are the characteristics of an effective narrative piece? How do you use technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences in a narrative? How do you effectively organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically?

1. Students learn about writing narrative texts beginning in the first grade and should also be familiar with the components of narrative text through their study of reading. It is still important to review the characteristics of narrative texts. It should also be noted that while students interact or tell stories to each other, they may not connect that story-telling to their own writing. In order to have students begin to think in a story-telling mindset, have students practice telling stories to each other in small groups or pairs. Have them respond to the discussion prompt "In your group, you will be telling each other a story. Think about something very funny that has happened to you. Share that story with your group." Have students ask each other questions to clarify about parts that are confusing or lack detail. Lead a discussion with students about what makes a personal narrative engaging. Review how the story-teller uses technique, relative descriptive details, and how events are structured. Brainstorm a list.
2. Select a mentor text that is a high-quality and high-interest example of a personal narrative. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read the mentor text. Present students with the concept of a story arc diagram (e.g., Story Arc) and review each component. Students will have seen story arcs when reading fiction and so it is helpful to mention this during a reading lesson. As students read the mentor text, they should highlight the exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution on the diagram. Lead a classroom discussion about what students found. Have students draw conclusions about narrative writing.
3. Students will select a story they want to tell through narrative writing. Have students develop a plan for their narrative using a story arc diagram. As students are developing their plan for writing, explain that they will need to follow this story arc in order for their writing to have a sequence of events that unfolds naturally and logically. Have students work in small groups or pairs to review each student's plan and analyze the sequence of events prior to writing. If there are problems with the event sequence, students should revise the event sequence for clarity or a more natural progression. Once they have revised their plan, they should draft a personal narrative.

How do you engage and orient the reader by establishing a context in narrative writing? How do you introduce and develop the narrator and/or characters in narratives?

1. Students learn about orienting the reader beginning in fifth grade; however, they will need to review the concept. Explain to students that creating a context is designed to create a relationship with the reader. The context is how the reader will connect and engage in what they are reading. When writing personal narratives, the context needs to be introduced early in the text. Discuss the anchor chart.

Anchor Chart: Creating Context

Creating Context Through . . .
• Details about the Narrator or Character • Backstory • Personality Trait • Setting • Life-Changing Situation • Everyday Situation • Memory • Anecdote

Select a mentor text that is a high-quality and high-interest example of a personal narrative. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to read the mentor text. As students read the mentor text, they should highlight places where the author has created context. Have students use the categories on the anchor chart to determine how the author created context. Have students look carefully at how the author has introduced the narrator and characters. Lead a classroom discussion about what students found. Have students use a sentence frame such as "The author establishes context when _____. The author is using _____ to establish context." Have students draw conclusions about how to develop context when writing.

2. Have students begin to plan a personal narrative using a story arc. Have students think about how they will introduce the narrator and characters during the exposition. Have students draft the opening paragraph(s) in which the narrator and main characters are introduced. Have students pay attention to the details shared about the character. In peer-editing partnerships, have students share their drafts. Have peer editors analyze the way the narrator and characters were introduced. Students should ask themselves, "Were the narrator and characters introduced in an engaging way?" Students should evaluate this feedback and revise their drafts as needed.

What is pacing in narrative writing? How do you use dialogue, pacing, and description to develop experiences, events, and/or characters effectively?

1. Select a mentor text that is an example of a well-paced personal narrative. Lead a reading of the mentor text. As you read the text, discuss pacing as a concept. Explain to students that pacing is the way writers make decisions to expand and shrink moments to move the story forward in an effective way. Lead a discussion about how dialogue and description are used to pace the story. Model for students how to create a story pacing diagram that reflects the way the mentor text is paced (e.g., Story Pacing Diagram). Have students note how dialogue and description relate to this diagram. Lead a discussion about why the author paced the story this way.
2. Have students begin to plan a personal narrative by using a story arc. Once students have outlined the basic events of the story, have them develop a story pacing diagram for their narratives. Have students decide which moments will be expanded and which will be shrunk. Also have students note where they will use description and where they will use dialogue. In small groups or pairs, have students share their plans. Have students analyze pacing and ensure it makes sense with the story arc. Students should evaluate feedback and revise their plans as needed.

How do you use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence of events? How do you use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another?

1. Select a sample narrative text devoid of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Project or display the text for students and lead a discussion about the quality of writing. Point out to students it is difficult to follow the sequence because of the lack of transition words. Project or display a list of common transition words, phrases, and clauses used to show sequence of events and time shifts (e.g., Time Order Words List). Lead a whole class discussion about ways to revise the text by using the list. Discuss how the use of these words, phrases, and clauses changes the cadence of the writing.
2. Have students look at a draft from a personal narrative text they have written. Have students revise the text so that they use transition words, phrases, and clauses to show sequence of events and to signal time shifts. Have students share their drafts during peer-editing conferences to check for the varied and appropriate use of transition words, phrases, and clauses. Have students evaluate peer feedback and revise their drafts as needed.

How do you use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events?

1. Select a sample paragraph devoid of precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language. Students should be familiar with description and sensory language from reading stories in previous years. Project or display the paragraph for students and lead a discussion about the quality of writing. Lead a whole class discussion about ways to revise the paragraph using precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language. Discuss how the use of this language helps the reader to picture experiences and events as if they were in the story.
2. Have students practice using precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to "show, rather than tell" when writing. Provide students with a list of sentences that tell rather than show experiences and events (e.g., Show-Me Sentences Handout). Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to rewrite each "telling sentence" into a "showing sentence." After students have completed the activity, lead a classroom discussion where students share different ways they have revised each sentence.
3. Have students review personal narrative drafts. Remind students that as they write, they will need to use precise words and phrases. Have students underline the use of this vocabulary in their drafts. Have students share their drafts during peer-editing conferences to check for the use of precise and domain-specific vocabulary for their topic. Have students evaluate peer feedback and revise their drafts as required.

How do you provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events?

1. Students learn about how to write conclusions for narratives beginning in third grade, but it will still be important to review what a conclusion is in a narrative. Select a mentor text that has a strong conclusion. Lead students through a reading of the mentor text. Ask students to locate where the author has provided a resolution for the story. Review with students the concept of the story arc. Lead a discussion with students about what they notice in the mentor text. Highlight the places where events are concluded and where the author hints at how things have changed in the mentor text. Remind students that when they conclude a narrative essay, they will need to include the resolution for the story they have told. Remind students that a resolution concludes the events of the story and often gives a hint for the future of the story.
2. Have students select a narrative text they have previously written. In peer-editing pairs, have students share their conclusions. Have peer editors analyze the conclusions for effective story resolution and suggest revisions. Students should evaluate feedback and revise their conclusions as needed. They should highlight where they concluded events and hinted at the future in their conclusions.

Key Academic Terms:

writing, narrative writing, technique, descriptive details, event sequences, unfolds, narrator, character, development, dialogue, description, pacing, precise words and phrases, sensory details, conclusion, logical, orient, context, signal shifts, transition words, time frame, setting, convey, establish, organize

Additional Resources:

A Step-by-Step Plan for Teaching Narrative Writing

Why Context Matters in Writing

Read*Write*Think*: Show-Me Sentences Lesson Plan

Sixth Grade On Demand Writing – Narrative Writing Samples

What is Narrative Writing, and How Do I Teach It in the Classroom?

W.6.27

Writing Standards
Research to Build and Present Knowledge
W.6.27 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Choose a question to answer with a short research project.
- Brainstorm a list of related questions that will help answer the larger question through research.
- Review types of sources and their uses in research projects.
- Use the library catalog and online resources to identify potential print and digital sources.
- Use a variety of sources to answer a question.
- Identify when research may need to be refocused and shift research appropriately.
- Refocus inquiry in guided situations.
- Gather information from sources.
- Conduct short research projects.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

How do you answer a question with a short research project?

1. Students learn about how to research beginning in first grade, but it is important to review the concepts of research. Ask students “What do you do when you want to learn more about a topic? How do you focus on what you are learning?” Lead a discussion where students brainstorm a list of high-interest topics. Select one of the topics and ask students to make a list of questions about that topic to narrow the research.

Chart: Questions to Help Narrow Research

Topic: The Brain
Possible Research Questions: How does the brain control our feelings? When does the brain stop growing? How does the brain regulate breathing? How does the brain help us sleep and dream? How does the brain help us make decisions?

Emphasize to students that precise questions will help them focus their research and pinpoint useful information. Have students watch a video about how to answer a question with a research project (e.g., How to Answer a Question with a Research Project).

2. Use the anchor chart and explain to students that they will be developing their own research questions.

Anchor Chart: What Is a Good Research Question?

A good research question is:
• Clear: easy for the audience to understand without other explanation • Narrow: focused enough that it can be answered thoroughly in the time allowed for the task • Concise: written in a short, clear way • Complex: cannot be answered only by "yes" or "no" • Arguable: has answers that are open to debate

Have students practice choosing a topic and developing a research question. In small groups or pairs, students should share their research questions. Other students in the group should analyze whether the research questions follow the guidelines provided and should offer suggestions for improvement as needed. Students should evaluate feedback and revise their research questions as needed. Lead a discussion about the questions the class has created.

How do you draw on more than one source in a short research project? How do you refocus inquiry if needed when researching?

1. Once students have selected a research question on which to focus, share that they will need to determine the best sources to use for their research. Select a sample research question and project or display it. Lead a discussion about where students would go to look for information for that topic (e.g., magazine article, website, encyclopedia, reference book, content area journal). Share with students that they may need to do simple searches on the Internet using search sites (e.g., Conducting Simple Searches of the World Wide Web), and show them how to use keywords to refine their searches (e.g., Refining Searches by Adding Keywords). Explain to students that they will need to follow the steps for evaluating sources they find on the Internet (e.g., Evaluating Internet Resources). Model for students how to find sources and evaluate them for the sample research question. Explain to students what happens when a research question does not yield enough sources. Demonstrate how to adjust the research question as necessary.
2. Have students select a research question that is high-interest and that they are passionate about. Show students a research scaffold (e.g., Research Paper Scaffold) in which they can record their question and capture information from multiple sources. Explain that more sources help build credibility in their writing; require students to use more than three sources for their research. Point out to students that if they are researching and they are unable to find enough good sources, they may need to adjust their research question.

Key Academic Terms:

writing, research, research report, inquiry, sources, question, answer, plan, brainstorm, refocus, conduct, draw on sources

Additional Resources:

Scaffolding Methods for Research Paper Writing

Inquiry on the Internet: Evaluating Web Pages for a Class Collection

How to Write a Research Question

Example Student Research Paper

W.6.28

Writing Standards
Research to Build and Present Knowledge
W.6.28 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.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Engage in close reading of multiple print and digital resources.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources.
- Identify the characteristics of a credible source.
- Assess the credibility of a variety of print and digital sources.
- Explain what it means to plagiarize.
- Explain how to avoid plagiarism when quoting and paraphrasing the data and conclusions of others.
- Quote or paraphrase a variety of print and digital sources without plagiarizing.
- Provide basic bibliographic information for sources.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

How do you gather relevant information about a topic from multiple print and digital sources? What is a credible source? How do you assess the credibility of a source?

1. Once students have selected a research question on which to focus, share that they will need to determine the best sources to use for their research. Select a sample research question and project or display it. Lead a discussion about where students would go to look for information for that topic (e.g., magazine article, website, encyclopedia, reference book, content area journal). Share with students that they may need to do simple searches on the Internet using search sites (e.g., Conducting Simple Searches of the World Wide Web), and show them how to use keywords to refine their searches (e.g., Refining Searches by Adding Keywords).

2. Explain to students that research needs to come from credible sources and model how to evaluate a source for credibility (e.g., Evaluating Sources for Credibility). Emphasize that they will need to follow the steps for evaluating sources they find on the Internet (e.g., Evaluating Internet Resources). Work with a school or local librarian to develop a scavenger hunt where students look for credible sources in different categories (e.g., website, video, newspaper, magazine, journal, academic book, encyclopedia). In their search, if students find a source that is not credible, have them flag it. At the end of the search, lead a whole class discussion about credible sources they found and sources that seemed suspect.
3. Have students practice the steps to researching by using credible sources. As students work to answer their research questions, have them use their graphic organizers, select credible sources, and defend their choices.

Graphic Organizer: Credible Sources

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Research Question:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Topic/Idea:</td><td>Fact:</td><td>Source:

How I know it is credible:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fact:</td><td>Source:

How I know it is credible:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fact:</td><td>Source:

How I know it is credible:</td></tr>
</table>

Have students share their findings with other students to review the credibility of the sources. Lead a discussion about the sources students find and the credibility of those sources. Create an ongoing list of credible sources for students to access when developing arguments.

What is plagiarism? How do you avoid plagiarism? How do you quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism? How do you provide basic bibliographic information for sources?

1. Introduce the concept of plagiarism. Explain to students that plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas as if they are one's own. Explain to students that when they are writing and using research they have conducted, they will need to make sure that they either put the information in their own words and credit the source or use a quotation that is credited. Select a short informational text about a topic. Write several texts that use the informational text as a source. Some texts should provide examples of plagiarism and others should not. Lead a classroom discussion about each of the texts, and work together to label the places where information used from the original text is "plagiarized" or "not plagiarized."
2. Explain to students that when they are writing, they will either need to directly quote the source or paraphrase the ideas. In both cases the author will need to be attributed. Review with students how to directly quote a text using quotation marks. Model several examples. Then have students practice how to paraphrase a text. Provide students with a list of paraphrasing strategies (e.g., Paraphrasing Strategies). Select a short informational text. Lead students through a reading of the text. Model how to select an idea from the text and paraphrase it for use in writing. Have students work in small groups or pairs to use sample passages and practice paraphrasing each (e.g., Paraphrasing Exercise). Lead a discussion in which students share examples of paraphrasing. Discuss with students whether their paraphrasing would prevent plagiarism.
3. Have students review research-based writing they have done in the past. In peer-editing pairs, have students review their sources and check for plagiarism. Have peer editors suggest ways to prevent plagiarism so that students can revise their work by quoting or paraphrasing.
4. Project or display for students the basic rules for citations (e.g., Citations for Beginners). Project or display basic citation formats for different types of sources. Model for students how to develop a bibliography for different types of sources. Provide students with basic information about different sources (e.g., website, book, magazine article, encyclopedia). In small groups or pairs, have students draft a bibliography using the standard citation format that follows the school/district's scope and sequence.

Key Academic Terms:

research, research project, print source, digital source, credible source, assess, plagiarism, quote, paraphrase, bibliography, bibliographic information, relevant, gather, data, conclusion, citation, standard citation format

Additional Resources:

Teaching Students to Avoid Plagiarism

Paraphrasing – Timbuktu in Your Own Words

I Used My Own Words! Paraphrasing Informational Texts

Teaching Students to Paraphrase

Is It Plagiarism Yet?

Prove It! A Citation Scavenger Hunt

Writing Support (Guides to Citation and Documentation Style)

W.6.29

Writing Standards
Research to Build and Present Knowledge
W.6.29 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").

Instructional Outcomes:

- Analyze literary and informational texts.
- Reflect on literary and informational texts.
- Research using literary and informational texts.
- Explain how to draw evidence to support analysis.
- Identify key details from literary and informational texts that are relevant to analysis.
- Explain how to draw evidence to support reflection.
- Identify key details from literary and informational texts that are relevant to reflection.
- Explain how to draw evidence to support research.
- Identify key details from literary and informational texts that are relevant to research.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is analysis? How do you analyze literary or informational texts? What does it mean to draw evidence? How do you draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis?

1. Students learn how to formally analyze text beginning in fifth grade but will need to review the concept (e.g., Literary Analysis). Remind students that when you analyze a text, you are

forming a position based on textual evidence. Select a short literary or informational text that has enough textual evidence to support a statement. Lead students through a reading of the text. Model how to analyze using a "think aloud" method in which you describe your position and your thinking behind it. Explain how you formulated your position with textual evidence. Model how to write a brief analysis of the text.

2. Select two short literary texts that have enough detail to support analysis of theme. Have students read the texts independently. Ask students to respond to a prompt such as "What is a shared theme in these two texts? What textual evidence supports your analysis of the theme?" Have students write a brief analysis in response to the prompt. Have students work in small groups or pairs to share their responses. Have students respond to others' analyses and decide if the analysis is well-reasoned and well-supported by textual evidence. Have students evaluate the feedback and revise their analysis as needed.
3. Select two short informational texts that have enough detail to support analysis of how an author develops an event through explanation and anecdotes. (This is supported by RI.6.13.) Have students read the texts independently. Ask students to respond to a prompt such as "How does the author develop the event *XYZ* in the text? What devices does the author use to do this? What textual evidence supports your analysis of the author's development of the event?" Have each student write a brief analysis in response to the prompt. Have students work in small groups or pairs to share their responses. Have students respond to others' analyses and decide if the analysis being shared is well-reasoned and well-supported by textual evidence. Have each student evaluate the feedback and revise one's own analysis as needed.

What is reflection? How do you effectively reflect upon literary or informational texts? What does it mean to draw evidence? How do you draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support reflection?

1. Students learn about reflection beginning in fourth grade but have informally reflected about what they have read for much longer. They will need to review the concept of reflection. Remind students that when you reflect about a text, you are making connections to your own experiences and relating them to the text. Select a short literary or informational text that is conducive for reflection. Lead students through a reading of the text. Model reflection using a "think aloud" method in which you describe your connection to the text and your thinking behind it. Explain how you formulated your position with evidence from the text. Model how to write a brief reflection about the text.
2. Select a short literary text that has strong characterization. Have students read the text independently. Ask students to respond to a prompt such as "Do you agree with how the character *XYZ* responded? Would you respond in the same way? Why or why not? Support your response with evidence from the text." Have students write a brief reflection in response to the prompt. Have students work in small groups or pairs to share their

responses. Have students respond to others' reflections and decide if the reflections are well-reasoned and well-supported by textual evidence. Have students evaluate this feedback and revise their reflections as needed.

3. Select a short informational text that has enough detail in it to support reflection of how an author develops an argument. Have students read the text independently. Ask students to respond to a prompt such as "What is the author arguing in this text? Do you agree with the author? What textual evidence supports your reflection about the author's argument?" Have students write a brief reflection in response to the prompt. Have students work in small groups or pairs to share their responses. Have students respond to others' reflections and decide if the reflections are well-reasoned and well-supported by textual evidence. Have students evaluate this feedback and revise their reflections as needed.

What is research? How do you use literary or informational texts to support research? What does it mean to draw evidence? How do you draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support research?

1. Students learn about research beginning in third grade and are expected to research as part of writing instruction (see W. 6.27 and W.6.28). Remind students that when they research, they need to include textual evidence to help answer their research question and support their conclusions. Select a short informational text that is conducive to answering a research question. Lead students through a reading of the text. Model reflection using a "think aloud" method in which you model how students can answer the research question using textual evidence. Model writing a brief answer to the research question, using the evidence from the text.
2. Select several short informational texts that have enough details to support a student answering a research question. Have students read the texts independently. Ask students to respond to a research question related to the topic. Students should write a brief answer to the research question based on the evidence from the informational texts. Students should work in small groups or pairs to share their responses. Students should respond to others' research and decide if the research is well-reasoned and well-supported by textual evidence. Students should evaluate the feedback and revise their research responses as needed.

Key Academic Terms:

literary text, informational text, evidence, analysis, reflection, research, key details, draw, trace, distinguish, evaluate

Additional Resources:

4 Strategies to Model Literary Analysis

Citing Textual Evidence

Using textual evidence in your research paper

Using Evidence in Writing

Language

L.6.37

Language Standards
Conventions of Standard English Skills and understandings that are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking are marked with an asterisk (*).
L.6.37 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Demonstrate knowledge of subject-verb agreement when interrupted by a prepositional phrase, with inverted word order, and with indefinite pronouns as subjects. b. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive). c. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., *myself, ourselves*). d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.* e. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).* f. Recognize variations from Standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

Instructional Outcomes:

- Explain the characteristics of subject-verb agreement.
- Explain how subject-verb agreement is affected when interrupted by prepositional phrases, inverted word order, and with indefinite pronouns as subjects.
- Identify correct and incorrect usage of subject-verb agreement when interrupted by prepositional phrases, inverted word order, and with indefinite pronouns as subjects.
- Use subject-verb agreement correctly in writing when it is interrupted by prepositional phrases, inverted word order, and with indefinite pronouns as subjects.
- Explain the characteristics of subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns and when each is used.

- Identify correct and incorrect usage of subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns in written passages.
- Use subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns correctly in writing.
- Explain the characteristics of intensive pronouns and how they are used.
- Identify correct and incorrect usage of intensive pronouns in written passages.
- Use intensive pronouns correctly in writing.
- Explain how to identify inappropriate shift in pronoun number and person.
- Identify inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person in written passages.
- Explain the characteristics of vague pronouns and how to correct them.
- Identify correct use of pronouns and incorrect use of vague pronouns in written passages.
- Use pronouns correctly and avoid using vague pronouns in writing and speaking.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is subject-verb agreement? How is subject-verb agreement affected when interrupted by a prepositional phrase, with inverted word order, and with indefinite pronouns as subjects?

1. Students learn about subject-verb agreement beginning in third grade. Review the rules for subject-verb agreement (e.g., Subject-Verb Agreement Video), and lead a discussion about why it is important for the subject and verb to agree when writing. Explain to students that there are situations in which subject-verb agreement is not always straightforward. Explain to students that in instances when there is an interrupting prepositional phrase, subject-verb agreement can become confusing. Review with students what a prepositional phrase is and how it functions in a sentence. Project or display a chart with common prepositions and examples of related prepositional phrases (e.g., Verbs: Interrupting Phrases). Project or display a sentence that has a subject, an interrupting prepositional phrase, and a verb such as the following:

The girl with the purple sweater dances competitively.

   Model for students how to highlight the subject and verb. Have students underline the prepositional phrase. Model for students how to ignore the prepositional phrase and match the subject and verb for agreement. Have students practice this with several other sentences.

2. Explain that in many sentences, the subject comes first and is followed by the verb, but there are also cases where the subject and the verb order is inverted. In this case, it can sometimes be confusing to deal with subject-verb agreement. Project or display a sentence that is similar to the following:

Silent were the stunned students.

Have students identify the verb (were) and the subject (students). Model for students that when they reverse the order (students were), the subject and verb are in agreement. Have students practice this with several other sentences (e.g., Inverted Sentences).

3. Review with students what a pronoun is and how it functions in a sentence. Students will be familiar with personal pronouns (e.g., I, you, we, they, him, her). Use the anchor chart to explain to students that there are other types of pronouns, including indefinite pronouns.

Anchor Chart: Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite Pronouns	
Indefinite pronouns that are singular	anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, and something
Indefinite pronouns that are always plural	both, few, many, others, several
Indefinite pronouns that can be singular or plural	all, any, either, more, most, none, some, such

Model for students how the word *all* can be singular or plural. Project or display two sentences that use *all* in the singular form and the plural form. Have students work in small groups or pairs to write sentences that use the other indefinite pronouns that can be singular or plural in both of their forms. Lead a discussion about how singular or plural indefinite pronouns will serve as the subject of the sentence. Model for students how this will affect the subject-verb agreement. Have students practice this with several other sentences (e.g., Subject and Verb Agreement).

What are subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns? How are subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns used correctly?

1. Review with students what a pronoun is and how it functions in a sentence. Students will be familiar with personal pronouns, which can be classified as subjective (e.g., *I, you, we, they*) or objective (*him, her, it*). Explain to students that the third type of pronoun is possessive

(e.g., *my, your, its*). Remind students that pronouns replace nouns in sentences. Project or display for students an anchor chart (e.g., Pronouns and Possessive Forms).

2. Project or display for students a sentence like the following:

> Michael and Carrie have three dogs and a cat.

Have students identify the subject of the sentence (Michael and Carrie). Explain to students that if you wanted to replace the subject with a subjective pronoun, you would use the word *they*.

> They have three dogs and a cat.

Project or display for students a sentence like the following:

> Michelle told Michael and Carrie a joke.

Have students identify the object of the sentence (Michael and Carrie). Explain to students that if you wanted to replace the object with an objective pronoun, you would use the word *them*.

> Michelle told them a joke.

Project or display with students a sentence like the following:

> That house is Michael and Carrie's.

Have students identify the subject of the sentence (house). Ask students to identify who the house belongs to (Michael and Carrie). Explain to students that if you wanted to replace the possessive in this sentence with a possessive pronoun, you would use the word *theirs*.

> That house is theirs.

Provide students with other sentences and have them practice replacing subjects, objects, and possessives with subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns (e.g., Pronouns [Subject, Object, Possessive Pronouns]).

3. Have students work in peer-editing pairs to review written drafts, paying close attention to subject-verb agreement. Have students highlight every instance of prepositional phrases and check to make sure the subject-verb agreement is correct. Have students underline each of the subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns and make sure that subject-verb agreement is correct. Students should use peer-editing suggestions to revise their work.

What are intensive pronouns and how are they used?

1. Introduce the concept of the intensive pronoun. Define it as a pronoun that ends in *-self* or *-selves* and is used to place emphasis on the noun or pronoun to which it refers. Project or display the following example:

My father and brother baked the cupcakes for the party themselves.

   Explain that the sentence also would be correct if it was written as "My father and brother baked the cupcakes for the party." But the word "themselves" emphasizes the importance of the *father and brother* baking. Use the anchor chart to lead a discussion about how the use of the intensive pronoun changes the meaning of the sentence and others like it.

   Anchor Chart: Common Intensive Pronouns

Common Intensive Pronouns
himself
herself
myself
yourself
itself
themselves
ourselves

   Have students work in small groups or pairs to write sentences for each of the intensive pronouns. Lead a discussion about the examples that students drafted.

2. Have students practice how to use intensive pronouns to complete sentences. Create sentences that do not use an intensive pronoun and have students complete them (e.g., Intensive Pronoun Exercises). Once students have finished, review their answers and correct any misconceptions.

3. Have students work in peer-editing pairs to review written drafts, looking for places where the use of intensive pronouns would appropriately add emphasis and interest to the writing. Emphasize to students that they should not overuse intensive pronouns, so have them choose and defend their choice of where to place them to their partner. Students should evaluate peer-editing suggestions and revise their work as needed.

What is an inappropriate shift in pronoun number and person? How do you recognize and correct an inappropriate shift in pronoun number and person?

1. Review with students what a pronoun is and how it functions in a sentence. Explain that it is important for the pronoun to match the noun or pronoun that is its antecedent (e.g., Singular and Plural Pronoun Antecedents). Project or display examples of sentences that use an incorrect pronoun. Lead a discussion about what word or words in the sentence clue the reader that the pronoun is incorrect in number or person. Have students practice using the correct pronoun person and pronoun number (e.g., Practice: Pronoun Person, Practice: Pronoun Number).
2. Create a writing text that has errors in pronoun person or pronoun number. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to find the errors and correct them. Once students have finished, review their answers and correct any misconceptions.
3. Have students work in peer-editing pairs to review written drafts, looking for places where there is an inappropriate shift in pronoun number and person. Students should evaluate peer-editing suggestions to revise their work as needed.

What is a vague pronoun and how do you correct it?

1. Review with students what a pronoun is and how it functions in a sentence. Explain that it is important for the pronoun to match the noun or pronoun that is its antecedent. Project or display the following sentence:

   > The polar bear has a small head compared to the body.

   Explain to students that the sentence is vague because the reader does not know to whom the body belongs. Explain to students that it is important for them to remove this vagueness from their writing. Model for students how to revise this sentence for clarity:

   > The polar bear has a small head compared to its body.

   Model for students how to recognize a vague pronoun reference. Project or display examples and have them identify the vague pronouns (e.g., Vague Pronoun Reference).
2. Have students practice revising for pronoun vagueness (e.g., Pronoun Vagueness). Create a writing text that has pronoun vagueness. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to find the examples and correct them. Once students have finished, review their answers and correct any misconceptions.

How do you recognize variations from Standard English in your own and others' writing and speaking? How do you improve expression in conventional language?

1. Explain to students that when they are writing, they will need to recognize errors in Standard English. To learn how to recognize and correct errors in writing, practice editing the writing of others. Explain to students how to peer edit others' work (Peer Edit with Perfection! Tutorial). Create a checklist of common conventions that students should use when peer-editing (e.g., Editing for Conventions Checklist, Editing Checklist for Self- and Peer Editing). Explain to students that they will be checking for errors in Standard English in an example of student work. Project or display an example of student work that is created by a teacher and includes common errors. Model for students how to use checklists to identify errors and suggest revisions.
2. Have students select a draft of their own written work. Have students use editing checklists to identify errors in their text. Have students work in peer-editing pairs to use checklists to review written drafts, looking for Standard English errors. Students also may read aloud to find errors that are more evident when heard than read (e.g., Reading Aloud). Students should use the errors they found on their own and peer-editing suggestions to revise their work as needed.

Key Academic Terms:

language, conventions, grammar, usage, subject-verb agreement, prepositional phrase, inverted word order, indefinite pronoun, subjective pronoun, objective pronoun, possessive pronoun, intensive pronoun, vague pronoun, shift in pronoun number and person, demonstrate, command, interrupt, recognize, ensure, pronoun, antecedent, ambiguous

Additional Resources:

Verbs: Interrupting Phrases

Verbs: Inverted Word Order

Subject, Object, and Possessive Pronouns

Indefinite Pronouns

Pronouns to the Core: Tackle Pronouns with 6th Graders

Reflexive Pronouns Lesson Plan

Emphatic Pronouns

Correcting Inappropriate Shifts in Pronouns

Grammatical Person and Pronouns

Pronoun Number

Peer Edit with Perfection: Effective Strategies

L.6.38

Language Standards
Conventions of Standard English Skills and understandings that are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking are marked with an asterisk (*).
L.6.38 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements.* b. Spell correctly.

Instructional Outcomes:

- Explain the rules for punctuating nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements.
- Distinguish between the use of commas, parentheses, and dashes when setting off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements.
- Identify correct and incorrect usage of punctuation to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements in written passages.
- Use punctuation to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements correctly in writing.
- Review common spelling patterns found in Grade 6-appropriate words.
- Identify resources for checking spelling, including word lists, dictionaries, and glossaries.
- Identify correct and incorrect usage of Grade 6-appropriate words in written passages.
- Spell Grade 6-appropriate words correctly in writing.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a nonrestrictive or parenthetical element? What are the rules for punctuating nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements? When do you use commas to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements? When do you use parentheses to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements? When do you use dashes to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements?

1. Define the word *parenthetical* and share examples of parenthetical elements, including appositives, relative clauses, prepositional phrases, and phrases. Discuss the anchor chart.

Anchor Chart: Parenthetical Elements

Parenthetical Elements	
Appositives (comma)	The hillside path, a rock-studded, muddy mess, was the wrong way to go.
Relative clauses (comma)	My teacher, who is also an avid hiker, arranged for the class trip to the state park.
Phrases as examples (parentheses)	Tropical vacation spots (e.g., Hawaii or the Caribbean) have increased in popularity.
Prepositional phrases (dashes)	The band leader–after dropping the music–continued without a pause.

2. Have students work in small groups or pairs to write sentences that each use one of the parenthetical elements. Lead a discussion where students share their sentences. Explain to students that different types of punctuation are used depending on how much the author wants to emphasize the parenthetical element. Explain to students that commas are used to set off the parenthetical element when the author wants to emphasize it the least. Parentheses are used when the author wants to somewhat emphasize the idea, and dashes are applied when the author wants to be the most emphatic. Have students look back at the sentences they have written and decide whether commas, parentheses, or dashes are most appropriate for each.
3. Create a sample writing text with errors in punctuating parenthetical elements. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to revise the writing text. Lead a discussion about how students have revised the writing, paying attention to the emphasis denoted by the different types of punctuation. Have students come to a consensus about emphasis and use of punctuation.
4. Have students select a draft of their own written work and use an editing checklist to identify where they have used parenthetical elements. Have students decide how to

punctuate each example based on degree of emphasis. If students have not varied their writing with parenthetical elements, have them revise sentences to use them.

What words are grade-appropriate for you to spell correctly? What references can you use to help you spell?

1. Consult the school/district's scope and sequence to determine which words need to be learned for Grade 6. Follow the activities in the school/district's scope and sequence or divide the list into smaller weekly lists and have students practice those words using one or more of the following activities:
    a. Crossword Puzzles
    b. Spelling "Go Fish" Card Game
    c. Flip-a-Chip
2. Explain to students that when they are writing, they may encounter words they do not know how to spell. When assessing student writing, note words that each student tends to misspell. Help each student create a personal list of words the student tends to misspell and use the list as a reference when writing. Create a commonly misspelled word list for the class. Model for students how to use resources such as an electronic spell checker or a dictionary (print or online) to find the correct spelling of words.
3. Have students select a draft of their own written work. Have students work in peer-editing pairs to check for misspelled words. Have students work together to find correct spellings of words using an electronic spell checker or a dictionary (print or online) and revise accordingly.

Key Academic Terms:

language, conventions, punctuation, spelling, comma, parentheses, dash, nonrestrictive element, parenthetical element, demonstrate, command

Additional Resources:

Editing Tip: Parenthetical Elements

Understanding Parenthetical Elements

English Spelling Rules: Making Sense of a Seemingly Chaotic Writing System

Guide to English Spelling Rules

Effective Spelling Strategies

L.6.40

Language Standards
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.6.40 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).

Instructional Outcomes:

- Explain the meaning of context and use context to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.
- Use reference materials to check meanings derived from context.
- Identify the meanings of common Greek and Latin affixes and roots.
- Use meanings of common Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of words and phrases.
- Use reference materials to check meanings derived from Greek and Latin affixes and roots.
- Identify the characteristics of dictionary entries, glossary entries, and thesaurus entries and distinguish between how each type of entry is used.

- Use reference materials to determine the pronunciation and parts of speech of words.
- Explain what a precise meaning is and identify examples of words that have similar but not identical meanings.
- Use print and digital reference materials to verify predicted meaning of words and phrases.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What strategies can you use to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases? How do you use context to determine the meaning of a word or phrase?

1. Students learn about using context beginning in first grade, but you will need to review the concept with them. Explain to students that there are often clues to the meanings of unknown words and phrases in the preceding or following text. Project or display for students the types of context that can be used to find word meaning (e.g., Types of Context Clues). Select or create a text that will allow students to use different types of context to figure out meanings of words, including definition, antonyms, synonyms, or inference. Model for students how to use context to determine the meaning of the words in the text.
2. Have students work independently, in small groups, or in pairs to practice using context to determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases (e.g., Look Around! Meaning in Context, Using Context Clues with Literature). Once students have completed the task, lead a discussion about their findings.
3. As students read independently, have students note two or three unknown words in the text selection. Have students attempt to use context to find their meaning. In a reading journal or in writing, have students note each word, the sentence in which each word is found, context that helps denote each word's meaning, and each word's predicted meaning. Students should double-check their answers using a dictionary or online vocabulary reference.

What are affixes and roots? How do you use the meaning of common Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of a word?

1. Students learn about common Greek and Latin affixes and roots beginning in fourth grade but will need to review the concept. Explain to students that the meaning of the word can often be constructed using knowledge of common Greek and Latin affixes and roots. Project

or display for students a list of common Greek and Latin Roots (e.g., Common Word Roots). Have students work in small groups or pairs to brainstorm a list of words that contain each of the common Greek and Latin roots. Lead a discussion about student findings.

2. Focus on a few of the Latin or Greek roots (e.g., Aud and Vocare). Introduce the meaning of the roots. Have students work in small groups or pairs to use common suffixes with the roots to form words. Have students use the meaning of the roots and suffixes together to determine the meaning. Have students write a sentence for each word they form. Lead a classroom discussion about the sentences and the meaning of the words.
3. As students read independently, have students note two or three words with familiar Greek or Latin roots in the text selection. Have students attempt to use their prior knowledge of affixes and roots to find their meaning. In a reading journal or in writing, have students note the word, the sentence in which the word is found, the roots and affixes, and the predicted meaning. Students should double-check their answer using a dictionary or online vocabulary reference.

How do you use print and digital reference materials to determine pronunciation? What is a precise meaning? What are print and digital reference materials that can help determine or clarify the precise meaning of words and phrases, and identify the parts of speech? How do you verify your predictions about the meaning of a word or phrase?

1. Students learn about using reference materials to determine pronunciation and to clarify precise meaning beginning in fourth grade but will need to review the concept. Project or display a sample dictionary entry (e.g., Anatomy of a Dictionary Entry). Review with students where they can find the pronunciation of a word. Review with students where they can note the parts of speech and precise meanings. Show a sentence that uses an unknown vocabulary word. Have students predict the meaning of the word based on context and/or knowledge of roots and affixes. Model for students how to determine the part of speech of the word within the sentence and how to find the meaning of the word within a dictionary entry based on the part of speech. Explain to students that they should check their prediction against the precise meaning.
2. As students read independently, have students note two or three unknown words in the text selection. Have students attempt to use their prior knowledge, context, and affixes and roots to find the meaning of the words. In a reading journal or in writing, have students note each word, the sentence in which the word is found, its part of speech, the context, roots and affixes, and the predicted meaning. Students should check their answers using a dictionary or online vocabulary reference. Students should also check the pronunciation of each word. Lead a discussion where students talk about the meaning of each unknown word, pronounce each word correctly, and explain how they figured out each word's precise meaning.

Key Academic Terms:

vocabulary acquisition, meaning, multiple-meaning words, unknown words, context, affix, root, dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, pronunciation, precise meaning, verify, determine, clarify, consult, reference, preliminary, determination, range, inferred meaning

Additional Resources:

Solving Word Meanings

7 Strategies for Using Context Clues in Reading

Common Content Area Roots and Affixes

Greek and Latin Root Word Meaning Match

L.6.41

Language Standards
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.6.41 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*).

Instructional Outcomes:

- Identify the characteristics of figures of speech, such as personification.
- Use context to interpret figures of speech.
- Explain word relationships such as cause/effect, part/whole, and item/category, and classify words within these relationships.
- Use word relationships to develop better understandings of words.
- Recognize and explain connotations and denotations.
- Distinguish between connotations and denotations.
- Use connotations and denotations to distinguish between the meanings of closely related words.

Guiding Questions and Instructional Activities:

What is a figure of speech? What is personification? How do you use context to interpret figures of speech?

1. Review the concept of figurative meaning. Students learn about figures of speech through their study of figurative language beginning in fifth grade, but they will need to review the concept. Review the difference between literal and figurative language by sharing examples (e.g., Literal vs. Figurative Language). Explain to students that literal language will mean

exactly what it says, while figurative language will describe and create an image to help the reader picture what is being said. Students will be familiar with metaphors and similes but will need to be introduced to other forms of figurative language, including alliteration, hyperbole, idioms, irony, onomatopoeia, personification, and puns. Provide definitions of other types of figurative language (e.g., Some Types of Figurative Language).

2. Select several short literary texts that contain many examples of figurative language. Have students work in small groups or pairs for a scavenger hunt to find examples of figurative language in the texts. Have students write the examples on index cards or sticky notes, along with the sentence(s) in which they were found. Model for students how to use context to help determine the meanings of the figures of speech.
3. As students read independently, have students note two or three examples of figures of speech in the text selection. Have students attempt to use their prior knowledge of context to find the meaning of each figure of speech. In a reading journal or in writing, have students note each figure of speech, the sentence in which the figure of speech is found, the context used to help determine the meaning, and the predicted meaning. Lead a discussion where students talk about the meanings of the figures of speech and the conclusions they have drawn about their meanings.

What are important word relationships that can help determine the meaning of words? How do you use cause/effect, part/whole, and item/category to better understand words?

1. Introduce the concept of word relationships and analogies. Explain to students that sometimes the meanings of words can be figured out by using their relationships with other words. Provide a definition and some examples of analogies (e.g., Analogies). Project or display examples of cause/effect, part/whole, and item/category analogies. Have students work in small groups or pairs to use their background knowledge and classroom resources to develop a list of word pairs that fall under each of these analogy types. Lead a classroom discussion to brainstorm a list to post in the classroom.
2. Select a short literary text in which cause/effect, part/whole, and item/category analogies can be found. In small groups or pairs, have students hold a scavenger hunt to find word pairs that fall within these types. Students should record the sentence(s) in which these analogies are found. Compile a list of the word pairs. Lead the students through a reading of the text. Have students think about each of the word pairs and how the words relate. Ask students to select one of the word pairs from the list and write the sentence in which it is found. Ask students to write a written response to a prompt such as “Write the sentence in which the words are found. What is the relationship between these words? What is the meaning of the words? How does the relationship between the two words help you understand them better?” Lead a discussion about the relationship of words, and help students draw conclusions about using word relationships to better understand words.

What is a connotation? What is a denotation? How do you distinguish between connotations of words with similar denotations?

1. Introduce the concept of connotative and denotative meaning. Explain to students that sometimes words or phrases have implied meanings or ideas that are associated with them. Provide a definition and some examples of connotative versus denotative meanings of words (e.g., What is Connotation?, What is Denotation?). Explain to students that some words may have similar denotations but different connotations. Have students work in small groups or pairs to use their background knowledge and classroom resources to develop a list of words with similar denotations but different connotations. Lead a classroom discussion to brainstorm a list to post in the classroom.
2. Select a short literary text that has words with clear connotations. Compile a list of the words and project or display them. Lead the students through a reading of the text. Have students think about each word and its denotative meaning. Ask students to select one of the words from the list and write the sentence in which it is found. Ask students to write a written response to a prompt such as "Write the sentence in which the word is found. What is the denotative meaning of the word? What is the connotative meaning of the word you selected? How does the connotation of this word change the meaning of the sentence?"

Key Academic Terms:

vocabulary acquisition, figure of speech, personification, word relationships, cause, effect, part, whole, item, category, connotation, denotation, demonstrate, interpret, distinguish, context, nuances

Additional Resources:

Figurative Language Rap Video

Common Sense Figurative Language Lesson

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language

Read*Write*Think: Figurative Language 2

Connotation Examples

Analogies Practice

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DATA RECOGNITION CORPORATION

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