English Language Arts – Grade 6

Table of Contents

Unit 1: Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines................................. 1-1
Unit 2: Fiction: Realistic Fiction............................................................. 2-1
Unit 3: Historical Fiction................................................................. 3-1
Unit 4: Myths.................................................................................. 4-1
Unit 5: Poetry ................................................................................... 5-1
Unit 6: Drama.................................................................................. 6-1
Unit 7: Research Reports—Writing Products............................................ 7-1
2012 Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum
Course Introduction

The Louisiana Department of Education issued the first version of the Comprehensive Curriculum in 2005. The 2012 Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum is aligned with Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as outlined in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 Curriculum and Assessment Summaries posted at http://www.louisianaschools.net/topics/gle.html. The Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum is designed to assist with the transition from using GLEs to full implementation of the CCSS beginning the school year 2014-15.

Organizational Structure
The curriculum is organized into coherent, time-bound units with sample activities and classroom assessments to guide teaching and learning. Unless otherwise indicated, activities in the curriculum are to be taught in 2012-13 and continued through 2013-14. Activities labeled as 2013-14 align with new CCSS content that are to be implemented in 2013-14 and may be skipped in 2012-13 without interrupting the flow or sequence of the activities within a unit. New CCSS to be implemented in 2014-15 are not included in activities in this document.

Implementation of Activities in the Classroom
Incorporation of activities into lesson plans is critical to the successful implementation of the Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum. Lesson plans should be designed to introduce students to one or more of the activities, to provide background information and follow-up, and to prepare students for success in mastering the CCSS associated with the activities. Lesson plans should address individual needs of students and should include processes for re-teaching concepts or skills for students who need additional instruction. Appropriate accommodations must be made for students with disabilities.

Features
Content Area Literacy Strategies are an integral part of approximately one-third of the activities. Strategy names are italicized. The link (view literacy strategy descriptions) opens a document containing detailed descriptions and examples of the literacy strategies. This document can also be accessed directly at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/11056.doc.

Underlined standard numbers on the title line of an activity indicate that the content of the standards is a focus in the activity. Other standards listed are included, but not the primary content emphasis.

A Materials List is provided for each activity and Blackline Masters (BLMs) are provided to assist in the delivery of activities or to assess student learning. A separate Blackline Master document is provided for the course.

The Access Guide to the Comprehensive Curriculum is an online database of suggested strategies, accommodations, assistive technology, and assessment options that may provide greater access to the curriculum activities. This guide is currently being updated to align with the CCSS. Click on the Access Guide icon found on the first page of each unit or access the guide directly at http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide.
Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 1: Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines

Time Frame: Approximately five weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading and responding to nonfiction literature, particularly news and magazine articles. Numerous news articles will be analyzed for important elements and writing techniques. Various comprehension strategies help to identify the effects of the structural features and literary devices used in this type of writing. Interviewing, researching, and writing news articles provide opportunities for student revision, proofreading, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occurs within the context of the news stories and features. Strategies such as vocabulary self-awareness, vocabulary cards, split-page notetaking, graphic organizers, learning logs, professor know-it-all, brainstorming, and questioning the content (QtC) will be introduced and applied to the nonfiction content. (During this unit, the school should arrange for daily delivery of a newspaper, or the students may be able to bring one from home.)

Student Understandings

Nonfiction is a kind of writing that deals with actual events, people, places, things, and ideas. Students examine the structural features of various types of nonfiction, including newspaper and magazine articles and features, as well as their underlying skills of investigation, research, and writing, including business letters and letters to the editor.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify and use structural features of nonfiction, periodicals, news articles, and business and persuasive letters?
2. Can students develop topics that lead to inquiry, investigation, and written products?
3. Can students support statements with specific examples, such as those from interview data?
4. Can students plan, draft, evaluate, revise, and edit news and feature articles and business and persuasive letters?
5. Can students use and create flow charts and other graphic organizers for understanding?
6. Can students assume a variety of roles in a group process?
## Unit 1 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade-Level Expectations</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01a.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01b.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Identify common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple-meaning words (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content-specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Analyze an author’s stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Identify persuasive techniques (e.g., unsupported inferences, faulty reasoning, generalizations) that reflect an author’s viewpoint (perspective) in texts (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17e.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure including an introduction, a body/middle, and a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLE #</td>
<td>GLE Text and Benchmarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22b.</td>
<td>Use the various modes to write compositions, including essays based on a stated opinion (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24a.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including business letters that include a heading, inside address, salutation, body, and signature (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24b.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including evaluations, supported with facts and opinions, of newspaper/magazine articles and editorial cartoons (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25a.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLE #</td>
<td>GLE Text and Benchmarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25c.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including colons after salutation in business letters (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27c.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including homophones (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39a.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including text structure (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39d.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including background information (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39f.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including sequence of ideas and organization (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40a.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including explaining the effectiveness and dynamics of group process (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40b.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed-upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40c.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41a.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices) (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41b.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic storage devices (e.g., CD-ROMs, diskettes, software, drives) (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41c.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42a.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLE #</td>
<td>GLE Text and Benchmarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias) (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42c.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Identify sources as primary and secondary to determine credibility of information (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44a.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including surveying (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44b.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including interviewing (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44c.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including paraphrasing (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Use word processing and/or other technology to draft, revise, and publish a variety of works, including compositions, investigative reports, and business letters (ELA-5-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Interpret information from a variety of graphic organizers, including timelines, charts, schedules, tables, diagrams, and maps in grade appropriate sources (ELA-5-M6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ELA CCSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Standards for Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Standards for Informational Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.3</td>
<td>Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.5</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.9</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.7</td>
<td>Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Speaking and Listening Standards

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

### Language Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L.6.4c, d</th>
<th>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.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>c.</strong> 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>d.</strong> 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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.5b, c</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>b.</strong> Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>c.</strong> Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.6</td>
<td>Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sample Activities

**Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing):** (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 14, 15)

Materials List: texts in current genre; Reading Response Prompts BLM; sample reading response learning log entries

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction Grade 6 ELA Unit 1 Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice their word attack skills, to boost their confidence to work through reading trouble spots, and, perhaps most important, to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should, however, keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they frequently respond to the text they have read through the use of brief reflective prompts. A learning log is a notebook or binder in which students record ideas, questions, reactions, and reflections. Documenting their ideas in this way allows students to process information in a different way and to articulate what they know or do not know about a subject. See Reading Response Prompts BLM for a list of prompts aligned to the GLEs. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that students see this as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Again, teacher modeling of his or her own use of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating, questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Response Learning Log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Text:</strong> Getting Along with Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/12/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14/06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 02, 03)**

Materials List: vocabulary self-awareness chart, vocabulary cards, Frayer model Vocabulary Card BLM, Newspaper Terms BLM, word maps, etc., plus dictionaries, thesauruses, index cards

Following a teacher-facilitated review of basic dictionary skills, the teacher will identify target vocabulary for the lesson and provide students with a list of terms; students should also add terms to the list as they read for the nonfiction, newspaper, and magazine-related vocabulary terms they encounter throughout this unit, especially those related to current events. Students will then use the vocabulary self-awareness strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions). The vocabulary self-awareness strategy assesses student understanding of vocabulary knowledge before reading or before beginning a unit of study. After students complete the vocabulary self-awareness chart, introduce the Frayer Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 1◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
Model vocabulary card strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions), which will create cards that illustrate the word’s definition, characteristics, examples, and illustrations, thus helping to move the word into a student’s long-term memory.

Students will first determine their familiarity with each term. Students will rate each word according to their own understanding, including giving an example and a definition for each. If students are comfortable with the word, they should give themselves a “+.” If they think they know, but are unsure, they should note the word with a “?” If the word is new to them, they should place a “−” next to the word. Over the course of the unit, students will add new information to the chart, continually revisiting their charts to revise entries and add new information. Thus, they have multiple opportunities to extend their understanding of the terms. (Source: Fisher, Douglas, William G. Brozo, Nancy Frey, and Gay Ivey. 50 Content Area Strategies for Adolescent Literacy. Upper Saddle River: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2007. 129-130.)

Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>−</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>NEWS</td>
<td>columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byline</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>byline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obituary</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>SMITH ALLCITY -- John A. Smith died July 2, 1997, after a short illness. Born August 4, 1936, in Taunton, MA, he grew up and lived most of his working life in Sherborn, MA, moving to Allcity in August, 1995. Surviving are his son, John Smith, Jr. and wife, Nancy, of Allcity; and two grandchildren, Joseph Smith, and Tracey Smith Kelty, all of Sherborn. Memorial services will be held at 11:00 am, Friday, July 10th at Allcity Memorial Presbyterian Church.</td>
<td>a notice of a person's death usually with a short biographical account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the unit, students will create vocabulary cards that illustrate the nonfiction, newspaper, and magazine-related vocabulary terms they encounter throughout this unit, including illustrations or examples for each meaning. Students will also use this strategy for any multiple meaning words encountered throughout the unit. Students will use these to see connections between words, examples of the word, and the critical attributes associated with each word. The strategy helps students understand word meanings and key concepts by relating what they do not know to familiar concepts. Vocabulary cards also require students to pay attention to words over time, thus improving retention;

Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 1◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
vocabulary cards also become an easy reference for students as they prepare for tests, quizzes, etc.

The teacher will model the use of a vocabulary card with a typical multiple meaning word, such as *pitch* (v., to throw something; to erect something, to toss aside or discard, to present or advertise, etc.). The teacher will write the targeted word in the center of the card.

Students will then use a 4”x6” or 5”x7” index card to imitate their teacher and create sample vocabulary cards for their own nonfiction, newspaper, magazine, or multiple meaning words from a list chosen by the teacher.

Sample Vocabulary Card for a Multiple Meaning Word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to throw something</td>
<td>1 level or degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to erect something</td>
<td>2 to toss aside or discard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to toss aside or discard</td>
<td>3 to present or advertise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples**

1 I can *pitch* a baseball pretty well.
2 Dad *pitched* our tent on the campout.
3 I *pitched* the old newspapers into the recycling bin.
4 Bob will *pitch* his product at today’s meeting.
5 John worked at a feverish *pitch* to meet the deadline.

Students will also use structural analysis to generate a list of roots and show other words that are derived from them. Students will identify the meanings of common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple-meaning words as they occur throughout the unit. The teacher will review the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; students will apply the use of this comprehension strategy throughout the unit as appropriate. Other words in the sentence and the picture can provide clues to meaning.

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Grade 6 ELA ◊ Unit 1 ◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
Activity 3: Words in Context (CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students will keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning from the text (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Teach students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but words that students stumble over, either with word meaning, use, or pronunciation. Coach students to use reference materials, such as a dictionary or online dictionary, to determine pronunciation, precise meaning, or part of speech as needed. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student written work.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word ferret in the following example, a discussion might reveal that the definition of the verb form could be an evolution from the noun form of ferret, a small mammal that can access small places. Incorporate author’s word choice into the discussion. With ferret in this context, it would be appropriate to discuss what the author’s choice of ferret, over phrases such as “figure out” or “find out,” lends to the tone, thus cluing the reader into what the author is implying about the character or situation.

Example: Words in Context
Text: City of Fire
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>ferret</td>
<td>“After she was done here, she would have to ferret out their identities and deal with them, too.” p.12</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>To search out</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from *City of Fire*; © Laurence Yep

**Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 19a, 19c, 19e, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 22b, 23, 24b, 25b, 26, 27a, 28a, and 29)**

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

An important principle in teaching students the writing craft is first showing them how accomplished writers use a particular skill, and then encouraging them to emulate those writers. The following process is a suggested model for conducting a writing mini-lesson.

1. The teacher should first introduce a skill by pointing out an example in a trade book, or magazine article, or demonstrating the technique through modeled writing. (The teacher thinks aloud as he or she composes in front of the students; models should be prepared beforehand.)
2. The teacher then has the class talk about the skill by asking questions such as: *Does the skill make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? Can you construct something like this?*
3. The teacher models the skill orally for students.
4. The students then try it out orally for practice, with partners.
5. Students then the skill out in a small practice piece of several sentences or more (guided writing).
6. Finally, students practice the skill in their independent writing, for homework, or in a previously composed draft, as a practice write. These can be kept in a bound composition notebook and labeled, with a table of contents, so that by the end of the school year, students have a writing book of target skill practices they can take with them.

When students have practiced a new writing craft target skill several times, they can then be expected to incorporate it into a new writing draft. In planning a whole-process piece, the teacher will use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM. The teacher will Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 1◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) convention skills as target skills for the whole process piece. These skills then become part of the scoring rubric.

2013-2014
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Varying tasks and the time frame in which students are allowed to write is important to meeting this standard. Having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year serves as evidence of meeting this expectation.

On the Writing Record BLM, have students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece, written over a day or two, have students indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Ensure students have recorded each writing assignment in this unit (Activities 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25b, 25c, 26, 27b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM and Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist with Examples BLM, sentences for proofreading

A mini-lesson is conducted during whole-class teaching time and should generally last only five to ten minutes. The teacher should choose only one explicit and concise focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, this could be a grammar, usage, conventions, or sentence formation focus. After the lesson, the teacher should encourage students to try whatever strategy applies to their writing.

Students should also be doing a daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related). There are several key elements to this. A teacher should never have students copy an incorrect sentence in order to correct it, as this reinforces the
errors rather than helping to eliminate them. Instead, the teacher will always instruct students to write the sentences as correctly as they can while giving positive feedback, walking around the room, and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher can tell him/her "Caught ya" and encourage him/her to find the missing error. Sometimes they may need a hint.

The teacher will then return to the board or overhead and correct the sentence with the class, eliciting answers from students and making sure someone explains why each error is incorrect. At this point, students will correct their papers, using proofreading symbols to mark errors they missed on their own. The students should use a colored pen to correct their “Caught yas” and indicate how many mistakes they made in a circle to the right of that day’s “Caught ya.” Students will record the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM; this allows the teacher to see over the course of a few days which errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle, Maupin House, 1990).

Activity 7: Nonfiction as a Genre (GLEs: 11d, 39a; CCSS: RI.6.3, RI.6.10)

Materials List: overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, or chart paper and markers, Learning to Distinguish Nonfiction Text Structures BLM, pens, pencils, news articles

Students will begin their study of the nonfiction genre by reviewing the definition of nonfiction: prose designed primarily to explain, argue, or describe rather than entertain and whose emphasis is factual. Following oral direction from the teacher, students will explain the connections between ideas and information in various types of nonfiction and give examples and descriptions of the kinds of nonfiction writing they can recall. Using the Learning to Distinguish Nonfiction Text Structures BLM, students will classify each type by its distinctive elements. Responses will be recorded on the board, overhead, or chart, and displayed throughout the unit. Students will discuss how nonfiction is both like and different from other genres of text and review the various types of nonfiction, focusing especially on periodicals, such as, journals, magazines, and newspapers. Students will discuss how to read nonfiction differently from fiction. The teacher will introduce the most common text structures that characterize nonfiction (description or listing, sequence or time order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, etc.), the most common signal words for each type, and questions students can ask themselves to aid in understanding the text structure. Students will visually represent the structures and their signal words in an adaptation of a graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions). In this case, the graphic organizer would have five columns: one for the common nonfiction text structures, one for a graphic representation of the text structure, one for the accompanying signal words, one for what the structure means for the reader, and one for questions students can ask of themselves to determine which text structure they are dealing with. This allows students to see the new material in an organized and visual manner which aids in understanding.

Grade 6 ELA Unit 1 Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
After students complete the Learning to Distinguish Nonfiction Text Structures BLM, introduce the professor know-it-all (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. Professor know-it-all is a review strategy that enables students to be experts on a particular topic—in this instance, the various text structures. After the initial class discussion of text structures, assign small groups (4-5 students) to each of the structures—description or listing, sequence or time order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution. Provide each group of students a newspaper article organized with their assigned text structure. Have students review the information about the text structure and read the news article. As students read the article, ask them to highlight signal words and make a completed graphic representation of the text structure (modeled after column two in the graphic organizer). Once small groups have reviewed the text structures, randomly call on students to come to the front of the room to provide “expert” answers to their peers’ questions about the content. Before calling upon experts, ask groups to generate 3-5 questions about each of the text structures in order to anticipate content that might be asked of them and to prepare for their turn as experts.

Remind students who are asking the questions to listen carefully to the answers given by the “professors” and to challenge or correct these experts if their answers were incorrect or incomplete. In the first use of professor know-it-all, it might be helpful to model the various types of questions expected from students about the content. Rotate the expert groups after five minutes or so. Continue the process of students questioning students until all groups have had an opportunity to be experts.

Once all expert groups have been questioned, assess individual understanding by having students complete an exit card with one thing they have learned about each of the text structures. The exit card is an index card or small square of paper on which students respond to a question or prompt. Student responses on exit cards can serve as formative assessment. When students start writing news articles for Activity 13, encourage them to revisit their notes on the various text structures to plan and organize their information.

Once students have been informally assessed with the exit cards and misunderstandings are cleared up, distribute copies of articles organized in the various structures to students. To reflect text complexity of the CCSS, it is recommended that articles fall in the Lexile® range of 955-1155. A tool for determining Lexile® text measure can be found at this link: https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/. Have students determine the appropriate text structure for their assigned article and analyze the author’s use of the structure to develop their ideas. Students may accomplish this by first completing the text structure graphic organizer with details from the text and then by explaining in a brief paragraph how the author introduces and then elaborates on the central idea.

Activity 8: Parts of a Newspaper (GLEs: 39a, 41a, 44a, 48; CCSS: RI.6.5; RI.6.10)

Materials List: KWL chart, teacher-made scavenger hunt list, newspapers, poster paper, markers, pens, pencils

Grade 6 ELA◇Unit 1◇ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines

1-14
Prior to their study of the parts of a newspaper, students will complete a vocabulary self-awareness assessment (view literacy strategy descriptions) and a KWL graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) to highlight what they already know, as well as what they still need to learn in order to comprehend the lesson fully. The KWL graphic organizer is a table divided into three columns: What I Know (prior knowledge), What I Want to Know (questions), and What I Learned (review); the third column is filled in after reading and discussion. It allows students to think about the topics being studied and then to revisit it after reading to see what was learned. (See the example below.)

Following oral directions from the teacher, student groups will survey the front page of a print newspaper, noting its format and layout; reasoning inductively by moving from the specific to the general, and then they will discuss how it is different from other texts they read (e.g., black and white ink, graphics, headline, byline, sidebar, column format.)

Students will then begin a list of the different parts they notice on the front page. Groups will report informally to the whole class descriptive details about the types of items they found.

Sample KWL Chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What I Know about: parts of a newspaper</td>
<td>What I Want to Know about: parts of a newspaper</td>
<td>What I Have Learned about: parts of a newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the Living section has cartoons.</td>
<td>I want to know what else is in the Living section.</td>
<td>I have learned that the Living section also has society events, advice columns, and columns about local happenings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want to know what an obituary is.</td>
<td>I’ve learned that an obituary is a death notice that has a brief biographical history of the person who has died.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the newspaper index, students will examine the rest of the paper through a scavenger hunt. The teacher will give each student or group specific items to look for, such as an ad for tires, the cost of a two-bedroom apartment, comic strip, editorial cartoon, speeches, etc.

Student groups will use split-page notetaking (view literacy strategy descriptions), also known as Cornell Notes, to take notes on the various sections and features of a newspaper, classify each by its distinctive elements, and formulate a description of each section’s or feature’s content and text structure. In this note-taking strategy, students organize the page into columns for questions/topics and for supporting details. As they read, they convert topics and sub-topics into questions and then record corresponding notes or information beside each question. This strategy encourages active reading and summarizing and provides a study guide for students to use for review.
To fully incorporate CCSS RI.6.5, students should be able to articulate how each section of the newspaper fits into its overall structure and contributes to its development. This could be done with a follow-up discussion of each section after students have had a chance to look through sample newspapers. An alternative would be insisting that students address this in their notes. For instance, in the notes on each section, they would have to explain how each section of the newspaper fits into the larger document with emphasis on its purpose or function.

Example of split-page notetaking:

| Section 1 – What’s found here? | • national news, international news  
• editorials, letters to the editor  
• celebrity news  
• national ads |
| Section 2 – What’s found here? | • local news, local human interest stories  
• obituaries, ads |
| How is it different from section 1? | • greater local focus |


Activity 9: Parts of a Magazine/Journal (GLEs: 11d, 39a, 48; CCSS: RI.6.5)

Materials List: vocabulary self-awareness assessment, various magazines, Graphic Organizer for Comparison of Newspapers, Magazines, and Journals BLM

Prior to their study of the parts of a magazine/journal, students will again complete a vocabulary self-awareness assessment (view literacy strategy descriptions) to highlight what they already know, as well as what they still need to learn in order to comprehend the lesson fully. (See Activity 2 for explanation of strategy and a sample.) These could include, but are not limited to informative article, masthead, table of contents, spread, sports article, photograph, captions, kicker, headline, contributor, editorials, soft news, feature article, word searches, cartoons, human interest, interview, etc.
Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pre-reading</th>
<th>Post-reading</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contributor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>a writer whose work is published in a magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word search</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>word search</td>
<td>a word game that consists of seemingly random letters arranged in a grid or rectangle; the object of the game is to find and mark all of the hidden words by circling them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This second example is designed to meet CCSS RI.6.5. Use this second chart for those words that refer to sections of the publication: *caption, column, feature, hammer, human interest, kicker, lead, masthead,* and *op-ed*. In this chart, the final column is a place for students to analyze the structure of the newspaper and to explain how each section fits into the paper as a whole.

Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pre-reading</th>
<th>Post-reading</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Structure, Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>table of contents</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>table of contents</td>
<td>a list of the parts of a magazine organized in the order in which the parts appear; includes page numbers on which each part begins</td>
<td>Found on page 1 of a newspaper or just inside a magazine, the table enables readers to find information quickly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then, following detailed oral instructions from the teacher, students will discuss the different kinds of magazines they have seen or may have in their homes, focusing on evaluating the text structure of magazines and magazine feature articles, including advertisements, a table of contents, section headings, comic strips, cartoons, speeches, and illustrations, etc. The teacher will also introduce the concept of journals as another kind of periodical. It might be helpful for students to look at a couple of periodicals. Student groups will visually represent the data from their discussions in the Graphic Organizer for Comparison of Newspapers, Magazines, and Journals BLM, comparing and contrasting newspapers, magazines, and journals.

Students will visit their school library at this point to determine what print and/or electronic periodicals are available there and to learn the system for using them. Students Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 1◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
should browse through the periodicals in the library, focusing on newspapers and magazines. Online magazines and newspapers can be accessed through Magazines on the Web: http://newslink.org/mgen.html, through http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/, the Internet Public Library at http://www.ipl.org/div/news/, or the Librarians’ Index to the Internet at http://lii.org/search/file/magazines.

Activity 10: Examining News Articles (GLEs: 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 14)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), various sample news articles and feature articles including some pre-segmented for QtC discussion, and Inverted Pyramid News Story Format Handout BLM

Students will read a selected news article in a newspaper or a feature article in a magazine, paraphrase it, and determine the author’s purpose for writing it. The teacher will then facilitate a discussion of the text structure found in such articles, employing the questioning the content (QtC) (view literacy strategy descriptions) technique. Questioning the content (QtC) is an activity that can help students cope with challenging text materials. The activity conditions students to think about what the text is saying, not what the “textbook” states. The questioning the content strategy makes the previously overlooked actions of the author more visible to students as they attempt to learn from text. In addition, students are less likely to be personally frustrated by difficult text as they realize that part of the author’s responsibility is to make sure a passage make sense. Students become deeply engaged with reading as issues and problems are addressed while they learn, rather than afterward.

In questioning the content, the teacher will reread segments of the text aloud to students and stop at pre-determined places to have the class discuss the ideas and events. The teacher will then pose questions, such as What is the author trying to say? and What do you think the author means by that? and How does this connect with other text ideas? Make sure to pre-select places to stop in the text where the students may be expected to have difficulties. Based on the teacher’s modeling of question asking, students will then collaboratively construct meaning by questioning the author and the author’s purpose. This gives students the opportunity to learn from one another, to question, and to consider alternative possibilities, and to test their own ideas in a safe environment.

For this questioning the content strategy, the teacher will determine where to break the reading segments based on the following considerations: the major differences between the news article in a newspaper or a feature article in a magazine, including the nature of news writing as factual; the purpose of a lead; the traditional news story structure of facts in descending order of importance; the need for necessary background information; and the focus of journalistic writing on the 5 W’s (who did what, when, where, and why).

The teacher will then distribute copies of the Inverted Pyramid News Story Format Handout BLM. Study of a traditional news article will contrast with a research-based
feature article, which focuses on the human interest side of a story and uses a chronological, logical, or narrative pattern of organization and is not tied closely to a news event. A feature article typically profiles a personality, tracks a trend, or gets to the story behind the news, while a news story starts with a premise or theme, presents information and backs it up, and brings the reader to a conclusion. Good sources for sample feature articles are Write Source: Student Models, found at http://thewritesource.com/models.htm, Weekly Reader, found at http://www.weeklyreader.com/index.asp and Parade, the Sunday Newspaper Magazine, found at http://www.parade.com/.

The teacher will use a sample newspaper story to model and illustrate an example of the Inverted Pyramid news story format. Students will each choose a news article (not a feature story), list the main facts (details) in the order the reporter presents them (typically in order of descending importance), and then visually represent the information in a graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) like the Inverted Pyramid News Story Format Handout. Next, they will rewrite the list of facts (details) in chronological order, compare the two lists, and discuss the differences in their groups. The teacher will use a magazine or newspaper feature story to model and illustrate an example of the feature story format and organization. Differences between the two can be found by looking at http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3752518 for both types, news and feature and http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson140.shtml, http://www.newspapersineducation.ca/eng/level_7to9/lesson5/lesson5_en.html for sample news stories, and http://www.1stheadlines.com/ to see multiple versions of the same news story from around the world.

Students will consider the use of an angle (the approach or perspective taken in presenting a story) in news writing. For example, in the story of Cinderella, there are many possible angles for a story: Prince meets love of life; stepsister is treated brutally; SPCA looks into maltreatment of mice, etc. Students will find examples of different types of angles in their newspapers and summarize what the angle is. Each group will then choose a topic for a possible news story, such as a coastal chemical spill, the release of a new video game, or a hurricane. Groups will brainstorm possible angles that could be taken in presenting one of the stories and report their angles back to the class.

Students can practice integrating information found in various forms of media and classifying a news story by its distinctive elements by watching the evening news on television. As they watch, students will focus on how the reporter uses the 5 Ws to cover the lead news story and identify the Who·What·Where·When·Why for the lead story.

**2013-2014**

**Activity 11: What’s the Slant? (CCSS: RI.6.9, RI.6.10, L.6.5b, L.6.5c)**

Materials List: projector and screen or posterboard, newspaper articles, pens and pencils
Select multiple news articles on the same subject with decidedly differing viewpoints. To illustrate bias readily, select companion pairs of articles—a news item and an editorial piece and read them utilizing the questioning the content (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. Questioning the content (QtC) teaches students to use questioning to construct meaning of content and to think at higher levels about the content they are reading and from which they are expected to learn. In this context, QtC is used to teach students about slant and bias in the news. By comparing news items with editorials, students should be able to analyze how an author’s use of language communicates his or her bias toward a subject.

In this activity, utilize text-dependent questions that encourage students to question the author’s exploration of a topic through word choice. Responses should lead to a discussion of bias in the articles. Following are some suggested question models for this activity. These questions should be modified to include specific information from each of the selected articles: “What does (article title or headline) indicate? What is the main topic being talked about in (article title)? The article says (this), but what does it mean? Why did the author use (a specific word or phrase)? What other words or phrases in (article title) are similar to that word or phrase?”

Post the pre-selected questions on the board or write on a poster and attach to the classroom wall. Model use of QtC with the first article, first reading the article aloud as students follow along, and then rereading the article, stopping at various points for students to use QtC. Then lead students in a discussion of the article’s message. Put students in pairs to practice questioning the second article together. Pairs will read the second article and utilize the strategy. As students discuss, monitor the pairs to model and clarify as needed.

Once pairs are finished, lead a whole-class discussion of their findings. Encourage students to examine the author’s words for bias in covering the subject. Remind students that news articles, unlike editorials, should be free from bias; however, point out that the language in some news articles demonstrates an author’s bias toward the subject. Clues for bias include, but are not limited to loaded language, a definitive opinion about the subject, stereotypical language, and a non-neutral point of view. Lead the class in designing a checklist they could use to examine articles for bias in future reading. Students should revisit this checklist when they write their own articles in Activity 15.

There is more information on biased language at these links: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/05/ and http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=121.

Activity 12: Outlining News Stories/Learning Logs (GLEs: 11b, 11c, 20b, 44c)

Materials List: various newspaper and magazines, outlining rules handout, pens and pencils, student learning journals, learning log sentence starters, Inverted Pyramid News Story Format Handout BLM

Grade 6 ELA◇Unit 1◇ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
The teacher will review with students the basic rules of outlining. These can be found online at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/01/) and [http://web.psych.washington.edu/writingcenter/writingguides/pdf/outline.pdf](http://web.psych.washington.edu/writingcenter/writingguides/pdf/outline.pdf). There is a lesson on outlining with power notes at this link [http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/power-notes-30759.html](http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/power-notes-30759.html).

Students will then each outline two news stories they have read, using the Inverted Pyramid News Story Format Handout BLM and applying the Inverted Pyramid news story structure (main idea followed by supporting details in descending order of importance) they have just learned. These should be shared within each group, and revised as needed for content or format. Students can also web the ideas first, using graphic organizer software such as Inspiration® or Kidspiration®, and then convert the web to an outline, if they have access to such software programs.

Next, students will complete a learning log entry (view literacy strategy descriptions). A structured learning log is a written entry in which students record thoughts, questions and comments about their own learning and metacognition and in which they make plans for future work. From time to time, the teacher can ask students to swap their learning logs and comment on each other’s reflections. The notes students make in their logs can form the basis of an essay they write. Learning logs are also an excellent support for class and group discussion. By asking students to reflect on a key question in writing before engaging in discussion, teachers give all students the opportunity to think carefully before making a response. In this way, more students become involved in the discussion, and the discussion tends to be richer. Encourage students, especially struggling writers, to use mind maps, sketches, and diagrams as well as narrative.

In this learning log entry, students will first summarize and paraphrase what has been learned so far about news stories and then record a personal response to the lesson. The first time students are doing this, they may need to be given starter phrases such as: I found this easy/hard; I had trouble with the part where _____; etc. (Additional learning log sentence starters can be found at [http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/models/diseases/sentstarters.html](http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/models/diseases/sentstarters.html).) For this assignment, each paragraph should have a topic sentence, relevant elaboration, and a concluding sentence. These learning log entries should then be given to a peer, who reads the summary and response and adds his or her own response, raising questions as appropriate. The original student will write another response to what the peer said.

**Activity 13: Creating Headlines and Leads/Primary vs. Secondary Sources** (GLEs: 11a, 11b, 11c, 17b, 19a, 19b, 19c, 20c, 20d, 39a, 39d, 41a, 41c, 42c, 43)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), examples of phrases and subordinate clauses, various news headlines, picture books, examples of primary and secondary sources.
secondary sources, various print and/or online newspaper and magazines, paper and pen or pencil, News Story and Headline Writing Rubric BLM

As preparation for this lesson, the teacher will review with students the difference between phrases and subordinate clauses. To evaluate the text structure of news stories, students will review the definitions of *headline* (the title of a story written in large, bold type above the story, generally having a subject and a verb), *topic* (the general thing or subject that all the sentences in the story talk about), and *main idea* (the most important idea about a topic). Students will then read the following story and identify its topic and main idea: *Not all monkeys like bananas. Chuckles, the oldest monkey in the City Zoo, refuses to eat bananas. Zookeeper Harry Katz says that animals are just like people. “Not all people like hot dogs,” says Harry Katz. “It’s just the same with monkeys and bananas!”* (topic: monkeys; main idea: Not all monkeys like bananas.) Using the main idea, “*Not all monkeys like bananas,*” students are to create headlines for the story. The teacher will record their responses, pointing out that headlines are usually not complete sentences, only phrases or subordinate clauses that do not have an end mark. Students will read news from which headlines have been removed; they will write headlines for several articles, choosing words appropriate for their audience and for clarity.

Students will share their headlines, pointing out how each headline relates to the article’s main idea. The teacher will facilitate a discussion by first asking what the author was trying to say and then asking which headlines are most attention grabbing and why. To integrate ideas, students will then collect headlines from various media (newspapers or grade-appropriate magazines), share them with the class, and determine the characteristics that headlines have in common. With a partner, students will find headlines in today’s news section, read the corresponding articles, and discuss how each of the issues might develop in the next month. Students will create headlines that could appear in the paper a month later. Students will confer with their groups to revise headlines to include strong verbs and submit their best headlines for a class contest.

Students will discuss the differences between primary and secondary sources and will identify possible primary and secondary sources used in reporting a news story to determine the story’s credibility of information. One website that can be used as a resource is [http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/news/index.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/news/index.htm). Students will connect ideas by using the Internet and bookmarking websites to locate and print a story that is covered in most of the local, state, national, and global papers; recording the names of the newspapers; comparing the similarities and differences in the stories; clarifying the possible primary and secondary sources of information; and speculating, as a class, about why the same story is covered differently in different newspapers.

The teacher will read aloud to students *If You Were a Writer* (Aladdin, 1995) by Joan Lowery Nixon, *Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One* (Puffin Books, 1984) by Kate Duke, or *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street* by Roni Schotter (Orchard Books, 1999). Students will discuss the idea of a writer’s use of words to create stories that make pictures and excite listeners to want to hear more. Focusing on the characteristics of a lead (the most important part of a news story, the first paragraph or sentence that usually starts with the
story’s most important words - *A giant snowstorm caused school closing today* instead of
*It was reported that schools were closed today because of a giant snowstorm*, students
should skim a print or online newspaper or magazine for one or two attention grabbing
leads and then share these within their groups, discussing what made each of the leads so
interesting, such as the action or descriptive words, anecdotes, unusual facts, etc.

Students will create a short news article (main idea/lead paragraph only) for the topic
“Our School Lunch is . . .” or “Middle School is . . .” or any other topic likely to provoke
sensory detail or strong feeling from students. Students will choose a real school event
such as a basketball game, school dance, or field trip and write a lead paragraph for a
news story about the event, being sure to include the 5 W’s, language and vocabulary
well-suited to create images and engage an audience, and all necessary background
information about the event and will sequence it in Inverted Pyramid order. The teacher
will model proper interview etiquette and the types of questions one might ask in an
interview. Students will take the role of reporters, work together in small groups to
generate a list of questions to be asked of persons interviewed, review the work of the
groups, and use peer feedback to sharpen and clarify questions.

Then student reporter teams will interview the school event participants, take notes on the
participants’ responses, and again employ the *split-page notetaking* (view literacy
strategy descriptions) technique (see Activity 6). Students will share notes, select the
most useful, and create a news story with a headline that follows established criteria.
Finally, the students will share their stories with the class who will then evaluate the
presentation of information in the reports.

**Activity 14: Roles/Reporting/Interviewing (GLEs: 20b, 40a, 40b, 40c, 41a, 42a, 44a,
44b; CCSS: W.6.7)**

Materials List: poster board and markers, *PowerPoint* software (if available), paper and
pen or pencil, Graphic Organizer for Roles BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g.,
overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera,
SmartBoard, etc.), examples of human interest stories; Feature Story Rubric

Students will assume a variety of roles while participating in the group process
throughout this activity; they will reflect upon its effectiveness at its end. They will
practice active listening while using the group process. Following teacher directions,
students will determine who is involved in the production of a newspaper by locating this
information in newspapers, doing research in the library or on the Internet, or
interviewing someone who works for a newspaper. Students will organize their thinking
about the roles using the Graphic Organizer for Roles BLM.

Students will connect this knowledge to their world by forming an editorial staff for each
section they choose to include in a class newspaper. (The editor will keep a list of
assignments.) They will decide which roles would be necessary, which roles each would
like to take (e.g., reporter, editor-in-chief, copy editor, mechanical team, advertising

*Grade 6 ELA◇Unit 1◇ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines*
team.), and what available technology should be selected to produce their newspaper (e.g., typewriters, computers, desktop publishing software, online publishing). Students will decide as a class which sections they would like to put in their classroom newspaper. Students will explore and survey various newspapers, paying particular attention to design and layout and discussing the organizational patterns they observe. The class will determine deadlines and will also decide how many copies to print.


Students will listen to or read aloud examples of typical human interest stories. (These can be found at the Associated Press website, [http://www.ap.org/](http://www.ap.org/). There is a lesson plan for writing feature articles at the following link: [http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/feature-story-fifteen-minutes-987.html](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/feature-story-fifteen-minutes-987.html).

Students will then prewrite by brainstorming ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), which is done as a group to generate a large number of creative ideas. There are four basic rules in brainstorming, intended to stimulate thinking. The teacher or student leader must 1) accept all ideas, 2) make no criticism, 3) accept unusual ideas as new ways of thinking, and 4) look to combine and improve ideas. In this brainstorming session, students are looking for creative ideas for topics for a human-interest feature article for the class paper/magazine that can be called *Up Close and Personal*; the more creative and high-interest the brainstormed ideas for this column, the better. From the brainstormed topics, each student should develop a guiding question for their topic.

After brainstorming, have students identify additional information they need to gather to answer the question about their topic, including people they can interview and potential interview topics and survey questions that reflect the events and activities in the school and community. To meet CCSS W.6.7, have students write more specific interview questions focused around the guiding question and topic. Model the interviewing process for students, emphasizing refocusing their inquiry when appropriate. It might be helpful to script an interview and have a student read the scripted answers that include responses that would lead to students’ changing the direction of their inquiry based on the newly gathered information. After students have written their questions, have students practice their questions on one another, paying special attention to refocusing. Each article should end with a simple conclusion about the topic. Students will form small reporting groups and develop questions that can be asked in interviews; they will schedule, conduct, and take notes with split-page notetaking ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) during their interviews (see Activity 6). After the interviews, encourage students to reflect on the information gathered to determine if they have enough information for their article, or if they need to locate additional sources of information. For example, if a student had to refocus his or her inquiry during the original interview, he or she might need to conduct a follow-up interview or locate additional information using electronic or print sources. Referring to the Feature Story Rubric BLM for guidance, students will also develop a
process for peer editing, revising, and producing their stories for the classroom newspaper.

**Activity 15: Publishing a Classroom Newspaper (GLEs: 17c, 20e, 20g, 24b, 25b, 28b, 29, 39f, 40a, 40b, 41b, 44b, 46, 48)**

Materials List: overhead and transparency pen, chart or poster paper and markers, LEAP Writer’s checklist, Class Newspaper/Magazine Rubric BLM, paper and pens or pencils

Following teacher directions, students will record and post a student-generated graphic organizer or flow chart, representing their plan for producing a newspaper and create and post a schedule stating when each task is to be completed and who is responsible for each task. The teacher will act as facilitator.

Students will conduct interviews, select relevant information from them (following up with additional research as necessary), and draft their news articles (applying 5 Ws and Inverted Pyramid organization, elaboration with facts and/or specific details, and structure to each). They will revise the articles based on peer feedback. They will proofread, using the LEAP Writer’s checklist found at [http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2071.pdf](http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2071.pdf), with particular attention to standard English punctuation and spelling, using spelling resources as necessary. They will also specifically proofread for commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences and using interjections for emphasis. They will complete the publication of the classroom newspaper with available technology. Assessment will be with the Class Newspaper/Magazine Rubric BLM.


Students will participate in the group process throughout this activity; they will reflect upon its effectiveness at its end. They will practice active listening while using the group process. Student groups will follow a teacher-directed sequence of steps to develop criteria for evaluating the distinctive elements of their classroom newspaper, based on their technical experience gained in reading other real-life newspapers, and developing their own news stories. The criteria will be posted so all can refer to the criteria as the newspaper is being published. The teacher will guide this discussion and help students focus on specific criteria for evaluating purpose, content, support, accuracy, layout, and graphics of each section and article. This list of criteria will then become the final rubric for assessing the classroom newspaper. This class publication should be assessed using the Class Newspaper/Magazine Rubric BLM.
Activity 16: The Newsroom—Publishing a Classroom Newspaper (CCSS: SL.6.1a, b, c)

Materials List: library and Internet access, chart paper and marker, Group Discussion Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 15 for the 2013-2014 school year. Because the Common Core Standards call for greater student accountability in group discussions, an extension of this activity in 2013-2014 provides a BLM for students to record their group roles and tasks, deadlines, and prepare discussion points in advance. The Group Discussion Record BLM should be seen as a companion document to Activity 15. The primary difference in this second year involves coaching students in techniques for collegial discussions and having them set and monitor their own deadlines.

Activity 17: Write a Business Letter to a Newspaper (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 17e, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 22b, 24a, 25a, 25c, 26, 27b, 27c)

Materials List: overhead and transparency pen, chart or poster paper and markers, LEAP Writer’s checklist, Business Letter Rubric, Persuasive Letter Rubric, paper and pens or pencils

The teacher will review proper business letter content, format, and tone, modeling each both orally and visually, and will facilitate a writing workshop for this activity. Students will prewrite by brainstorming details for a persuasive letter to the editor of his/her local newspaper in which he/she addresses a current issue in the community. Students will work in author groups to gather the information needed to support their opinions and use inductive and deductive reasoning to be clear and convincing.

Students will draft their letters, double-spacing to allow room for revisions and corrections. Students will work in author groups to evaluate and revise for clear voice; logical reasoning with support to state a viewpoint; logical structure and organization; style, tone, level of formality; and vocabulary appropriate for the intended audience and topic. Students will proofread for proper business letter format and standard English usage and punctuation, especially the use of colons after the salutation, and capitalization of proper names, hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives, regular and irregular verb tenses, homophones, and the use of a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check to find correct spellings). Students will use the LEAP Writer’s checklist, available at http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/1684.pdf, to peer/self-edit and revise their work. Students will publish their letters, using available technology. Assessment will be with a business letter rubric.

Teacher Note: Further information regarding the formatting and proper tone of business letters is available at

Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 1◊ Nonfiction—Newspapers and Magazines
Title: Letter Writing  
Annotation: This site provides multiple tips, activities, and links to information about writing all sorts of business letters.

Title: Format for a Business Letter  
URL: http://www.grossmont.edu/sandia.tuttle/businessletter.html  
Annotation: This site gives the proper format for a business letter.

Title: Sample Business Letter: Block Style  
URL: http://www.sutterhigh.k12.ca.us/counselor/business%20letter.htm  
Annotation: This site gives specific instructions on the typing of a business letter.

Teacher Note: Additional rubrics for writing a letter to the editor are available at http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson875/PersuasiveLetterRubric.pdf

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of newspaper and magazine vocabulary terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products. Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will give oral presentations (e.g., speeches, audio or videotapes, poster talks, slideshow) in small groups or whole class, summarizing details learned about newspaper and magazine forms and elements.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about newspapers and magazines at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, word processing, PowerPoint, and other available technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about newspapers and magazines.
- Students will use a proofreading checklist that addresses the most common errors in punctuation, capitalization, usage, and sentence formation to proofread their reading response journals, their individual news stories, their business letters, their letters to the editor, and their final drafts of the class

- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, interviewing, group process, news and letter writing techniques, writing process and craft, and vocabulary acquisition.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 7**: Student groups will complete the Learning to Distinguish Nonfiction Text Structures BLM that identifies the most common text structures that characterize nonfiction, their accompanying signal words, and questions students can ask themselves to aid in identifying and comprehending each structure. These should include the following structures and their information:
  - description or list
  - sequence or time order
  - compare and contrast
  - cause and effect
  - problem and solution

- **Activity 9**: Student groups will complete the Graphic Organizer for Comparison of Newspapers, Magazines, and Journals BLM that identifies the contrasting text structures and features of newspaper, magazines, and journals. This should include the following structures and their information:
  - news stories
  - editorials
  - columns
  - feature stories
  - advertisements and classified ads
  - reviews
  - interviews
  - research reports
  - reviews of literature
  - book reviews

- **Activity 10**: Students will create and complete a graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) that identifies the Inverted Pyramid News Story format of a particular news story. This should:
  - start with the lead
  - name the 5 W’s
  - follow with two or three specific supporting details
  - end with a final detail
  - give the most important information at the top (beginning)
  - give the least important information at the bottom (end)
• **Activity 13**: Student groups will complete news articles and headlines based upon school events and interviews with participants. Stories should be assessed with the News Story and Headline Writing Rubric BLM. These stories should:
  - establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph
  - follow a logical sequence (beginning, middle, and end)
  - demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic
  - use details in the articles that are clear, effective, and vivid
  - have headlines and captions that capture the reader's attention and accurately describe the content
  - have captions for graphics that adequately describe the people and action in the graphic

• **Activity 14**: Student groups will complete human interest stories based upon interviews of school and community members for a human interest section of the class paper/magazine. These feature stories should:
  - establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph
  - follow a logical sequence (beginning, middle, and end)
  - demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic
  - use details in the articles that are clear, effective, and vivid
  - have headlines and captions that capture the reader's attention and accurately describe the content
  - have captions for graphics that adequately describe the people and action in the graphic
  - probe into feelings and attitudes

• **Activity 16**: Students will complete the production and publication of a class newspaper/magazine. This class publication should be assessed using the Class Newspaper/Magazine Rubric BLM. The final product should include:
  - graphics in which captions adequately describe the people and action in the graphic
  - articles that establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic
  - details in the articles that are clear, effective, and vivid
  - columns that are neatly typed in the "justified" type style
  - "gutters" that are adequate and consistent between all columns and articles
  - professional “feel” to the layout and format
  - articles that have headlines and captions that capture the reader's attention and accurately describe the content

• **Activity 17**: Students will each write a persuasive letter to the editor, which addresses a current community issue and takes a stand on it. These will be evaluated with the Persuasive Letter Rubric BLM
Time Frame: Approximately five weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading and responding to realistic fiction. Comparing and contrasting real life to realistic fiction helps students appreciate the fact that stories can model real life. Fiction (story) elements of setting, characters, plot, and theme are defined and analyzed. Writing and group processes provide opportunities for student proofreading, revision, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing. Strategies such as vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, split-page notetaking, graphic organizers, reading response learning logs, brainstorming, discussion, and reciprocal teaching will be introduced and applied to the fiction content.

Student Understandings

Realistic fiction refers to stories set in the modern world with conflicts typical of modern life; these stories did not really happen, but could have. Realistic fiction stories revolve around characters who behave in ways that cause readers to say, “She /He acts just like I do.” Dealing with real-life issues such as friendships, family life, school, growing up, death, divorce, war, etc., through stories can help students cope with similar problems and feelings they are experiencing in their own lives.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify plot, setting, character, and theme in a series of realistic fiction pieces?
2. Can students explain how the author’s depiction of plot, setting, character, point of view, and theme reinforce the story’s meaning and tone?
3. Can students relate realistic fiction to personal experiences?
4. Can students plan, draft, evaluate, revise and proofread a realistic fiction story that contains a central conflict, a clear setting, a plot with complications, realistic characters, dialogue, flashback and foreshadowing, and a satisfying resolution?
5. Can students focus on increasing their personal vocabularies through the use of comprehension strategies such as word maps/webs, context clues, and non-linguistic representations for idioms and multiple meaning words?
### Unit 2 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE#</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01a.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01b.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01c.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01d.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using knowledge of idioms (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Identify common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple meaning words (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content-specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including theme development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04b.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including character development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04d.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including plot sequence (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain literary and sound devices, including foreshadowing (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05b.</td>
<td>Identify and explain literary and sound devices, including flashback (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11f.  | Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or
### Grade-Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE#</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Analyze an author's stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17a.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an established central idea (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17d.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22b.</td>
<td>Use the various modes to write compositions, including essays based on a stated opinion (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Grade-Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE#</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25c.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including colons after salutation in business letters (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English punctuation, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Organize oral presentations with a thesis, an introduction, a body developed with relevant details, and a conclusion (ELA-4-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ELA CCSS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.5</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reading Standards for Informational Text

<p>| RI.6.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.                                                              |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Standards</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.6.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Standards</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L.6.4c, d</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.5b, c</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, thrifty).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.6</td>
<td>Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific word and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Activities

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.

It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them.

Ongoing activities should be a part of daily instruction.

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 14, 15)

Materials List: texts in current genre; Reading Response Prompts BLM; sample reading response learning log entries

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence in working through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they frequently respond to the text they have read through the use of brief reflective prompts. See Reading Response Prompts BLM for a list of prompts aligned to the GLEs. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that students see this activity as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Again, teacher modeling of his or her own use of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Response Learning Log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Text:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/12/06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade 6 ELA Unit 2 Fiction: Realistic Fiction 2-6
Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 01c, 01d, 02, 03)

Materials List: vocabulary cards, plus dictionaries, thesauruses, index cards

Students will review the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; they will apply the use of this comprehension strategy throughout the unit, as appropriate. Other words in the sentence and the picture can provide clues to meaning. Students will use vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions) to define words specific to the story and key to its comprehension. Students will continue to use this type of strategy to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the fiction unit. Allow time for students to review their cards and quiz each other with the cards in preparation for tests and other class activities.

Vocabulary Card Example:

front of card

- Vocabulary word
- Sentence from text that illustrates the word
- Definition
- Example or drawing

![Barracks](image)

a building

Superordinate idea

1) military housing, often dormitory style
2) noun; usually used in plural
3) Example:

Concentration camp prisoners were forced to line up in front of their barracks each morning.

Characteristics or features

Student-composed sentence
Students will also continue to use structural analysis to examine roots and other words derived from them. Students will continue to identify the meanings of common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple-meaning words as they occur throughout the unit. Students will continue to identify the four most common types of context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) as they figure out meanings of unknown words in context; students will apply the use of this comprehension strategy throughout the unit as appropriate.

Students will review the term *idiom*. Student groups will then quickly generate a list of common idioms that they know. Each group will present its best five idioms to the class, but no group will repeat an idiom that has already been stated. All the idioms generated should be recorded. Students should review the terms *literal* and *figurative*; the teacher will facilitate a discussion on the differences between these words and reasons why authors often use figurative language or why figurative language is used in conversation. Each student should then choose an idiom and sketch a drawing of the figurative meaning of the idiom, as well as write the literal meaning of the term. These should be posted. Additional idioms that occur throughout the unit should be addressed in like manner.

Students will review the concept of *multiple-meaning words*. When these are encountered throughout the unit, students will create word webs and riddles that illustrate the multiple meanings of the word, including illustrations or examples for each meaning.

Students will continue to create word webs and riddles that illustrate the multiple meanings of such words, including illustrations or examples for each meaning. Students may also use *graphic organizers* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm)), such as the Frayer Model to help acquire this vocabulary knowledge. The Frayer model and additional best practices strategies for teaching vocabulary can be found at [http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm).

**2013-2014**

**Activity 3: Words in Context (CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)**

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm)) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning from the text (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student
understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Teach students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but words that students stumble over, whether with word meaning, use or pronunciation. Coach students to use reference materials, such as a print or online dictionary to determine pronunciation, precise meaning, or part of speech as needed. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in the student’s written work.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, a discussion about the word cavernous as used below might reveal its evolution from the word cave and all that it connotes. Incorporate author’s word choice into the discussion. With cavernous in this context, it would be appropriate to discuss what the author’s choice of the word cavernous, over synonyms such as vast or spacious, lends to the tone, thus cluing the reader into what the author is implying about the character or situation.

Example: Words in Context  
Text: Mockingbird

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>Contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>cavernous</td>
<td>“It’s hard and stiff on the outside and cavernous on the inside. My Dictionary says CAVerous means filled with cavities or hollow areas.” p. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>large and hollow</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from Mockingbird; © Kathryn Erskine 

Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 19b, 19c, 20b, 20d, 21, 22b, 23, 25b, 27a, 28a, 28c, 29)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g.,
overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

In this and the following units, continue the process for teaching students the writing craft outlined in unit 1. Begin by showing students how accomplished writers use a skill, and then encourage students to emulate those writers. Follow the process below for conducting a writing mini-lesson.

1. The teacher should first introduce a skill by pointing out an example in a trade book, or magazine article, or demonstrating the technique through modeled writing. (The teacher thinks aloud as he or she composes in front of the students; models should be prepared beforehand.)
2. The teacher then has the class talk about the skill by asking questions, such as: *Does the skill make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? Can you construct something like this?*
3. The teacher then models the skill orally for students.
4. The students then try it out orally for practice, with partners.
5. Students then try the skill out in a small practice piece of several sentences or more (guided writing).
6. Finally, students practice the skill in their independent writing, for homework, or in a previously composed draft, as a practice write. These can be kept in a bound composition notebook and labeled with a table of contents so that by the end of the school year, students have a writing book of target skill practices they can take with them.

When students have practiced a new writing craft target skill several times, they can then be expected to incorporate it into a new writing draft. In planning a whole-process piece, the teacher will use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM. The teacher will choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) convention skills as target skills for the whole process piece. These skills then become part of the scoring rubric.

**2013-2014**

**Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)**

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Varying tasks and the time frame in which students are allowed to write is important to meeting this standard. Having students keep
a record of their writing over the course of the year serves as evidence of meeting this expectation.

On the Writing Record BLM, have students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece, written over a day or two, have students indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Ensure students have recorded each writing assignment in this unit.

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 25b, 25c, 26, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM and Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist with Examples BLM, sentences for proofreading

A mini-lesson is conducted during whole-class teaching time and should generally last only five to ten minutes. The teacher should choose only one explicit and concise focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, this could be a grammar, usage, conventions, or sentence formation focus. After the lesson, the teacher should encourage students to try whatever strategy applies to their writing.

Students should also be doing a daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related). There are several key elements to this. A teacher should never have students copy an incorrect sentence in order to correct it, as this reinforces the errors rather than helping to eliminate them. Instead, the teacher will always instruct students to write the sentences as correctly as they can while giving positive feedback, walking around the room, and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher can tell him/her "Caught ya" and encourage him/her to find the missing error. Sometimes they may need a hint.

The teacher will then return to the board or overhead and correct the sentence with the class, eliciting answers from students and making sure someone explains why each error is incorrect. At this point, students will then correct their papers, using proofreading symbols to mark errors they missed on their own. The students should use a colored pen to correct their “Caught yas” and indicate how many mistakes they made in a circle to the right of that day’s “Caught ya.” Students will record the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM; this allows the teacher to see over the course of a few days which errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle, Maupin House, 1990).
Activity 7: Characteristics of Fiction and Realistic Fiction (GLEs: 04a, 04b, 04d, 09, 11b, 11f; CCSS: RL.6.10)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart, Character Map BLM, Story Map BLM

The teacher will begin the study of the fiction genre by reviewing the definition of fiction (stories based on imagination and not presented as fact). Students will give examples and descriptions of the kinds of fiction writing they can recall. The teacher will record responses on the board, overhead, or chart, and display them throughout the unit. Students will discuss how fiction is both alike and different from other genres of text, and summarize and review the elements of various types of fiction, focusing especially on realistic fiction.

The teacher will review with students the definition of realistic fiction (stories set in the modern real world with conflicts typical of modern life that did not really happen but could have); such stories deal with feelings and real-life issues that students can relate to, such as friendships, family life, school, growing up, death, divorce, war, etc., which can help them deal with problems and feelings they are experiencing in their own lives. They will employ the vocabulary self-awareness chart (view literacy strategy descriptions) to review elements of fiction. Refer to Unit 1 for further explanation.

Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>−</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>setting</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>The story is set in current times in a neighborhood in Miami.</td>
<td>the time and place in which a story takes place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protagonist</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The protagonist of the story is Esmerelda, since the story is mainly about her.</td>
<td>the main character in a story or novel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>denouement</td>
<td></td>
<td>−</td>
<td></td>
<td>Following the denouement in which Shaun won the race, he walked away with Laura.</td>
<td>the conclusion of a story; the events following the story’s high point, or climax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The example chart above has words that students didn’t know initially, so they originally had −“s or ?”s, but eventually learned, so changed these to +’s. Students should revisit their charts often as their vocabulary knowledge expands for the words on the chart, and students should change the information on the chart to reflect their new understandings.

Select a short realistic fiction story appropriate to the text complexity demands of the CCSS expectations. To reflect text complexity of the CCSS, it is recommended that texts fall in the Lexile® range of 955-1155. A tool for determining Lexile® text measure can be found at this link: https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/. As the story is read, students will identify the main character(s) and, using the Character Map BLM, complete it for one character in the story. Students will then identify the setting, problem (conflict), and solution of the story, revising their initial predictions as needed by completing a Story
Map BLM. Students will summarize the story to a partner, using a teacher-provided story map as a guide.

The teacher will facilitate a discussion of the concept of theme by asking, “What is this story really about?” until students begin to move away from the story line and toward the lesson or message of the story. Students will then brainstorm a list of traits of this story in response to the prompt: What I like about _____ (a favorite character, the plot, the setting) is _____. The class will discuss responses and cite specific examples as support for each choice. Students will do a quick-write about what real-world connections or ideas the story reminds them of. As students share ideas, the teacher will record connections on a chart or transparency. The teacher will encourage the class to take a closer look at the author’s purpose in a realistic fiction story, stressing the importance of the theme (the overall message or key idea presented by the author) of the story and emphasizing the need for students to return to the text for specific evidence. Often the same themes will occur in many different stories. Students will watch for similar themes throughout this unit.

Students will make a list of all the realistic fiction they recall reading. These lists will be used as a reference point for categorizing various types of realistic fiction, such as coming of age, family issues, friendship, dealing with death, and survival stories. Students will then decide which kind of realistic fiction they would like to begin or continue reading and form groups according to interest.

Activity 8: Identify Short Stories for a Group Resource List (GLEs: 04a, 04b, 04d, 09, 11b, 11e)

Materials List: library, Internet access, note cards, Reciprocal Teaching Graphic Organizer BLM, QAR BLM

Students will use the library and the Internet to identify short stories that fit their group’s choice of categories of realistic fictional works to read during the unit. Not all stories identified will be read.

Students will share with the class how they went about organizing this activity. This can be done by the class as a whole or in smaller groups to concentrate on students’ interests and differing abilities. Students will then make a list of the stories each will read. Stories may be read by one person or more than one person in the group. Based on teacher recommendation, some stories may be read by every student in the group. When reading these stories, students will use the reciprocal teaching strategy and the Reciprocal Teaching BLM. Reciprocal teaching focuses on the four main comprehension processes of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting, something good readers do automatically while struggling readers may not even understand these processes are required. It also makes the students responsible for creating the meaning of a story, rather than relying on a teacher’s summarization. While the steps of this strategy should be taught initially all at once, students need many exposures to all processes, so teachers must return to this strategy over and over,
modeling steps repeatedly as needed and using a graphic organizer to help students see their roles. It is also crucial that students practice all four roles within the strategy, rather than sticking with one or two more comfortable roles. Steps are as follows:

1) Put students in groups of four. Distribute a note card to each member of the group, identifying each person's unique role for the current assignment.
   a. summarizer
   b. questioner
   c. clarifier
   d. predictor

2) Have students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection, using note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the upcoming discussion.

3) At the teacher-chosen stopping point, the *Summarizer* will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.

4) The *Questioner* will then pose questions about the selection:
   a. unclear parts
   b. puzzling information
   c. connections to previously learned concepts
   d. motivations of actors or characters

5) The *Clarifier* addresses confusing parts and attempts to answer the questions that were just posed.

6) The *Predictor* offers guesses about what the author will tell the group next or what the next events in the story will be.

7) The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.

The group will meet and share the realistic fiction stories they have read individually or in a group, focusing on the realism of the plot, setting, and character and the message or theme of each story and continuing to employ the *reciprocal teaching* strategy.

The teacher will then review and model making inferences in such stories. A useful technique for teaching this to students and one which aligns well with the *reciprocal teaching* strategy is the “Author and Me” strategy from the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) method, which helps students categorize questions from stories into two major categories: answers found “In the Book” or “In My Head.” Those found “In the Book” are further categorized as either “Right There” if the answer is found within a single sentence or “Think and Search” if the answer requires information from more than one sentence or paragraph. “In the Book” answers will either be “Author and Me” (these are the inference questions which are based on prior knowledge and what the author has told you in the text) or “On My Own” (represent questions for which the answer must be found in the reader’s own background knowledge; a reader would not have to have read the text to answer these questions). Using the QAR BLM, students will make note of all inference questions that occur in their realistic fiction reading and be prepared to discuss these.
Teacher Note: Useful websites for teaching the QAR strategy include: 
http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/qar.html and 

For each story read, students should be prepared to summarize or paraphrase specific details of plot, character, and setting from the story; to explain what is realistic about the story; to explain major inferences from the story; and following a review of theme by the teacher, to state the theme without using the names of characters or referring to the story line.

Activity 9: Presentation of Stories with One Prominent Area (Plot, Setting, Character) (GLEs: 04b, 04d, 35, 36; CCSS: RL.6.5, RL.6.10)

Materials List: notebook, Split-Page Notetaking BLM

Following teacher instructions, as students read their selected realistic fiction stories, each group will identify stories in which one of the three elements (plot, setting, character) is dominant; this will become the focus of a group presentation. Students will take notes, employing the split-page notetaking (view literacy strategy descriptions) technique and using the Split-Page Notetaking BLM. In this note-taking strategy, students organize a notebook page into columns for questions/topics and for supporting details. As they read, they convert topics and sub-topics into questions and then record corresponding notes or information beside each question. This strategy encourages active reading and summarizing and provides a study guide for students to use for review. In taking notes, students should search for details that show the author’s emphasis on one of the three main story elements and which will help them focus their own presentation.

Discussion of fiction text structures could be a good introduction to a story analysis. In this composition, students analyze the story for one element—character, setting, theme, or plot—including an explanation of how the author develops the element throughout the story. Special emphasis should be placed on choosing a seminal passage, one that perfectly demonstrates the author’s development of the chosen element: character, setting, theme, or plot.

Example of split-page notetaking on a realistic fiction story:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author’s Emphasis on Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who’s who?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From whose point of view is the story told?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What problems/conflicts are seen?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author’s Emphasis on Plot</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the primary conflict?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author’s Emphasis on Setting</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where and when does the story take place?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What details affect the plot?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which element is dominant in this story?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify one passage that illustrates the dominance of this element.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The presentation on a selected realistic fiction story should include a thesis, an introduction, a body developed with relevant details, and a conclusion. Through such oral presentations, groups will make other students aware of authors’ techniques and styles that students could imitate in their own writing of realistic fiction stories, such as showing, not telling, the setting; dialogue or narration that reveals specific character traits; or complications that advance a plot. The groups, in consultation with the teacher, will decide which of their presentations they would like to portray for the class as a whole. The teacher will try to showcase presentations in which at least one story represents the dominance of plot, setting, and character. When presenting, students will adjust volume and inflection of their delivery for their audience and purpose. (See Oral Presentation Rubric found at [http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson416/OralRubric.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson416/OralRubric.pdf)).

2013-2014

Activity 10: Comparing Texts—Listening v. Reading (CCSS: RL.6.7, RL.6.10)

Materials List: short story, audio version of the same short story, Listening v. Reading BLM

Select a short story with an accompanying audio version. Using the Listening v. Reading graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions), students will first read the short story, taking notes on significant words or phrases from the story on each of the story elements identified—character, point of view, setting, plot, and theme.

Play the audio version for students, having them listen and take notes in the same manner. Instruct students to underline trends that are common in both “readings” of the text, but encourage them to listen for notable differences.

Lead students in a discussion of the choices made by the producers of the audio version that colored their interpretation of the story in some way.
Students can use the graphic organizer as pre-writing for a written comparison of the two. Encourage students to compare and contrast differences in what they “saw” and “heard” as they experienced the text in a different way.

This activity could be extended into SPAWN writing (view literacy strategy descriptions). SPAWN is an acronym, standing for five categories of writing prompts: Special Powers, Problem Solving, Alternative Viewpoints, What If?, and Next. While SPAWN writing was developed for content-area writing, prompts can be crafted to stimulate students’ predictive, reflective, and critical thinking about literature. SPAWN Writing is generally informal writing, and it should be scored as such. Generally, an adequate response can be developed within 10 minutes.

In this context, the Alternative Viewpoints category should help students think critically about the differences between the text read silently and the audio version of the text. The prompt might read something like, “Imagine you are the author of the story. Did the audio version accurately portray the story as you envisioned it? What, if any, changes would you recommend to the reader? Why?”

Students can share their SPAWN responses with a small group or with the class to stimulate discussion, heighten anticipation, and check for understanding.

**Activity 11: Brainstorm Story Ideas/Teacher Modeling/Prewriting (GLEs: 04a, 04b, 04d, 11f, 17a, 17b, 17c, 20a, 20b; CCSS: RL.6.5, SL.6.1a, SL.6.1b, SL.6.1c, SL.6.1d)**

**Materials List:** notebook, Story Map BLM

Using the Story Map BLM, the teacher will select a story to use for demonstration purposes to model the writing of a realistic fictional narrative in chronological order for the class, stopping to discuss the thinking that goes into choosing the characters, setting, problem, events, and solution as those elements occur in the model story.

In the same way that the story maps have guided their comprehension of stories they have been reading, story maps will guide students in writing a realistic fiction story. Students will each complete a Story Map BLM for their stories. Students will begin by each brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) with a partner possible problems (conflicts) that their main character could face. The story should be about a situation with which the author is very familiar, so the story can be as realistic as possible. Students will decide how the story will end (resolution), and what theme or central message they wish to convey. Students should consider and discuss various ways the theme could apply to their own lives and share their ideas with the class.

Students will then prewrite by choosing characters, a plot conflict, a setting, at least three important events, and a solution for their realistic story idea; they will record these ideas on the Story Map BLM, using chronological order.
Using the fishbowl discussion (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy, students will share their maps and offer suggestions to each other, using their author groups as a way to improve on the number and specificity of the details. A fishbowl discussion provides a forum for a small group of students to discuss an issue or problem “in a fishbowl” while another group of students looks on. In this instance, the author groups would form the fishbowl, and the rest of the class would form the outer group. Author groups could use the fishbowl as a forum for ironing out issues (characterization, setting description, plot development, theme development) in their stories before they begin drafting the narratives in Activity 12. Each author will take notes based on the group’s feedback for his or her story. To meet CCSS RL.6.5, author groups should identify an “essential sentence,” one at the heart of the story. The outer group’s challenge is to determine how that sentence fits into the overall structure of the story. Students will also discuss which point of view the author should take to make the story most realistic. Note: In 2013-2014, greater emphasis should be placed on the development of the narrator’s point of view to reflect the incorporation of CCSS RL.6.6.

After the initial fishbowl discussion, the outside group should be given an opportunity to discuss among themselves their reactions to the conversation they observed. Then both groups can share their discussions with the entire class. Having the entire class become familiar with all the authors’ stories should make for easier revision in Activity 13.

Activity 12: Create a Story/Drafting (GLEs: 04a, 04b, 17b, 17d, 19b, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20g, 21)

Materials List: writing notebook, Narrative Beginnings Handout BLM, Story Map BLM, Dialogue with Speaker Tags and Stage Directions BLM, Revelation of Character in Writing BLM

Using the Narrative Beginnings Handout BLM, the teacher will model how to begin a narrative story to avoid making a story sound like a list. Students will first refer to their completed Story Maps from the previous activity; they will then practice several different narrative beginnings with an interesting sentence about something that is happening in their story, showing the time and place of the setting by showing the background noise and by giving a hint of the eventual outcome, etc.

Double-spacing in order to have room for revisions and proofreading corrections, authors will use computers or word processors, if available, along with their story maps and notes to create a draft of a narrative realistic story, introducing the characters, setting, and problems, and emphasizing chronological order with transitional words and variety in sentence structure in writing their drafts. The teacher will distribute the Dialogue with Speaker Tags and Stage Directions BLM, and will model its use. Students will revise their drafts to add dialogue with speaker tags and stage directions, highlighting these additions to make it easier for teacher and peer reviewers. The teacher will then distribute the Revelation of Character in Writing BLM and model its use next. Students will
Activity 13: Revise, Proofread, and Publish a Story (GLEs: 04b, 05a, 05b, 17c, 20e, 20f, 20g, 23, 25b, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28c)

The teacher will facilitate the pairing and exchange of work between author groups. Each group will meet separately and read, review, take notes, and comment on the other group’s work, including the author’s completed Story Map as well as the draft of the story. Then the groups will get together with one person from each group summarizing the group’s comments for the author’s story in the other group. The author who is receiving the comments will have time to ask questions; then the group to which the author belongs will ask questions. Students will discuss appropriate peer comments and questions for the listeners (using the Praise-Question-Polish format and BLM) and post them in the classroom (e.g., I don’t understand . . .; I want to know more about . . .; your story map says ___, but in your draft, ____; can you think of another way to ____?). In this way, the two groups will work to improve the stories of each other’s group. Students will work with their partners to share their story beginnings and to listen to their partner’s comments. Using their story maps as a guide, they should add something to their story to help clarify what was confusing or to add detail.

Students will brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) possible ways to use foreshadowing (e.g., bad weather that foreshadows a complication to come; the sun coming out just before a complication is resolved) in a story; these should be recorded and posted. Students will brainstorm possible ways to use flashback (or flash forward) in a story (e.g., These techniques of playing with time can be seen in the film The Sandlot: Smalls was walking into the baseball stadium to begin his job as an announcer at the beginning of the story, and at the end of the story he is announcing the game. What happens in between those two scenes is a flashback about the greatest summer of his life.); student responses should also be recorded and posted by the teacher. Student authors will then revise their stories to include elements of foreshadowing and flashback.

Students will discuss the idea that showing a character trait through dialogue is more powerful than just direct description; they should refer to the Revelation of Character in Writing Handout BLM as needed. Groups will do practice writes of dialogue for specific character traits (e.g., conversation that reveals nervousness, fear, excitement, anger).
Students will look for places in their stories to add dialogue that reveals a specific character trait and will revise their stories accordingly.

After appropriate teacher mini-lessons as needed for common errors made by students in their drafts and after the opportunity to self- and peer-edit their drafts for such errors, students will use the Secondary Editing-Proofreading Checklist BLM. By using it, they can make sure their sentences make sense and that they are using correct capitalization, punctuation, and usage, especially the use of commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences, possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns, regular and irregular verb tenses, and the use of conjunctions, transitions, and prepositional phrases to connect ideas.

To publish the story, the teacher will direct a whole-class discussion about the method of publication, using available word processing technology. Students will brainstorm a process for completing the publication process. The class will conclude the unit by publishing their works of realistic fiction. The final product can be placed in the school library. Assessment will be with the Realistic Fiction Rubric BLM.

**Sample Assessments**

**General Guidelines**

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

**General Assessments**

- Students will be provided with a checklist of realistic fiction terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products. Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will give oral presentations (speeches, audio or videotapes, *PowerPoint* presentations, etc.) in small groups or whole class, summarizing details learned about realistic fiction elements and characteristics.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about realistic fiction at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, word processing, *PowerPoint*, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about realistic fiction.
- Students will use a proofreading checklist that addresses the most common errors in punctuation, capitalization, usage, and sentence formation to proofread their reading response journals and their individual realistic fiction
2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum

stories.

- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, group process, writing process and craft, and vocabulary acquisition.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 7**: Students will use a story map to deconstruct a story. This should include:
  - setting (time and place)
  - list of characters
  - exposition and background information
  - rising action, including complications which build suspense
  - central conflict
  - resolution
  - falling action
  - theme

Students will complete a character map for one character in a story. This should include:
- at least three different character traits
- at least one event or action that supports the trait
- an assessment of the character’s nature as:
  - realistic or not
  - flat vs. round

- **Activity 9**: Student groups will each present to the class a story in which either plot, setting, or character is dominant. The presentation should:
  - present information in logical sequence
  - tell the tale entirely through narration and dialogue
  - maintain connection with audience
  - be audible and distinct
  - contain few errors in written form
  - achieve fluency and expression appropriate to the story in use of:
    - voice
    - emphasis
    - facial expression
    - gestures

  (See *Rubric for Oral Presentation* in Grade 6 Unit 2 BLM)

- **Activity 11**: Students will each create and complete a story map that outlines their original realistic fiction story. See Activity 7. Students will participate in a fishbowl discussion to aid one another in story development.
Activity 12: Student groups will draft, revise, and publish an original realistic fiction story. The criteria used for final assessment should include a story that:

- hooks the reader’s interest with an effective narrative beginning technique or hook
- contains a beginning that makes clear the setting, including both time and place
- quickly sets up the main character’s problem or conflict
- arranges the events of the story in chronological order and connects these events with transitions of time and place
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- gives attention to word choice in the story.
- reveals character traits through narration, dialogue, and direct description
- uses sufficient descriptive details and attributes
- creates vivid and specific images for the reader
- uses at least two complicating incidents/events in the plot to create dramatic tension
- has a satisfying resolution that logically resolves the problem (conflict) and that supports the overall theme
- is relatively free of mistakes in spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics, and manuscript form

Activity 13: Students groups will proofread an original realistic fiction story, using a proofreading checklist for common errors in sentence construction, usage, capitalization, and punctuation. This should include attention to use of:

- commas, especially for separating independent clauses in compound sentences, for items in a series, and for interrupters
- coordinating conjunctions
- agreement of subjects and verbs and pronouns and their antecedents
- possessives vs. plurals
- verb tenses, regular and irregular
- conjunctions, transitions, and prepositional phrases to connect ideas
- commonly misspelled words
Realistic Fiction Short Stories: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Aiken, Joan. “Lob’s Girl”
2. Avi. “Scout’s Honor”
3. Block, Francesca Lia. “Blue”
5. Cisneros, Sandra. “Eleven”
7. Cooper, Susan. “Muffin”
8. Cormier, Robert. “President Cleveland, Where are You?”
10. Fleischman, Paul. “Interview with a Shrimp”
11. Garcia, Rita Williams. “Food from the Outside”
13. Howe, James. “Everything Will be Okay”
17. Lindbergh, Reeve. “Flying”
19. Mazer, Norma Fox. “In the Blink of an Eye”
20. Mohr, Nicholasa. “Taking a Dare”
22. Myers, Walter Dean. “Jeremiah’s Song”
26. Paterson, Katherine. “All-ball”
27. Paulsen, Gary. “Why I Never Ran Away from Home”
28. Rosen, Michael J. “Older Run”
29. Rylant, Cynthia. “Pegasus for a Summer”
30. Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk. “Stray”
32. Viorst, Judith. “La Bamba”
Realistic Fiction Novels: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Abbott, Tony. Firegirl
2. Blume, Judy. Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret
3. Bunting, Eve. The Homecoming
4. Byars, Betsy. Summer of the Swans
5. Christopher, Matt. Mountain Bike Mania
6. Cleary, Beverly. Dear Mr. Henshaw
7. Clements, Andrew. Frindle
8. Creech, Sharon. Absolutely Normal Chaos
10. DiCamillo, Kate. Because of Winn Dixie
11. Fleischman, Paul. Seedfolks
12. Gantos, Jack. Joey Pigza Swallows the Key
14. Horvath, Polly. Everything on a Waffle
15. Hurwitz, Johanna. Baseball Fever
16. Konigsburg, E.L. From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E.Frankweiler
17. Lord, Cynthia. Rules
18. Lowry, Lois. Anastasia Krupnik
20. Paulsen, Gary. Dogsong
22. Soto, Gary. Crazy Weekend
23. Spinelli, Jerry. Crash
24. Voigt, Cynthia. Bad Girls
25. White, Ruth. Belle Prater’s Boy
Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 3: Historical Fiction

Time Frame: Approximately five weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading and responding to, as well as writing, historical fiction. Reading historical fiction illuminates time periods and facilitates understanding and appreciation of diverse customs and heritages. Writing historical fiction provides opportunities for students to visualize places and events from history through the eyes of fictional characters. The defining characteristics of fiction are examined and analyzed. Researching historical places and events as setting and background for an original story provides opportunity for student practice in information, technology, and problem solving skills. Writing and group processes provide opportunity for proofreading, revision, publication, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing. Strategies such as reading response *learning log*, *SQPL* (*Student Questioning for Purposeful Learning*), *text chain*, *GISTing*, *vocabulary self-awareness* and *vocabulary cards*, *graphic organizers*, and *brainstorming* will be introduced and/or applied to the fiction content.

Student Understandings

Historical fiction conveys to a reader that, while human nature is much the same over time, human experience, especially everyday experience, is not. Students will understand historical fiction is fiction in a historical setting, in which the main characters, and often many others may be real people, or they may be invented by the author. Students will be able to identify selected details that attempt to convey the setting, spirit, manners, and social conditions of a past age from facts based on careful research. Students will understand historical fiction uses the written record to invent dialogue and action and creates fictional characters to bring a reader close to historical figures and events.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the elements of fiction, particularly historical fiction?
2. Can students recognize an author’s purpose?
3. Can students explain how historical setting can influence characterization and the future action of a story?
4. Can students relate historical fiction to factual events and personal experiences?
5. Can students avoid plagiarism through creating citations and crediting of sources when conducting Internet research?
6. Can students write a journal entry from first person point of view?
7. Can students plan, draft, evaluate, revise, and proofread a found poem that uses word
choice and imagery to convey the mood of a character?
8. Can students plan, draft, evaluate, revise, and proofread a historical fiction story?

Unit 3 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade-Level Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLE#</strong></td>
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<td>25a.</td>
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<td>25b.</td>
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<td>26.</td>
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</table>
27a. Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M3)

27b. Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)

27c. Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including homophones (ELA-3-M3)

28a. Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)

28b. Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)

28c. Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)

29. Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)

39c. Evaluate media for various purposes, including support for main position (ELA-4-M5)

39e. Evaluate media for various purposes, including opinions vs. facts (ELA-4-M5)

40a. Participate in group and panel discussions, including explaining the effectiveness and dynamics of group process (ELA-4-M6)

40b. Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed-upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)

40c. Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)

41a. Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices) (ELA-5-M1)

42a. Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias) (ELA-5-M2)

42b. Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)

44a. Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including surveying (ELA-5-M3)

45b. Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including graphic organizers (e.g., outlines, timelines, charts, webs) (ELA-5-M3)

45c. Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)

47a. Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including integrating quotations and citations (ELA-5-M5)

47b. Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including using endnotes (ELA-5-M5)
### 47c. Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including creating bibliographies and/or works cited lists (ELA-5-M5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELA CCSS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.6.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Informational Text</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>RI.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</td>
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<td><strong>Writing Standards</strong></td>
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<td>W.6.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, audiences.</td>
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<td><strong>Speaking and Listening Standards</strong></td>
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<td>SL.6.1a, b, c</td>
<td>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</td>
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<td>a.</td>
<td>Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</td>
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<td>b.</td>
<td>Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.</td>
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<td><strong>Language Standards</strong></td>
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<td>L.6.4c, d</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.6.5b, c</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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,
thrifty).

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

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 14)

Materials List: texts in current genre, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence and work through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they frequently respond to the text they have read through the use of brief reflective prompts. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that this be seen by students as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, inferring, and rereading is vital. To encourage student analysis of texts and to foster their ability to infer information from texts read, have students select a key passage (short) from the day’s reading in support of their response. Encourage discussion of student responses, including determining whether the information is explicit or inferred. It is important to note that the responses are not to be summaries.
An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Pages Read</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Passage to Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/1/11</td>
<td>p. 1-4</td>
<td>I think this story is going to be about how Bud struggles in his new foster home, especially dealing with an older “brother.”</td>
<td>“I’m the one who’s going to have problems. A older boy is going to want to fight, but those little girls are going to treat you real good.” (3-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2/11</td>
<td>p. 4-8</td>
<td>Bud has had to grow up quickly. I wonder if that’s just how things were back then.</td>
<td>“Most folks think you start to be a real adult when you’re fifteen or sixteen years old, but that’s not true, it really starts when you’re around six.” (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/4/11</td>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>At first I thought that the Amos family took Bud in out of kindness, but now I see they had a motive of greed.</td>
<td>“I didn’t care that he was twice as big as me, and I didn’t care that his mother was being paid to take care of me.” (13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpts from *Bud, Not Buddy*; © Christopher Paul Curtis

**Activity 2: Vocabulary (Context Clues, Idioms, Multiple Meaning Words) (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 01c, 01d, 03)**

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, plus dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Students will continue to use the vocabulary self-awareness strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to determine their familiarity with new words or phrases encountered throughout the unit. Poor reading strategies are characterized by poor metacognitive awareness. Thus, students who are aware of their progress through monitoring, controlling, and evaluating are typically stronger students academically. This strategy is valuable for students because it highlights their understanding of what they know and what they still need to learn in order to comprehend a text. Strategy procedures for students should be explained as follows:

1. Examine the list of words written in the first column.
2. Put a “+” next to each word you know well, and give an accurate example and definition of the word. Your definition and example must relate to the unit of study.
3. Put a “?” next to any words for which you can write only a definition or an example, but not both.
4. Put a “-” next to words that are new to you.

The teacher should remind students that the chart will be used throughout the unit and since they will be revising the chart, they should write in pencil.

*Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart*
Students will continue to use the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, and contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; they will apply this comprehension strategy throughout the unit, as appropriate.

Students will continue to differentiate between literal and figurative meanings of common idioms encountered throughout the unit by sketching a picture of the figurative meaning, and writing the literal meaning of the term. These should continue to be posted. Additional idioms that occur throughout the unit should be addressed in like manner.

In this unit, students will use two kinds of vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions). Students will first use the standard vocabulary cards to define words specific to the story content and key to its comprehension. This is especially important for new content words that will be seen in historical fiction. Explain to students that these words are content-specific for an understanding of the text. Students will continue to use this strategy to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the fiction unit. Allow time throughout the unit for students to review the vocabulary cards individually and with a partner to reinforce word meanings.

Example: Vocabulary Card

**front of card**

- **Vocabulary word**
- **Sentence from text that illustrates the word**

**back of card**

- **Definition**
- **Example or drawing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th></th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>flabbergasted, adj.</td>
<td>−</td>
<td></td>
<td>dumbfounded; thunderstruck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valise, n.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td>a suitcase or a satchel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students will continue to create word webs and riddles that illustrate multiple-meaning words, including illustrations or examples for each meaning.

Students will continue to focus on the etymologies of common roots and affixes. Students will use structural analysis to generate a list of roots and show other words that are derived from them.

**2013-2014**

**Activity 3: Words in Context (CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)**

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but here the focus is on how the word is used in context and how the student makes sense of the word, not how the word is defined in the dictionary.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Teach students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but they should be words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student pieces.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, a discussion about the word *wallop* might include its colloquial use and also its figurative use.
Example: Words in Context
Book: Bud, Not Buddy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 6</td>
<td>wallop</td>
<td>“These Amoses might look like a bunch of cream puffs but if she was anything like Todd I bet she could pack a real wallop.” 17</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a punch or tough hit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from Bud, Not Buddy; © Christopher Paul Curtis

Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 22a, 23)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM, Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), pen/pencil; paper or notebook

The teacher will continue to point out examples of good writing in texts followed by questioning (Examples: Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? Can you imitate this?) This is followed first by the teacher and then the students orally modeling the skill, trying it out in practice pieces and finally applying the skill in independent writing kept in a bound and labeled composition notebook, with a table of contents. This enables students to have a writing book of target skills practices they can take with them. In this unit, it will be important to focus on historically accurate details of setting, chronological order, narrative beginnings and endings, and dialogue to advance or complicate the plot and to reveal character.

In planning a whole-process piece, the teacher will use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner and choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for the whole process piece. In this unit, emphasize developing writing with literary devices, specifically foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft a whole process piece, double-spacing in order to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, re-ordering). The teacher will illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies.
2013-2014
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement. This record should be a point of reflection for students, guiding them to recognize the varied forms their writing can take and the varied uses for writing.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece.

With each writing assignment in the unit (Activities), students will record on this page.

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 23, 25a, 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 27c, 28a, 28b, 29)

Materials List: overhead and transparency pen or blackboard and chalk, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist, BLANK BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist, with Examples BLM, Proofreading/Editing Strategies for Students BLM, sentences for proofreading, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

The teacher should continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, this could be a grammar, usage, conventions, or sentence formation focus.

Students should also continue daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related), writing sentences as correctly as they can while the teacher walks around the room and gives positive feedback to students. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher encourages him/her to search further and then returns to the board or overhead, corrects sentences with the class and explains why each error is incorrect. Using proofreading symbols, students continue to correct their papers and record the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist. This allows the teacher to see which errors are being made by the majority of students so teachers can plan appropriate whole-class FUMS mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle, Maupin House, 1990.)
Mini-lessons on the use of capitalization of proper names, especially historical names of people and places, hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives, homophones, prepositional phrases, and interjections for emphasis should also be part of this unit whenever student errors indicate such a need. Also, for this unit, GLE 23 has been addressed in the checklist with a section labeled “Writing Development Focus.” Following mini-lessons on the use of literary devices, including flashback, foreshadowing, and imagery, students should practice incorporating these into their writing as appropriate.

The teacher will model editing and proofreading strategies, using the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM. The teacher will also hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and will daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

**Activity 7: Identify Periods of Interest in History: Group Students on Basis of Interest**

(GLEs: 09, 22a, 40a, 40b, 40c, 44a, 45b)

Materials List: historical fiction picture book(s), chart paper and marker, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

Students will shift their study of the fiction genre to the historical fiction subgenre by the teacher’s reading aloud a historical fiction picture book, such as *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco (Philomel Books, ©1994) or *Dandelions* by Eve Bunting (Voyager Books, ©2001). Students will then compare and contrast the lives of the characters in the chosen historical fiction picture book to present-day lives.

Before reading the picture book aloud, the teacher will use the *Student Questions for Purposeful Learning (SQPL) strategy* (view literacy strategy descriptions) by first creating a statement that would cause students to wonder, challenge, or question. A sample SQPL statement for *Pink and Say* might be: “Soldiers fighting on opposite sides in a war can never be friends.” Such a statement does not have to be factually true, but it must provoke interest, curiosity, or disagreement. Based upon the statement, teams of students must then create two to three logical questions related to the statement that they would like answered, such as: *Which war will this story be about? Are the characters friends before it starts? Are the characters still friends at the end?* Teams of students should then share their questions, starring those questions that are asked by more than one team. Once all questions are listed, add questions if necessary; if students have failed to ask about important information, they will need to pay attention in the story. Direct students to pay particular attention to information that will help them to answer starred questions. Pause periodically during the reading of *Pink and Say* and have students determine which of their SQPL questions can be answered. Students might write answers in their learning logs (strategy link). After reading *Pink and Say*, remind students that they must always ask questions before they learn something new and then listen and look for answers to those questions.
Review the definition of historical fiction. Students will give examples and descriptions of the kinds of historical fiction writing they can recall. Responses will be recorded on the board, overhead, or chart and left up throughout the unit. Students will discuss how historical fiction is both alike and different from other kinds of fiction.

Facilitate a discussion of the elements of historical fiction and criteria for choosing good historical fiction books. Historical fiction should present a well-told story that doesn’t conflict with historical records, portrays characters realistically, presents authentic settings, folds in historical facts, provides accurate information through illustrations, and avoids stereotypes and myths. Students will connect texts to life by determining well-known movies or television programs they have seen that are historical fiction, using the genre characteristics generated by the class to make their determination.

Students will participate in the group process throughout the rest of this activity; they will reflect upon its effectiveness at its end. They will practice active listening while using group process. The class will survey their interests in particular periods of history and form groups based on these interests. Groups may be formed on the basis of time periods or on the basis of types of people, such as generals, explorers, scientists, or others. Students then will meet in their small groups and identify some essential questions about their time period or role and speculate on possible answers. Varying roles in the group, students will keep a list of their questions for future reference by the group. The group will create symbols for the major events of their time period and organize the symbols into a pictorial timeline graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) of the era. They will then mark their area of interest on the timeline by recording the topic they are studying and their names next to the appropriate spot. Timelines can be chronologically organized and displayed in the classroom throughout the unit. These can be done with traditional paper and markers or with visual/graphics software such as KidPix, Inspiration, etc.

2013-2014
Activity 8: Book Interest Groups (CCSS: RL.6.10, SL.6.1a, SL.6.1b, SL.6.1c)

Materials List: library and Internet access, chart paper and marker, chalkboard and chalk, or overhead projector and pen, Group Discussion Record BLM

Because the Common Core Standards call for greater student accountability in group discussions, an extension of this activity in 2013-2014 provides a BLM for students to record their group roles and tasks, record deadlines, and prepare discussion points in advance. The Group Discussion Record BLM should be seen as a companion document to Activity 7.

Activity 9: Resources for Exploration: Fiction and Nonfiction Bibliographies (GLEs: 40c, 41a, 42a, 42b, 45c, 47a, 47b, 47c)

Materials List: online citation maker, library and Internet access, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, index cards

Groups will use print and electronic resources in the library and the Internet to explore fiction and
nonfiction resources for their research on a historical time period. Following teacher directions, students will make two lists labeled fiction and nonfiction to keep track of these resources by genre. Students will then skim and scan the resources to determine which ones to use to answer more of the group’s questions. Students will report to the group the results of their skimming and scanning and what resources might be appropriate for each member of the group. The teacher will facilitate a discussion about the need for crediting sources in order to avoid plagiarism, and students will learn how to credit quotations, citations, and endnotes from teacher modeling. Teacher will model use of source cards. Students will learn how to credit quotations, citations, and endnotes. Using MLA format, students will create a sample Works Cited (bibliography) page from their source cards of their fiction and nonfiction resources.

To reinforce student understanding of the research process, especially maintaining and reporting accurate source information, utilize the text chain (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. The text chain strategy gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of newly learned material. The text chain strategy works for narratives, steps in a process, or solution to a problem. In a small group, students write a short composition using the information and concepts being learned—in this case, how to find information and properly credit sources. It might be helpful to provide students with the first line of the text chain; for example, “After my search of the online catalog, I had a list of sources to choose from.” Students would each add one line, further explaining the steps in the research process. The last student should bring the steps to a logical conclusion.

The full text chain for how to conduct research might read something like this:

- After my search of the online catalog, I had a list of sources to choose from.
- Skimming the available sources, I chose those that best answered my questions.
- I kept track of these resources by writing down all copyright information.
- To avoid plagiarizing, I paraphrased or summarized my answers and labeled them with source information.
- Using the model MLA format page, I made a Works Cited page.

The group should then check their text chain for accuracy.

Teacher Note: A good source for information regarding these skills and links to online citation makers can be found under Kathy Shrock’s Guide for Educators at http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/referenc.html. Handouts on avoiding plagiarism and another citation creator can be found at http://citationmachine.net/.

Activity 10: Determine Influence of Setting on Characters (GLEs: 04b, 09, 11e, 20a, 45b)

Materials List: reading response learning logs, student-chosen graphic organizers, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Students will read some of the historical fiction and nonfiction works from the lists compiled during their research. They will record in their reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) a short description of the characters and settings of each story or piece they read. The teacher will review and model the use of first person pronouns in telling a story from a Grade 6 ELA ◊ Unit 3 ◊ Fiction: Historical Fiction
particular character’s point of view. Students will write a brief entry from a first person point of view as one or more of the characters from the work. Students will keep notes of the ways that the setting of both the fiction and nonfiction works influenced each character and plot. The group will then brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) ways that settings can influence both plot and character. Students can discern and record other noted patterns of character behavior influenced by elements of setting and present this information through the use of graphic organizers (view literacy strategy descriptions), such as lists, character webs, diagrams, wheels, or charts. Students will summarize their own notes regarding the influence of setting on characters for their group. Summaries should be assessed for completeness and correctness.

Students will brainstorm individually some ideas that they might want to use when they generate their own historical fiction at the end of the unit. The teacher will be sure to follow the four basic rules in brainstorming, intended to stimulate thinking. The teacher or student leader must 1) accept all ideas, 2) make no criticism, 3) accept unusual ideas as new ways of thinking, and 4) look to combine and improve ideas. This brainstorming session should focus on details about the time period chosen by each student and such categories as the tools, clothing, foods, vehicles, manners, customs, jargon, toys, etc. that might have been in use during that period and/or place.

Activity 11: Poetry, Imagery, Word Choice, and Mood (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 05c, 05d, 11g, 20e)

Materials List: Found Poem Rubric BLM, Creating a Metaphor BLM, printed copy of an article or piece of fiction or nonfiction text for Found Poems, scissors, paste, and paper or computer and printer, pen/pencil; paper or notebook;

Students will review the poetic form called free verse (a poem without predictable rhyme, rhythm, or length of line or stanza) and compare and contrast it to rhymed lyrics and narrative poetry. They will select a historical character to write a poem about and then choose at least three poetic elements and literary devices such as rhyme, rhythm, repetition, simile, alliteration, onomatopoeia, etc. to include in their poem. The teacher will review these as needed.

The teacher will introduce the concept of found poetry next, which will be assessed with the Found Poem Rubric. Found poetry is the rearrangement of words or phrases taken randomly from other sources (e.g., clipped newspaper articles, nonfiction texts, or fictional stories) in a manner that gives the rearranged words a completely new meaning. The teacher will model aloud the thinking that goes along with creating a found poem that uses word choice and imagery to convey the mood of a character. Students will find a printed copy of an article or piece of fiction or nonfiction text of three to five paragraphs about a person or major event from the historical time period about which they are writing. They will cut apart each word; these should be spread out on their desks so students can see each word better. Students should remove any “unnecessary” or “unimportant” words and from the pile of cut words, choose only the key words they feel create images for their readers and convey something important about their person or event. They are then to rearrange the words into a “found” poem draft by pasting or rewriting them onto a clean piece of paper, remembering that free verse is not written in complete sentences, but instead in meaningful phrases, and that it strives to create images through choosing only the best or most important words and phrases. If necessary, students can add a word or two of their own to the found poems for meaning.
Students will review the concept of metaphor (a comparison of two dissimilar things) and look for a place to revise their found poems by adding a metaphor, using the following questions and the Creating a Metaphor BLM to get them started: How would you describe the person or object? How does it make you feel? What does it remind you of? What object, emotion, or experience could you compare it to? After adding a metaphor to their poems, students will then share the finished found poems with the class.

Before students share their poems, have them read a brief selection from the original text used to write the found poems. As students read their poems and companion texts, audience members should be listening for changes in meaning and purpose as the text evolves into a poem. Student impressions could be used as support in a whole class discussion on how form can change meaning or understanding.

**Activity 12: Similarities and Differences of Characters in Fiction/Nonfiction and People Today: Biographical Sketches (GLEs: 04b, 20b, 22a, 39c, 39e)**

Materials List: T-Chart Graphic Organizer BLM, historical fiction excerpts/stories, access to historical diaries, photographs, speeches, biographies, and text examples; reading response learning logs; pen/pencil; paper or notebook; index cards, GIST Worksheet BLM, Character Traits List BLM, Biographical Sketch Rubric BLM

Students will spend several days reading, comparing, and contrasting historical fiction accounts, factual historical articles, and biographies. The teacher will facilitate a discussion about how historical fiction and written accounts of history or people (biographies) are different genres. Students will identify where history stops and the story starts by reading various examples of historical fiction and speeches. Students will use a T-chart graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) to separate facts from fictional details and to differentiate between make-believe and history while the teacher guides students to recognize the interpretive nature of historical reporting. Students will find historical photographs to compare with text illustrations. They will look for incongruities as well as confirmations, what's been included and/or left out, and so on. Students will compare and contrast incongruities and confirmations in a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) entry.

Students will use the GIST strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to summarize and paraphrase essential information from the short biographies they will read in order to write a biographical sketch. In this strategy, students must limit the “gist” of a paragraph to a set number of words. Limiting the total number of words forces students to think about only the most important information in order to summarize a text; this is the essence of comprehension. The teacher must first model this strategy with a short (one to five paragraphs) biographical text (possibly from a biographical dictionary).

1) Students read a short section of no more than three paragraphs.
2) Students try to remember important ideas from the passage, and the teacher lists them on the board.
3) The teacher assists the class to condense those ideas into 20 words.
4) Students read a second short section and, again, create a 20-word summary that incorporates
information from both the first and second sections.

5) Students repeat the strategy with a third section.

NOTE: Students must be shown how to delete trivial and repetitious information and to collapse lists into broader categories. If a passage lists the achievements of Robert Fulton, Alexander Graham Bell, and Thomas Edison, collapse the names into the category of “inventors”; or if a passage lists the various schools a person attended, then it could be summarized by stating that the person was well-educated.

Example of GIST:

SAMPLE of Biographical Text

Mary Todd met Abraham Lincoln at a dance. He was 10 years her senior and an aspiring lawyer. They fell in love and were engaged at the end of the following year. Mary’s sister and brother-in-law did not approve. In January 1841, perhaps with his poorer background and debt in mind, Abraham asked Mary to release him from the engagement. After Abraham became severely depressed as a result of the split, a friend arranged for them to get together again. After another year of clandestine meetings and secret preparations, on November 4, 1842, Mary informed the Edwardses that she and Abraham were getting married that day. Realizing the marriage was inevitable, the Edwardses had the wedding take place in their home that evening. Inside Mary’s ring was the inscription “Love Is Eternal.”

The Lincolns had four sons: Robert Todd (August 1, 1843), Edward Baker (March 10, 1846), William Wallace (December 21, 1850), and Thomas “Tad” (April 4, 1853). With Lincoln earning a modest income, they first lived in an $8-a-week room at the Globe Tavern in Springfield. They soon moved to a small three-room cottage; then six months later, in 1844, the Lincolns moved to the only home they would ever own. With Lincoln’s work keeping him away, they stayed in touch through letters, with him relying more and more on Mary’s careful analysis of books and political reports. She helped Lincoln collect fees for his services and continuously promoted him, even predicting that he would become President. “He is to be President of the United States some day,” she said. “If I had not thought so, I never would have married him, for you can see he is not pretty. But look at him: Doesn’t he look as if he would make a magnificent President?”
Based upon the excerpt from a biography above, a student might complete the following GIST:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIST Worksheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Todd married Abraham Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in spite of a 10-year age difference, her family’s disapproval, and his lack of money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the next eleven years, the Lincolns had four sons and moved from a tiny room to their own home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary helped Abraham while he was away by analyzing books and political reports and promoting him as our future president.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The class will choose an important person for a sample biographical sketch and will prewrite by completing a GIST for analyzing the real-life character as a class, with the teacher facilitating this activity. Students will then choose a historical person to study and will read a short biography of the person, using available print, electronic, and/or Internet resources to complete their own prewriting to analyze their character by completing a GIST with the GIST Worksheet BLM.

The teacher will model the use of note cards for selecting essential information from these resources. Using the Character Traits BLM, students will form theories about the biographical character’s traits and support them with researched factual details, using note cards and source cards. Each student will then write a short biographical sketch about the historical figure that will include specific behaviors that support the character traits stated. Students will share their biographical sketches with the class. These will be scored with the Biographical Sketch Rubric BLM.

Activity 13: Comparing Historical Characters with People of Today (GLEs: 04b, 09, 39c, 39e)

Materials List: community guest speakers, Details of Setting BLM, access to library and Internet, T-Chart Graphic Organizer BLM

The teacher can invite experts in history or authors as resource people into the classroom so
students have an opportunity to discuss their observations and explore further questions about interpreting historical events and determining what is fact and what is fiction. Students will make notes on how characters in the fiction and nonfiction they are reading are similar to and different from the people of today. Students will state their main idea as a hypothesis.

Students will be put in groups according to the historical period they will research. Since students have been using the learning log to record titles/info about their selected readings, the teacher should instruct students to refer to the learning logs to assist them with this activity. Using available print, electronic, and/or Internet resources, they will search the Internet or electronic library for holdings about the subject; they will read these and record relevant details of life from their chosen historical periods on a Details of Setting BLM. Using the T-Chart BLM, they will also evaluate their own notes for whether opinions and facts support their main idea (hypothesis) regarding the similarities or differences between people of today and the characters encountered in their historical fiction and nonfiction reading. Students will share their findings within their group and discuss any commonalities between the findings of members of the groups. They will share strategies for taking notes on their fiction and nonfiction reading.

**Activity 14: Discuss and Record Criteria for Good Historical Fiction (GLEs: 04a, 04b, 04d, 09, 11c, 14)**

Materials List: chart tablet and markers, blackboard and chalk, paper and pen/pencil or computers and printers, T-Chart Graphic Organizer BLM, index cards

The teacher will review the historical fiction criteria discussed at the beginning of the unit and facilitate a discussion about what makes historical fiction good. Having read and responded to a variety of books, students will now create their own criteria for evaluating historical fiction to add to this list. Criteria should include all the typical elements of fiction, such as conflict, characters, plot, theme, etc., but should also include those elements that are specific to historical fiction. Using a T-Chart, students will identify and compare specific characteristics of informational books with those of historical fiction. For example, the order of events cannot change in biographies or history books, but made-up events can be inserted into historical fiction. Another example is that dialogue can be created both to reveal character traits of a real or imagined person and to advance a plot. Students will explore the author’s purpose in writing and will discuss what they liked and disliked about the fiction and nonfiction stories they read. Students will take notes on index cards during this discussion to prepare for individual stories they will write later in the unit.

**Activity 15: Brainstorm Plots and Characters for Students’ Stories: Discuss Interaction of Setting in Those Stories (GLEs: 04b, 04d, 09, 11f, 20b, 40b)**

Materials List: Six Basic Plots of Fiction BLM, Story Map BLM, Fiction Planner BLM

The teacher will introduce the six basic plot formations that most stories follow (e.g., Boy Meets Girl, Lost and Found, Good Guys vs. Bad Guys, Character with a Goal or Problem, Character vs. Nature, and Crime and Punishment/Mystery and Solution), using the Six Basic Plots of Fiction.
BLM. Students will give examples of books, stories, television programs, or movies they have seen which follow one of these basic plots.

Using the Story Map BLM for prewriting, the teacher will select a story idea to use for demonstration purposes to model the writing of a historical fiction story with at least three historically accurate details of setting in chronological order for the class. The teacher will stop to discuss the thinking that goes into choosing the point of view, basic plot, characters, central problem, complicating events, and solution chosen for the piece as these elements occur in this modeled story; interweave the researched details of historical setting into the story as appropriate. In small cooperative groups, following agreed-upon rules for discussion, students will then prewrite by brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) possible characters and plots for their own stories, based on their reading of both fiction and nonfiction. Students will take notes of ideas that they want to incorporate in their stories, using the Fiction Planner BLM. Students will relate historical fiction to their own personal experience and will continue discussion of how their settings will influence the plot and character development in the story.

Activity 16: Write Initial and Final Drafts and Share Results with the Author Group (GLEs: 04c, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 25a, 27c, 28b, 29, 40b)

Materials List: Narrative Beginnings BLM, Fiction Planner BLM, Historical Fiction Rubric BLM, LEAP ELA Writer’s Checklist, Editing Checklist BLM

Using the Narrative Beginnings BLM as a resource, the teacher will facilitate a review of effective ways to begin narratives. (See Unit 2, Activity 5.) Students will use the Fiction Planner BLM, the Historical Fiction Rubric, and the notes they have taken during the unit to draft a historical fiction story, introducing the characters, making clear the time and place of the historical setting and basic plot, and emphasizing chronological order with transitional words. Students will use interjections for emphasis and variety in sentence structure in writing their drafts, double-spacing to have room for revision and editing. After authors have completed their drafts, they will return to their groups and share them.

Using the assessment rubric (Historical Fiction Rubric BLM) as a source for comments, members of each historical period author group will point out what they like in the story, and authors will take notes for things they would like to incorporate into their own stories. Again, using the Historical Fiction Rubric BLM, students will self-evaluate and revise their drafts for ideas, organization, word choice, style, and audience awareness, incorporating valid feedback by the author group. Using the LEAP ELA Writer’s Checklist (available at http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/1684.pdf) and the Editing Checklist BLM, students will self- and peer-edit drafts for sentence formation, usage, and errors in mechanics, including hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives and spelling errors including commonly confused homophones, frequently misspelled words, and derivatives; students will use spelling resources as needed. Students will read the stories of all of the others within their own group and give feedback on how well stories meet the criteria for good historical fiction developed earlier in the unit.
Activity 17: Revising to Add Foreshadowing and Flashback (GLEs 20e, 21, 23, 28c)

Materials List: Exploding a Moment BLM, historical fiction student drafts, colored pens/pencils, Historical Fiction Rubric BLM

The teacher will distribute and use the Exploding a Moment BLM to help students understand the concept of showing the details of an event rather than simply summarizing them. Students will then review (See Unit 2, Activity 10.) possible ways to use foreshadowing (e.g., bad weather that foreshadows a complication to come; the sun coming out just before a complication is resolved, etc.) in stories; these should be recorded and posted. Students will then brainstorm possible ways to incorporate flashback (or flash forward) in a story. Such techniques of playing with time can be seen in the film *The Sandlot*. Smalls was walking into the baseball stadium to begin his job as an announcer at the beginning of the story; at the end of the story, he is announcing the game. What happens in between those two scenes is a flashback about the greatest summer of his life. Student responses should also be recorded and posted by the teacher and recorded in student learning logs. Student authors will then revise their historical fiction stories to include elements of both foreshadowing and flashback; they will use a different color pen or pencil to add these elements so the additions can be easily seen by the teacher. In addition, students will check their drafts to make sure that their transitions of time and place are appropriate. The teacher will review these added details. Flashback/flash forward and foreshadowing should be added to the historical fiction rubric.

An additional and invaluable resource for teaching students to play with time in narratives can be found in chapters entitled “Explode the Moment and Shrink a Century” in Barry Lane’s book for teaching writing, entitled *After the End: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision*, published by Heinemann, ©1992.

Activity 18: Publish Historical Fiction Produced by the Class (GLEs: 20f, 20g, 25a, 27c, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: Historical Fiction Rubric BLM, LEAP ELA Writer’s Checklist, Editing Checklist BLM, print and electronic dictionaries and thesauruses, paper and pen/pencil or computers and printers, various publishing and art materials

The class authors may also read the stories of other authors, providing appropriate feedback, based upon the Historical Fiction Rubric BLM. The class will decide as a large group how they would like to publish, illustrate, and disseminate their works of historical fiction, such as printed in a class book, posted on the class Web site, published via e-mail, or read aloud in a video. Students will use available technology to produce a final draft for publication. Final checks will be performed on hyphens, capitalization, homophones, interjections, conjunctions, and spelling, using the ELA Writer’s Checklist and Editing Checklist BLM. A variety of resources, such as print and electronic dictionaries and thesauruses, will be used to check spelling and word choice.
Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- The teacher will provide students with a checklist of historical fiction-related writing target skills to practice in their journals (e.g., revealing character, showing setting, writing narrative beginnings). Students will collect all journal entries from this unit in a portfolio and turn them in to be assessed for completion and response to the topic.
- Students will research a historical character or event and use the information to produce a text that summarizes the character’s appearance, background and origins, accomplishments, and central problem. Have students give oral presentations in small groups or whole class, summarizing the details learned about the character or event. Assessment of the final product may include:
  - interesting and accessible format
  - correct documentation of resources
  - historically accurate content
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about historical fiction at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, PowerPoint®, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about myths.
- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, elements and genre characteristics of historical fiction and historical nonfiction, story elements, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related research components.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 7**: Student groups will create a pictorial timeline of their group’s area of interest and essential questions; these should be chronologically organized and posted. The process should include:
  - accurate time and setting.
  - clear labels.
  - appropriate pictures or graphics.
- **Activity 9**: Students will create fiction and nonfiction bibliographies of possible resources for their research on a historical time period. The process should include:
  - attention to the chosen MLA bibliographic format.
  - a variety of both fiction and nonfiction resources for the period.
• **Activity 11:** Students will create free verse found poems about a person or event from their chosen historical time period. These should include:
  ➢ clear evidence of critical thinking about this period of history.
  ➢ one or more visual images.
  ➢ one clear overall impression of the topic.
  ➢ details that appeal to one or more of the five senses.
  ➢ details that appeal to your reader’s emotions.
  ➢ carefully chosen, precise, and vivid word choices and images.
  ➢ repetition of sounds to emphasize the most important images or ideas.
  ➢ line breaks so each image stands on its own.
  ➢ few errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and legibility.

• **Activity 12:** Students will write a short biographical sketch about a chosen historical figure. The process should include:
  ➢ a pre-write.
  ➢ a draft that includes specific behaviors that support the character traits stated in the sketch.
  ➢ revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

• **Activities 14 through 18:** Students will write an original historical fiction story that will incorporate accurate and researched details of setting (time and place). The process should include:
  ➢ a pre-write that includes a Fiction Plotline and a Character Web.
  ➢ a rough draft of a story that does the following:
    o uses an effective narrative beginning technique.
    o uses sufficient background information, including a clear setting.
    o makes clear the main character’s problem or conflict.
    o is arranged in chronological order and uses transitions of time and place.
    o uses at least three historically accurate and documented details of setting in the story (e.g., tools, clothing, foods, vehicles, manners, customs, jargon, toys, etc.).
    o uses dialogue both to advance the plot and to reveal character.
    o uses at least two complicating incidents/events to create dramatic tension.
    o concludes with a satisfying resolution which logically resolves the conflict.
    o allows for revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, voice, sentence fluency, and conventions; self and peer editing; or conferencing with the teacher.
  ➢ a final draft that displays cohesive context, good use of logical order, detailed support, and correct use of the conventions of usage and mechanics.
### Historical Fiction Short Stories/Anthologies/Picture Books: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Bunting, Eve.  *Dandelions (PB)*
2. Chambers, Veronica.  *Amistad Rising*
3. Cormier, Robert.  “President Cleveland, Where are You?”
5. Fleischman, Paul.  *Bull Run*
6. Foreman, Michael.  *War Boy*  
   *War Game*
7. Fritz, Jean.  *And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?*  
   *Homesick*
8. George, Jean Craighead.  *The Wounded Wolf*
9. Hong, Maria.  *Growing Up Asian American: An Anthology*
    “What Means Switch”
13. Mazer, Anne.  *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories*
14. Mohr, Nicholasa.  *A Matter of Pride and Other Stories*
15. Myers, Walter Dean.  “Jeremiah’s Song” (from *Visions*)
17. Polacco, Patricia.  *Pink and Say (PB)*
18. Taylor, Mildred D.  “The Gold Cadillac”
21. Yee, Paul.  “The Friends of Kwan Ming” (from *Tales from the Gold Mountain*)

### Historical Fiction Novels: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Avi.  *Don’t You Know There’s a War On?*  
   *True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
2. Ayers, Katherine.  *North by Night: A Story of the Underground Railroad*
4. Collier, James and Christopher.  *My Brother Sam is Dead*
5. Curtis, Christopher Paul.  *Bud, not Buddy*  
   *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*
6. Cushman, Karen.  *Catherine, Called Birdy*  
   *The Midwife’s Apprentice*
7. Hesse, Karen.  *Letters from Rifka*  
   *Out of the Dust*
8. Lord, Bette Bao.  *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*
10. Myers, Anna.  
   The Keeping Room  
11. Myers, Walter Dean.  
   Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam  
12. Paterson, Katherine.  
   Jip, His Story  
   Lyddie  
13. Paulsen, Gary.  
   Nightjohn  
   Hang a Thousand Trees with Ribbons  
15. Roop, Peter and Connie.  
   Girl of the Shining Mountains: Sacajawea’s Story  
16. Ryan, Pam Munoz.  
   Esperanza Rising  
17. Salisbury, Graham.  
   Under the Blood-red Sun  
   My Name is Seepeetza  
19. Taylor, Charles A.  
   Juneteenth: A Celebration of Freedom  
20. Taylor, Mildred T.  
   Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry.  
   Grasshopper Summer  
22. Uchida, Yoshiko.  
   Journey Home  
   Journey to Topaz  
23. Yep, Laurence.  
   Dragon’s Gate  
   Dragonwings  
   Devil’s Arithmetic  
   Encounter
Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 4: Myths

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, writing, and responding to myths and applying a variety of strategies to demonstrate comprehension. Myths provide students with the opportunity to experience the lives of ancient peoples and to compare their thoughts with those of people today. The defining characteristics and literary elements of myths (creation, nature, hero) will be analyzed. Writing and group processes provide opportunity for proofreading, revision, publication, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing. Strategies such as reading response learning log, vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, word grids, Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA); graphic organizers, SQPL (student questions for purposeful learning), anticipation guides, SPAWN writing, professor-know-it-all, and brainstorming will be introduced and/or applied to the mythological content.

Student Understandings

Students will recognize that myths are traditional fictional stories, often dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes, that explain natural phenomena, describe the psychology, customs, or ideals of a society, address the theme of good conquering evil, or express a culture's view of the universe. In a myth, often the forces of nature are personified. Students will recognize in myths their universal qualities and themes relevant to life today. Students will recognize the cultural importance of myths.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the elements and characteristics of myths?
2. Can students identify the stated or implied theme of a myth and explain how details support the theme?
3. Can students define a hero and cite examples of heroic behavior?
4. Can students identify the cultural context of myths, including similarities and differences?
5. Can students evaluate and make generalizations about characters or events?
6. Can students use selection details and prior knowledge to draw conclusions?
7. Can students relate myths to personal experiences?
8. Can students write an original myth that explains some element of creation, nature, or the concept of heroes?
9. Can students convert a myth to a Reader’s Theater script and format and then perform it?
## Unit 4 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE #</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01b.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01c.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including theme development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04b.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including character development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04d.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including plot sequence (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11f.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11g.</td>
<td>Demonstrating understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Analyze an author’s stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Identify persuasive techniques (e.g., unsupported inferences, faulty reasoning, generalizations) that reflect an author’s viewpoint (perspective) in texts (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 17b.  | Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17c.</th>
<th>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17d.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer, teacher) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24c.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of novels, stories, poems, and plays (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English punctuation, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39b.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including images/sensory details (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39f.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including sequence of ideas and organization (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41c.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41d.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic texts (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42b.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)</td>
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**ELA CCSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| RL.6.9 | Compare and contrasts texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and..."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RL.6.10</strong></td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Informational Text</strong></td>
<td><strong>RI.6.4</strong> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Writing Standards** | **W.6.1a, b** 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.  
| **W.6.9** | Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  
   a. Apply grade 6 reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).  
   b. Apply grade 6 reading standards to literary nonfiction (Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not).  
| **W.6.10** | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. |
| **Language Standards** | **L.6.4c, d** 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.  
   c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or to 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).  
| **L.6.5b, c** | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.  
   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).  
| **L.6.6** | Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.  

**2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum**
Sample Activities

*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.*

*It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them.*

*Ongoing activities should be a part of daily instruction.*

**Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing):** (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 11g, 14)

Materials List: texts in current genre, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of *daily* sustained, silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence to work through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should continue to keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they frequently respond through the use of brief reflective prompts. Sample reflective response prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that this be seen by students as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Response Learning Log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Text:</strong> Favorite Greek Myths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/3/06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 03)

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, plus dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, index cards

Students will use standard vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions) to define words specific to the mythological content and key to its comprehension. Students will continue to use the standard vocabulary cards to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the unit on mythology:

Example: Vocabulary Card

**front of card**

- Vocabulary word: labyrinth
- Sentence from text that illustrates the word: It was easy to get lost in the new shopping mall's confusing labyrinth of different buildings and levels.

**back of card**

- Definition: 1) An intricate structure of interconnecting passages through which it is difficult to find one's way; a maze. 2) noun
- Example: 3) Example: 4) The park has a labyrinth of walking and bike paths.

Students will continue to focus on the etymologies of common roots and affixes from world mythology. Students will use structural analysis to generate a list of such roots and show other words that are derived from them. Another modified vocabulary card example can be used to help students understand important vocabulary words or concepts, including space for the etymology of the word, antonyms and synonyms, the definition, a symbolic representation of the word, and space for using it in a sentence; it can be found at [http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Tools/vocabsquares.pdf](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Tools/vocabsquares.pdf). A list of common words from Greek mythology can be found at [http://www.quia.com/jg/50217.html](http://www.quia.com/jg/50217.html).
2013-2014
Activity 3: Words in Context
(CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and an analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Students should add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student pieces. As students look up the meaning of words, encourage them also to determine the pronunciation and part of speech. Online dictionaries with pronunciation tools can be found at these links: www.m-w.com and www.dictionary.com.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards. Discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. Encourage students to use the dictionary for verification after trying to determine word meaning from context. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word enhanced in the following example, a discussion might reveal that enhanced in this context differs from the meaning of physically enhanced, which would be closer to improved. Follow-up with a discussion on what the writer’s choice of enhanced as a synonym, such as improved or advanced lends to the tone of the piece.
Example: Words in Context
Text: Trickster’s Girl

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 11</td>
<td>enhanced</td>
<td>“Raven stepped in after her and closed the door. Even enhanced night vision needed a bit of light to work with.” p.58</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>intensified</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from Trickster’s Girl © Hilari Bell

Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 23, 32)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM, Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner (Example) BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

The teacher will continue to point out examples of good writing in texts followed by questioning (Examples: Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? Can you imitate this?). This is followed first by the teacher after which the students orally model the skill, try it out in practice pieces and finally apply the skill in independent writing kept in a bound composition notebook and labeled with a table of contents, so students have a writing book of target skills practices they can take with them. Important to focus on in this unit will be historical details of setting, chronological order, narrative beginnings and endings, dialogue to advance or complicate the plot, conflicts which center on greed, jealousy, or other flaws, the revelation of character of both gods, mortals and perhaps animals, and an explanation of some scientific phenomena or a lesson for the reader.

In planning such a whole-process piece, the teacher will use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM and will continue to choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for the whole-process piece. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft a whole-process piece, double-spacing to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, reordering). The teacher will illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies.
2013-2014
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner Blank BLM, Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner (Example) BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames as well as shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Students should record on this page each writing assignment in the unit (Activities 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist with Examples BLM, sentences for proofreading, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

The teacher should continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, the mini-lesson could have a grammar, usage, conventions, or sentence formation focus. The teacher will distribute copies of the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, modeling each strategy for students and providing practice in each until students can apply each strategy independently.

Students should also continue daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related), writing sentences as correctly as they can while the teacher gives positive feedback, walking around the room and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher encourages him/her to search further and then returns to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols; and recording the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist; and allowing the teacher to see which errors
are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990.)

Mini-lessons on the use of commas and coordinating conjunctions, capitalization of names, possessives, the use of regular and irregular verb tenses, and revisions to add prepositional phrases, transitions, and interjections for emphasis, should also be a part of this unit whenever student errors indicate such a need.

The teacher will hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly. These sessions will daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

**Activity 7: The Power of Myth: The Literature of the Spirit (GLEs: 04b, 11d; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: various myths; word grid example.

Students will continue the study of the fiction genre by the teacher’s reading aloud a selected myth, such as any from Ingri and Edgar Parin D’Aulaire’s *Book of Greek Myths* (Yearling Books, ©1992), *The Gods and Goddesses of Olympus* by Aliki (HarperTrophy, ©1997), *Favorite Greek Myths* retold by Mary Pope Osborne (Scholastic, ©1991), *The Children’s Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and The Tale of Troy* by Padraic Colum (Simon Pulse, ©1982), or those available at [http://www.mythology.com/](http://www.mythology.com/). The teacher will facilitate a discussion allowing students to share their reactions to the myth, leading to a conversation on the elements and power of myths throughout history and today. The class will create a list of these and keep it posted/updated throughout the unit.

Students will then read silently another myth selected by the teacher, detailing its literary elements and story ideas, including character development. To reflect text complexity of the CCSS, it is recommended that articles fall in the Lexile® range of 955-1155. A tool for determining Lexile® text measure can be found at this link: [https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/](https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/). Also, texts can be searched for Lexile text measures at this link: [http://src.scholastic.com/ecatalog/search_titles_1.asp?UID=D6DE0A9E6DB34D78AEB80545FEBCFE90&subt=0](http://src.scholastic.com/ecatalog/search_titles_1.asp?UID=D6DE0A9E6DB34D78AEB80545FEBCFE90&subt=0). All students can read the same story, or the teacher can hand out copies of different myths to the class members. As a group, the students will brainstorm the defining characteristics and structure of myths. Online myths may be found at the following sites:

- [http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm)
- [http://www.wingedssandals.com/](http://www.wingedssandals.com/)
- [http://www.webenglishteacher.com/classmyth.html](http://www.webenglishteacher.com/classmyth.html)

Using the defining characteristics and structure of myths, students and teacher can then co-construct a modified word grid ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) that helps students
to learn related terms by analyzing their similarities and differences. Steps for doing this include:

1. Create a blank word grid and display it.
2. Ask students to list names of the two myths which have now been read in class. Write the names of these myths along the left side of the grid from top to bottom.
3. Allow additional rows across on the grid so students can add to the grid as they read additional stories throughout the unit.
4. Students and teacher should now agree upon and then add terms which reflect the defining characteristics and structure of myths. These should be added in the spaces at the top of the grid, moving left to right. [See example below.]
5. Have student volunteers help fill in the grid for the two stories read so far, using a plus sign (+) for each characteristic or structural feature seen in the two myths, and using a minus sign (-) for each characteristic or structural feature not found.
6. The final column is for textual evidence. To meet CCSS RL.6.1, have students cite textual evidence for one of the features identified in each myth.
7. Have students continue to fill out the grid as they read additional myths.
8. As a unit review, use the word grid to help students see patterns of defining characteristics by asking questions such as: “What are two (or more) common characteristics of Myth A and Myth C?” or “Give me two ways the Norse myth(s) and the Roman myth(s) are different.”

After creating the grid and analyzing the myths they are studying as they go, students will more easily see and understand the similarities and differences between myths.

### Example of Word Grid [Semantic Feature Analysis] for Myths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>contains fantastic elements:</th>
<th>man versus self Conflict</th>
<th>god versus god conflict</th>
<th>man versus god conflict</th>
<th>contains symbol(s)</th>
<th>uses flashback</th>
<th>Main character shows fatal flaw</th>
<th>Textual evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myth A</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myth B</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myth C</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 8: Defining a Hero: Prometheus (GLEs: CCSS RL.6.1, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: poster paper; markers; various magazine and newspaper articles depicting
Heroes and heroines can be found in every strata of society. Students will think about a person from the present or past that they would call a hero and share why. They will discuss whether the terms *celebrity* and *hero* mean the same thing and will *brainstorm* their definition of a contemporary hero or heroine, including the character traits that are present in people who act in a truly heroic manner. Students may use their Character Traits BLM to help with this activity. Each student group will be given an analogy about heroes to brainstorm (e.g., “A hero is like a champion, a supporter, Superman, an ally, a partner.”) Working in their groups, students will *brainstorm* some characteristics of the analogy being used. Students will say how each characteristic is similar to that of a hero. Students will share and discuss these ideas and opinions, supporting each with relevant factual details. Students will cite specific examples of events or people they have read about or seen that exhibited these traits and will describe the events and how the individuals responded.

Students will collect a variety of magazine and newspaper articles depicting real people in acts of heroism, including several examples from the events of September 11, 2001, from first responders during Hurricane Katrina, or from any more recent natural disaster. Student groups will read the articles and discuss how the people behaved and what their motives were. Groups will suggest ideas for a composite picture of a hero or heroine. They may want to appoint an artist who will interpret the group ideas, or they may work collectively. They will add text with arrows pointing to specific parts of their composite hero, e.g., a large heart. Each group will share its hero poster with the class. Groups will then write a definition of a contemporary hero or heroine, referring to their poster and any notes they have made. They will then share their definitions with the class, looking for similarities and differences as groups report; students will take notes in their journals. Definitions should all be posted; the class will come to a consensus on a joint definition of a contemporary hero or heroine. Students will refer to this definition and refine it throughout the unit.

Students will discuss whether they remember any stories of gods and goddesses of ancient Greece. Students will read a myth about Prometheus (See titles and resources from Activity 5 or use Internet and/or library resources.) depicting the creation of humans, the acquisition of fire, and the suffering of Prometheus. Before reading the myth, have students respond to an *anticipation guide* about the themes of the myth. An *anticipation guide*, while suited to information that is verifiable, can also be used with literature to activate prior knowledge of topics and to help students set purposes for reading and learning. For this reason, *anticipation guides* are especially helpful to struggling and reluctant readers and learners.

Sample *anticipation guide* statements for the Prometheus myth might include, but are not limited to these:

1. People should be rewarded for obedience. true _____ false: _____
2. People should be punished for industry and innovation. true _____ false: _____
3. It is important to obey authority at all times. true _____ false: ____
4. Knowledge is power. true _____ false: _____
5. A person can have too much power. true _____ false: _____

Anticipation guide statements can be written or projected on the board or distributed in handout form. After students respond to the statements, have them meet in pairs to compare and discuss their responses. Open the discussion to the entire class and then transition by telling students they will read a story tied in theme to these statements. Once the class has finished the story of Prometheus, revisit their responses in the context of the story and make any revisions. Invite students to share their post-reading responses to ensure logic and to clarify any misconceptions.

As students read, they will find at least three things that Prometheus did for humans, using sticky notes to mark what he did and jotting down both the action and a reason why Prometheus did what he did. These should be recorded on the Action, Motivation, and Consequences BLM. After discussing these in their groups, students will use the charts and their Character Traits BLM to create a list of traits for Prometheus, e.g., selfless, risked life for others, persevered, suffered for humankind, etc. Students will share their lists and then do a quick write about whether Prometheus was a hero or not, defending their reasoning.

Students will read additional myths, and they will look for other heroes. A class list will be kept of heroes throughout the unit, as students will need to reflect upon their heroic traits and behaviors in subsequent activities.

2013-2014
Activity 9: Perspectives of Prometheus (CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.9, RL.6.10)

Materials List: Prometheus Myth, copies of a companion poem about Prometheus

This activity is a supplement to Activity 8 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS RL.6.9 requires students to compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes or topics. Once students have read the myth of Prometheus, finished their character traits list, and have done their quick-write, introduce a poem version of the story. Consider “Prometheus Unbound” by Shelley or “Prometheus” by Goethe. Texts of both poems are widely available on the Internet, but because of the sophisticated language, students may need some assistance with comprehension. Consider assigning stanzas of the poem to small groups.

Using a 2-column chart, have students examine the myths and poems, looking for how the authors approached the same theme using different genres. Students should focus on use of language, character descriptions, and changes in the narrative. If students expand the organizer into a brief composition, have them cite textual evidence from both works to support their analysis.

Activity 10: Greek and Latin Root Words in Myths from Different Cultures (GLEs:
01b, 01c, 03, 41d)

Materials List: various myths; index cards; pen/pencil, paper; Student Notetaking Form for Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA) BLM; print, electronic, and online dictionaries; Flash Card/Word Frames Strategy BLM, Flash Card/Word Frames Strategy sample.

Students will explore myths from around the world. The teacher will compile contributions from many cultures as a resource for learning about and writing in this genre (See Grade 6 Recommendations at beginning of Unit following GLEs). The teacher will first have the class read a myth together, using the DL-TA (Directed Learning-Thinking Activity) strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to help students make, check, and refine or refute predictions during and after the reading. This activity helps students to clarify their purpose for reading and gives them a framework for self-monitoring in this form of shared reading. It literally tracks their thinking processes throughout the reading. Steps are as follows:

1. Introduce background knowledge by eliciting from students what they already know about the topic. Discuss the title, cover or illustrations, and any other important information, recording students’ ideas.

2. Following a class discussion, have students write their predictions and explain the evidence they used to answer such questions as:
   - What do you expect this myth to be about?
   - What do you think the title will have to do with the story?
   - Do you think this myth will have a happy or tragic ending?

3. Determine where the natural stopping points in the text are. Read the first section of the text, stopping at the end of the first chunk to ask students to reread and revise their predictions, if necessary, and to cite the new evidence that makes a change necessary.

4. Ask:
   1. What do you know so far from this reading?
   2. How do you know it?

5. Repeat steps three and four for the next chunks until the story is complete.

6. Use students’ predictions as the basis of a discussion by asking, “What did you expect to happen before you began the reading?”

A discussion of a myth might include the following:

Teacher: Class, look at the picture of [main character]. What does the illustration tell you?

Student A: I think it shows ________________.

Teacher: What does it show you about the setting? About [main character]?

Student B: I think it shows ________________.

Teacher: What do you think the author will write about? What might you learn from it?

Student C: I think he will write about ________________.

Teacher: What makes you think that?

Student D: I think we will learn about ________________.

Teacher: What makes you think that?
Students will then use the Student Notetaking Form for Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA) BLM to make and revise predictions as they read a series of myths from a variety of cultures: Greek, Roman, Norse, Native American, etc. Each student should read several myths from a variety of cultures. A variety of myths from different cultures can be found at this link: [http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm).

Students will divide into small groups and use print, electronic, and online dictionaries to determine the etymologies of Greek and Latin root words found in the selected myths for this unit. Students will use structural analysis to generate a list of root words and show other words that are derived from them. Students will compare their lists and add to their own lists from the lists of others; students will then use the Flash Card, Word Frames Strategy and BLM for learning these.

Sample Flash card/Word Frames Strategy for the word **monologue**:

- **Top Right Corner:** Write the word’s definition.  
  Definition: a literary device in which a character reveals his or her innermost thoughts and feelings through a poem or a speech.

- **Top Left Corner:** Write the word’s opposite and cross it out.  
  Opposite: **dialogue**

- **Lower Left Corner:** Write a silly sentence that uses the definition of the word.  
  Silly Sentence: I had a monologue with myself, but I didn’t like the audience.

- **Lower Right Corner:** Draw a graphic to help visualize the concept.

- **In the Center:** Write the word by isolating any prefixes; isolating the root, noting the meaning of the root, isolating any suffixes, and labeling the part of speech in parentheses.
  
  mono\(=\text{one, single, alone}\) + \(logue=\text{speech (noun)}\)

The list of root words and words derived from root words and their meanings will be assessed.

**Activity 11: Reading and Comparing Myths According to Themes and Characters (GLEs: 04a, 09, 11c, 11d, 24c, 41c, 41d, 42b)**

Materials List: Linear Venn BLM, Internet access; bookmarked Web sites; electronic texts; Character Traits BLM (See Activity 8)

Teachers will act as facilitators for students to compare and contrast the themes in myths from different cultures and generate a list of similarities among them using a Linear Venn graphic organizer ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to represent the information (See Linear Venn BLM). As they read, students will also look for details that support the heroic behavior of characters in the myths. The teacher will distribute copies of the Character Traits BLM as a resource for this part of the activity. Students will then divide into their small groups and individually choose a particular mythological theme (creation...
stories, war, gods of the sea, or others) to explore in greater depth. Students will use their research skills to find myths in the library and on the Internet, using bookmarked Web sites and electronic texts that relate to their themes. A discussion and examples of four trends found in myths across cultures are at this link: [http://www.pbs.org/mythsandheroes/myths_archetypes.html](http://www.pbs.org/mythsandheroes/myths_archetypes.html). Students will outline and draft a paragraph that lists the similarities of theme and gives at least one example from each myth and will share their information with the others in the group.

**Activity 12: Comparing Texts—Reading v. Viewing (CCSS: RL.6.7)**

Materials List: myth, video version of the myth, Reading v. Viewing BLM

Select a myth with an accompanying video version. To aid students in focusing and sustaining attention, develop an **SQPL** (*student questions for purposeful learning*) lesson. **SQPL** ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) promotes purposeful reading and learning by prompting students to ask and answer their own questions about content. Before reading the text with students, generate a statement related to the material that would cause students to wonder, challenge, and question. The statement does not have to be factually true as long as it provokes interest and curiosity. Present the statement to students via projection or duplication on a handout. Students should pair up and generate 2-3 questions they would like to have answered based on the statement. When all pairs have composed their questions, have each team share their questions with the class. As students ask their questions aloud, record these on the board. As duplicate questions arise, star or highlight these. Once all questions have been shared, look over the student-generated list and add any questions if necessary. At this point, have students read and view the two texts so they can seek answers to their questions. Tell them as they view and/or listen to pay attention to information that helps answer questions from the board. Stop periodically and have partners discuss which questions could be answered and ask for volunteers to share.

Video versions of myths, including “Romulus and Remus,” “Psyche and Cupid,” “Perseus and Medusa,” “Daedalus and Icarus,” and others, are available for streaming at [http://my.discoveryeducation.com/](http://my.discoveryeducation.com/). **SQPL** statements could be specific to content or themes in these myths, or they could be generic and related to reading vs. viewing media. For instance, the statement could read, “Myths, because of their fantastical elements and dependence upon imagination, are difficult to depict in film.” Student questions might read like these: “If the characters aren’t depicted as imagined, how will my viewing experience be affected?” or “If the director changes the setting, will the meaning of the narrative change?”

Using the Reading v. Viewing graphic organizer ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), students will first read the myth, taking notes on significant words or phrases from the story on each of the story elements identified—character, point of view, setting, plot, and theme. Special emphasis should be paid to visualizing elements, especially character and setting. After students read the myth, have them stop and discuss answers to their **SQPL** questions.
Play the video version for students, having them watch and take notes in the same manner. Instruct students to underline trends that are common in both “readings” of the text, but encourage them to make note of significant differences. Again, allow discussion time for students to resolve their questions.

Lead students in a discussion of the choices made by the producers of the audio version that colored their interpretation of the story in some way.

Students can use the graphic organizer and discussion ideas as pre-writing for a written comparison of the two. Encourage students to compare and contrast differences in what they “saw” and “heard” as they experienced the text in a different way.

Activity 13: Favorite Heroic Mythological Characters (GLEs: 04b, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 21, 23, 24c)

Materials List: any hero myth, pen/pencil, paper; Internet access, Character Traits BLM (See Activity 8).

Students will read a myth about a hero and discuss the language—the word choice that captured their attention and imagination—that helped them visualize the character. The teacher will facilitate a review of the structures and elements of narrative and lyric poems and how they are alike and different. Students individually will make a list of three heroic mythological characters they liked. Using their Character Traits BLM as a reference, students will prewrite by brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) a list of why each character was heroic, either individually or with another student in the same group.

The teacher will then read several poems about heroes, such as “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant, “On the Death of Mr. Franklin” by Philip Freneau, “The Dying Words of Stonewall Jackson” by Sidney Lanier, “Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight” by Vachel Lindsay, “Paul Revere's Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, or other hero poems of the teacher’s choosing. Additional poems about heroes as a topic may be found at http://www.theotherpages.org/poems/SubjIdx/heroes.html and http://www.9-11heroes.us/911-memorial-poem.php.

Students will further explore characters and their heroic traits by writing a poem (e.g., lyric, narrative, biopoem) about a character from the list. The class will first create a character map for Prometheus, and the teacher will model the steps in creating a poem about Prometheus. Students will suggest character attributes and qualities displayed by Prometheus as the teacher completes the model poem. The teacher will do a “Think Aloud” as a way to review methods used by authors to reveal character other than direct narration. For example, if students believe the subject of the teacher’s model poem has courage, the teacher can ask, “What can we show this character doing in the poem that will let the reader know he is courageous without actually saying he is? What can we show him thinking that will help to reveal his courage?” etc.
Each student will then choose one character from their “Heroes” list (See Activity 2.) as the topic of an individual poem and, using the reasons from the brainstormed list with examples from the myths, brainstorm appropriate descriptive and character attributes, and compose a draft of a poem about that character. After the rough drafts are completed, students will use conferencing, revising, and proofreading strategies in pairs or small groups. The author will then use the feedback to produce a final, illustrated draft of the poem. (Poems may be illustrated with clip art, if the Internet is available. Students can go to http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx?lc=en-us to download free clip art.) These should be shared and posted. The final poem can be shared with the author group or the whole class, through a class poetry anthology, or through Internet publication. Students will discuss successes and difficulties they had in completing the assignment.

Activity 14: Mythology Today (GLEs: 09, 20a, 20d; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.10; W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.9)

Materials List: word grid from Activity 7, list of three heroic mythological characters from Activity 12, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

This lesson uses myth as a vehicle for analysis and discussion. Students work together in small groups to discuss how mythology is alive and well today. Students may talk about characters from cartoons, movies, television, song lyrics, and even brand names of products as proof that mythology continues to affect our modern lives. Students will, using the completed word grid from Activity 7, refer to the list of elements of a myth and then pick a character from modern culture to show how that character is similar to one in a myth they have read.

This activity could be extended into SPAWN writing (view literacy strategy descriptions). SPAWN is an acronym, standing for five categories of writing prompts: Special Powers, Problem Solving, Alternative Viewpoints, What If?, and Next. While SPAWN writing was developed for content-area writing, prompts can be crafted to stimulate students’ predictive, reflective, and critical thinking about literature. SPAWN Writing is generally informal writing, and it should be scored as such. Generally, an adequate response can be developed within 10 minutes.

In this context, the Special Powers category should help students think critically about the similarities and differences between the two characters—one from myth, one modern. The prompt might read something like this: “You have the power to bring about a meeting between these two characters. Would they get along? What might stand in the way of friendship? Why? What personality traits would show up?” To incorporate CCSS RL.6.1, encourage students to support their claims with textual evidence. For instance, if a student claims that Hera’s jealousy surfaces, they should refer to a myth in which they’ve seen this occur.
Students can share their SPAWN writing responses with a small group or with the class to stimulate discussion, heighten anticipation, and check for understanding.

Activity 15: Creating a Narrative Myth (Identifying the Character) (GLEs: 04b, 17c, 19c, 20a; CCSS: RL.6.10)

Materials List: Molly Bang’s Picture This: How Pictures Work, (New York: Sea Star, 2000), Mythological Character Planner BLM, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

Students will review and reflect on the reading and writing they have completed in comparing myths of yesterday and today, especially considering the characters that they selected from the past and the present in their paragraphs.

The teacher will read aloud Molly Bang’s Picture This: How Pictures Work, (New York: Sea Star, 2000) to facilitate a discussion on the importance of the role of illustrators. (Alternative titles would be: Patricia Aldana’s Under the Spell of the Moon: Art for Children from the World's Great Illustrators, Uri Shulevitz’s Writing with Pictures: How to Write and Illustrate Children's Books, or Bertne Amoss’s Writing and Illustrating Children's Books For Publication: Two Perspectives; 10th Anniversary.) By helping readers to visualize what the author is writing about, by helping to create the mood of a story or give concrete attributes to a character, the role of illustrator is invaluable. Students will have the opportunity to act as illustrators for their own stories, which will be created in the following activities.

To prepare students for writing original myths, review conventions of the genre by implementing professor know-it-all (view literacy strategy descriptions). Professor know-it-all is a review strategy that enables students to be experts on a particular topic—in this instance, mythological characters and themes. To begin, assign small groups (4-5 students) to one of the myths read or to an element of myths—characters, conflicts, purpose, or theme. In their small group, students should review material from their readings and class discussions. Once small groups have reviewed the content, randomly call on students to come to the front of the room to provide “expert” answers to their peers’ questions about the content. Before calling upon experts, ask groups to generate 3-5 questions about their assigned material in order to anticipate content that might be asked of them and to prepare for their turn as experts.

Remind students who are asking the questions to listen carefully to the answers given by the “professors” and to challenge or correct these experts if their answers were incorrect or incomplete. When using professor know-it-all, it might be helpful to model the various types of questions expected from students about the content. Rotate the expert groups after five minutes or so. Continue the process of students questioning students until all groups have had an opportunity to be experts.

Once all expert groups have been questioned, students will reconvene in their cooperative groups for prewriting. In their small groups, students will begin to generate a
mythological character they think might be interesting as a central character for their own original myth. Students will work on one another’s characters, discussing options of how the character might appear, while one student selected by the group records notes of the discussion. After brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) what the character might be like, the students will summarize their characters by listing their characters’ physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, relevant personal background, and personality quirks on the Mythological Character Planner BLM. These details will become part of the elaboration of the narrative myth they will write and should be chosen to engage their readers.

Activity 16: Creating a Narrative Myth (Identifying the Conflict) (GLEs: 04d, 17c, 20b, 23)

Materials List: Conflict BLM, Myth Planner BLM, Literary Devices BLM, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

Students will continue their prewriting and elaboration activities by reviewing with the teacher the many different conflicts found in the myths that were read and by making a class list of these conflicts. Students will use this list and the Conflict BLM to identify a central conflict for their own myths, as well as complete the Myth Planner BLM, which will include their decisions about the related plot sequence, setbacks, and complications (e.g., time pressures, such as forces of nature or deadline dates, injuries, losses, weather, mistakes, misunderstandings, mishaps) their character will encounter before resolving his or her central conflict. They will work within their groups to describe how their character might react to the conflict and its setbacks/complications and what the outcome might be. After receiving suggestions from the group, students will generate a list of events that will happen to their character and record these events on the Myth Planner BLM. Students should also review the variety of literary devices with which they might describe their main character within the draft of their myths, such as imagery through simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, etc., by using the Literary Devices BLM.
Activity 17: Writing a Narrative Myth (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19e, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21)

Materials List: Narrative Beginnings BLM, Dialogue that Reveals Character and Advances Plot BLM, Time and Place Transitions Handout BLM, Peer Feedback Form for Myths BLM.

As a precursor to the drafting stage of the writing process, the teacher will facilitate a review of the structure and defining elements of myths and of good narrative stories. Most myths begin with exposition, follow with rising action and a conflict, continue with the climax, conclude with falling action and resolution, and have an underlying theme or make a comment about human nature. Students will use a Narrative Beginnings BLM to review good narrative beginnings, use a Time and Place Transitions BLM to review the use of time and place transitions for narratives, and use a Dialogue that Reveals Character and Advances Plot BLM to review dialogue that both advances a plot and reveals specific character traits. Students will use the feedback from the earlier peer review (Activity 12) and the BLMs from Activities 14 and 15 when identifying the conflict and plot complications to begin drafting their myths, being sure to double-space for future revisions. At this point, it would be advisable for the teacher to provide feedback to students regarding the structure of their myths. Students will self- and peer-evaluate and revise their myths for their use of mythical elements, appropriate use of transitional words and word choices, for appropriate tone, and for variety in sentence structure. (See Peer Feedback Form for Myths BLM.) Students will share their revised drafts with their editing group from which they will receive additional feedback. They will then take the feedback and revise and proofread their drafts again to produce the final copy, using available technology to publish their work. This is particularly powerful if students can post their myths on the school or other website for others to read, thus giving them a real audience.

Activity 18: Sharing the Myth with the Class: Reader’s Theater (GLEs: 24c, 31, 35, 39b, 39f)

Materials List: pen/pencil, paper; copies of chosen myth; stools or chairs; class-created rubric.

Students will discuss how a Reader’s Theater performance is similar to and different from other types of drama and dramatic performances. Following the teacher’s instructions, each group will then choose one myth from those authored by their cooperative group to prepare in Reader’s Theater style, including preparing a script for the group. Students will use simple notations to indicate speakers for each part. Tips for student scripting, staging, and reading of a text for a Reader’s Theater performance can be found online at http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips.html.

As part of the Reader’s Theater format, students will use their voices, facial expressions and hand gestures to interpret the characters in their myths. While there are many styles of Reader’s Theater, nearly all share these features:
Narration serves as the framework of dramatic presentation.

There should be no full stage sets. If used at all, sets are simple and suggestive.

There should be no full costumes. If used at all, costumes are partial and suggestive.

There should be no full memorization.

Scripts are used openly in performance. Their scripts are visible to the audience, whether the performers actually read from them or not. Decorations are either nonexistent or minimal. Readers usually sit on stools or chairs; costumes are not used, either. Each reader portrays one or more characters, using his or her voice, oral expression through practice, and reading fluency to convey meaning to the audience. The key to this is practice. Performers in Reader’s Theater try to develop a connection with the audience in order to assist the audience to concentrate its attention on the literary text. Audience members will practice active listening. Students will prepare their scripts and practice their parts, working on the oral emphasis, including volume, diction, enunciation, and inflection, that will add meaning to their readings; these will be presented to the rest of the class (and additional classes, if desired).

The class will create a rubric under the teacher’s leadership so the group can assess each presentation. The rubric will include evaluating the performance for sensory details, scripting, voice expression and fluency, and effectiveness of facial expression and physical gestures used.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- The teacher will provide students with a checklist of mythology-related journal topics (e.g., nature, creation, special creatures, supernatural powers, human nature). Students will collect all journal entries from this unit in a portfolio and turn them in to be assessed for completion and response to the topic.

- Students will research a mythological character and use the information to produce a text that summarizes the character’s appearance, background and origins, heritage, special powers, and central problem. Assessment of the final product may include:
interesting and accessible format.
- correct documentation of resources.
- content that covers all required areas.

- Students will give oral presentations in small groups or whole class, summarizing the details learned about the character.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about myths at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, PowerPoint®, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about myths.
- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, mythological elements and genre characteristics, story elements, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related research components.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 11:** Students will compose a paragraph that lists the similarities of theme from at least three myths with at least one text example as support. The process should include:
  - a clear statement of similar themes.
  - examples that support the stated similarity.

- **Activity 13:** Students will choose a heroic character from the myths they have read to describe in a poem. The process should include:
  - a pre-write that includes a character map of descriptive and sensory attributes, relationships with other characters, and behaviors that display important character traits.
  - a rough draft of at least ten or more well-developed lines that show the character’s most important heroic traits and at least two examples of poetic sound devices appropriate to the form.
  - revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, and fluency of language, as well as usage and mechanics that may include peer editing or conferencing with the teacher.
  - a final draft that displays correct use of the conventions of usage and mechanics for poetry (e.g., use of line breaks and stanzas, capitalizing first word of each line, etc.).

- **Activity 14:** Students will complete a SPAWN writing assignment. The finished product should:
  - state the elements of the modern hero’s life that are similar.
  - provide support for the similarity through examples of similar behaviors, motivations, and consequences for the characters from both periods.
  - contain revised and edited ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency voice, and conventions of language that may include peer
• Activities 15 through 17: Students will write an original myth. The process should include:
  ➢ a pre-write that includes a character summary of physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, relevant personal background, and personality quirks, including:
    o a rough draft that has a clear beginning, middle, and end, quickly reveals the setting, conflict, and character traits through dialogue and narration, resolves the central conflict in a satisfying way and explains some aspect of the physical/natural world, or makes a comment on human nature.
    o revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions that include peer editing or conferencing with the teacher.
  ➢ a final draft and publication.

• Activity 18: Groups of students will rewrite an original myth as a Reader’s Theater script, make staging decisions, conduct practice reading/performing sessions, and present the Reader’s Theater production to others. The process should include:
  ➢ choosing one group member’s myth for the Reader’s Theater performance
    o rewriting the script so as to tell the myth entirely through the reading of the narrated parts and through the dialogue
    o having repeated practice sessions so each group member achieves fluency and expression in regard to voice, emphasis, facial expression, and gestures appropriate to the myth
  ➢ giving a final performance before an audience
Myths: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Abrahams, Roger. *African Folktales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)*
3. Altman, Linda Jacobs. *African Mythology*
4. Amery, Heather. *Greek Myths for Young Children*
5. Asbjornsen, Christen. *Norwegian Folktales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)*
6. Bellingham, David. *Kingfisher Book of Mythology*
8. Bruchac, Joseph. *Native American Animal Stories (Myths and Legends)*
11. Ghose, Sudhin N. *Folk Tales and Fairy Stories from India*
13. Helbig, Althea K., and Agnes Regan Perkins. *Myths and Hero Tales: A Cross-Cultural Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults*
15. Horowitz, Anthony. *Myths and Legends, Myths and Mythology [Children’s Library]*
17. Kingsley, Charles. *Heroes of Greek Mythology [Dover Storybooks for Children]*
19. Leeming, David Adams. *Children’s Dictionary of Mythology*
20. Lynch, Patricia Ann. *African Mythology A to Z*
21. Masters, Andrew. *Roman Myths and Legends*
22. Milbourne, Anna, Heather Amery, and Gillian Doherty. *Usborne Book of Myths and Legends [Stories for Young Children]*
23. Nextext. *Classical and World Mythology*
24. Osborne, Mary Pope. *Favorite Greek Myths*
25. Price, Margaret Evans. *A Children’s Treasury of Mythology*
26. Ramanujan, A. K. *Folktales from India (Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore)*
27. Reid, Martine. *Children of the Raven, Myths and Legends of the Haida Indians*
28. Roberts, Moss *Chinese Fairy Tales and Fantasies (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore Library)*
28. Russell, William F.  
   Classic Myths to Read Aloud
\n29. Shepherd, Sandy.  
   Myths and Legends from around the World
\n30. Sutcliff, Rosemary.  
   Black Ships before Troy
   Eagle of the Ninth
   Lantern Bearers
   Outcasts
\n31. Tyler, Royal.  
   Japanese Tales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)
\n32. Verniero, Joan, and Robert Fitzsimmons.  
   An Illustrated Treasury of Read-Aloud Myths and Legends
\n33. White, Anne Terry.  
   Golden Treasury of Myths and Legends adapted from the World’s Great Classics
Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 4: Myths

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, writing, and responding to myths and applying a variety of strategies to demonstrate comprehension. Myths provide students with the opportunity to experience the lives of ancient peoples and to compare their thoughts with those of people today. The defining characteristics and literary elements of myths (creation, nature, hero) will be analyzed. Writing and group processes provide opportunity for proofreading, revision, publication, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing. Strategies such as reading response learning log, vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, word grids, Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA); graphic organizers, SQPL (student questions for purposeful learning), anticipation guides, SPAWN writing, professor-know-it-all, and brainstorming will be introduced and/or applied to the mythological content.

Student Understandings

Students will recognize that myths are traditional fictional stories, often dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes, that explain natural phenomena, describe the psychology, customs, or ideals of a society, address the theme of good conquering evil, or express a culture's view of the universe. In a myth, often the forces of nature are personified. Students will recognize in myths their universal qualities and themes relevant to life today. Students will recognize the cultural importance of myths.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the elements and characteristics of myths?
2. Can students identify the stated or implied theme of a myth and explain how details support the theme?
3. Can students define a hero and cite examples of heroic behavior?
4. Can students identify the cultural context of myths, including similarities and differences?
5. Can students evaluate and make generalizations about characters or events?
6. Can students use selection details and prior knowledge to draw conclusions?
7. Can students relate myths to personal experiences?
8. Can students write an original myth that explains some element of creation, nature, or the concept of heroes?
9. Can students convert a myth to a Reader’s Theater script and format and then perform it?
## Unit 4 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE #</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01b.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01c.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including theme development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04b.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including character development (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04d.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including plot sequence (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) (ELA-1-M2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11f.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11g.</td>
<td>Demonstrating understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Analyze an author’s stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Identify persuasive techniques (e.g., unsupported inferences, faulty reasoning, generalizations) that reflect an author’s viewpoint (perspective) in texts (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17d.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader (ELA-2-M2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (individual personality) (ELA-2-M2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer, teacher) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24c.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of novels, stories, poems, and plays (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English punctuation, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunct ions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39b.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including images/sensory details (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39f.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including sequence of ideas and organization (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41c.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41d.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic texts (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42b.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases) (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ELA CCSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.9</td>
<td>Compare and contrasts texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RL.6.10</strong> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading Standards for Informational Text**

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

**Writing Standards**

| **W.6.1a, b** | 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. |

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

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

**Language Standards**

| **L.6.4c, d** | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading an content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.  
 c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or to 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). |

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

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

*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.*

*It is strongly recommended that a teacher preview websites before students access them.*

*Ongoing activities should be a part of daily instruction.*

**Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 11g, 14)**

Materials List: texts in current genre, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of *daily* sustained, silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence to work through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should continue to keep a reading response *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55)) of pages read in which they frequently respond through the use of brief reflective prompts. Sample reflective response prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at [http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55). It is crucial that this be seen by students as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Pages Read</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/1/06</td>
<td>pp. 1-4</td>
<td>I think this story is going to be about how one of the gods gets in trouble. They always do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2/06</td>
<td>pp. 5-12</td>
<td>If the gods are immortal, then do they grow old?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/3/06</td>
<td>pp. 13-20</td>
<td>Zeus reminds me of a spoiled child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 03)

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, plus dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, index cards

Students will use standard vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions) to define words specific to the mythological content and key to its comprehension. Students will continue to use the standard vocabulary cards to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the unit on mythology:

**Example: Vocabulary Card**

**Front of card**

- Vocabulary word
- Sentence from text that illustrates the word

**Back of card**

- Definition
- Example or drawing

Students will continue to focus on the etymologies of common roots and affixes from world mythology. Students will use structural analysis to generate a list of such roots and show other words that are derived from them. Another modified vocabulary card example can be used to help students understand important vocabulary words or concepts, including space for the etymology of the word, antonyms and synonyms, the definition, a symbolic representation of the word, and space for using it in a sentence; it can be found at [http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Tools/vocabsquares.pdf](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Tools/vocabsquares.pdf). A list of common words from Greek mythology can be found at [http://www.quia.com/jg/50217.html](http://www.quia.com/jg/50217.html).
Activity 3: Words in Context
(CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and an analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Students should add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student pieces. As students look up the meaning of words, encourage them also to determine the pronunciation and part of speech. Online dictionaries with pronunciation tools can be found at these links: www.m-w.com and www.dictionary.com.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards. Discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. Encourage students to use the dictionary for verification after trying to determine word meaning from context. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word enhanced in the following example, a discussion might reveal that enhanced in this context differs from the meaning of physically enhanced, which would be closer to improved. Follow-up with a discussion on what the writer’s choice of enhanced as a synonym, such as improved or advanced lends to the tone of the piece.
Example: Words in Context  
Text: Trickster’s Girl

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 11</td>
<td>enhanced</td>
<td>“Raven stepped in after her and closed the door. Even enhanced night vision needed a bit of light to work with.” p.58</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>intensified</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from Trickster’s Girl © Hilari Bell  

Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 23, 32)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM, Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner (Example) BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

The teacher will continue to point out examples of good writing in texts followed by questioning (Examples: Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? Can you imitate this?). This is followed first by the teacher after which the students orally model the skill, try it out in practice pieces and finally apply the skill in independent writing kept in a bound composition notebook and labeled with a table of contents, so students have a writing book of target skills practices they can take with them. Important to focus on in this unit will be historical details of setting, chronological order, narrative beginnings and endings, dialogue to advance or complicate the plot, conflicts which center on greed, jealousy, or other flaws, the revelation of character of both gods, mortals and perhaps animals, and an explanation of some scientific phenomena or a lesson for the reader.

In planning such a whole-process piece, the teacher will use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM and will continue to choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for the whole-process piece. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft a whole-process piece, double-spacing to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, reordering). The teacher will illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies.
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing)  
(CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner Blank BLM, Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner (Example) BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames as well as shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Students should record on this page each writing assignment in the unit (Activities 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist with Examples BLM, sentences for proofreading, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

The teacher should continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, the mini-lesson could have a grammar, usage, conventions, or sentence formation focus. The teacher will distribute copies of the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, modeling each strategy for students and providing practice in each until students can apply each strategy independently.

Students should also continue daily editing or proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related), writing sentences as correctly as they can while the teacher gives positive feedback, walking around the room and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher encourages him/her to search further and then returns to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols; and recording the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist; and allowing the teacher to see which errors
are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990.)

Mini-lessons on the use of commas and coordinating conjunctions, capitalization of names, possessives, the use of regular and irregular verb tenses, and revisions to add prepositional phrases, transitions, and interjections for emphasis, should also be a part of this unit whenever student errors indicate such a need.

The teacher will hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly. These sessions will daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

**Activity 7: The Power of Myth: The Literature of the Spirit (GLEs: 04b, 11d; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: various myths; word grid example.

Students will continue the study of the fiction genre by the teacher’s reading aloud a selected myth, such as any from Ingrid and Edgar Parin D’Aulaire’s *Book of Greek Myths* (Yearling Books, ©1992), *The Gods and Goddesses of Olympus* by Aliki (HarperTrophy, ©1997), *Favorite Greek Myths* retold by Mary Pope Osborne (Scholastic, ©1991), *The Children’s Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and The Tale of Troy* by Padraic Colum (Simon Pulse, ©1982), or those available at [http://www.mythology.com/](http://www.mythology.com/). The teacher will facilitate a discussion allowing students to share their reactions to the myth, leading to a conversation on the elements and power of myths throughout history and today. The class will create a list of these and keep it posted/updated throughout the unit.

Students will then read silently another myth selected by the teacher, detailing its literary elements and story ideas, including character development. To reflect text complexity of the CCSS, it is recommended that articles fall in the Lexile® range of 955-1155. A tool for determining Lexile® text measure can be found at this link: [https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/](https://www.lexile.com/analyzer/). Also, texts can be searched for Lexile text measures at this link: [http://src.scholastic.com/ecatalog/search_titles_1.asp?UID=D6DE0A9E6DB34D78AEB80545FEBCFE90&subt=0](http://src.scholastic.com/ecatalog/search_titles_1.asp?UID=D6DE0A9E6DB34D78AEB80545FEBCFE90&subt=0). All students can read the same story, or the teacher can hand out copies of different myths to the class members. As a group, the students will brainstorm the defining characteristics and structure of myths. Online myths may be found at the following sites:

- [http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm)
- [http://www.wingedssandals.com/](http://www.wingedssandals.com/)

Using the defining characteristics and structure of myths, students and teacher can then co-construct a modified word grid (view literacy strategy descriptions) that helps students
to learn related terms by analyzing their similarities and differences. Steps for doing this include:

1. Create a blank *word grid* and display it.
2. Ask students to list names of the two myths which have now been read in class. Write the names of these myths along the left side of the grid from top to bottom.
3. Allow additional rows across on the grid so students can add to the grid as they read additional stories throughout the unit.
4. Students and teacher should now agree upon and then add terms which reflect the defining characteristics and structure of myths. These should be added in the spaces at the top of the grid, moving left to right. [See example below.]
5. Have student volunteers help fill in the grid for the two stories read so far, using a plus sign (+) for each characteristic or structural feature seen in the two myths, and using a minus sign (-) for each characteristic or structural feature *not* found.
6. The final column is for textual evidence. To meet CCSS RL.6.1, have students cite textual evidence for one of the features identified in each myth.
7. Have students continue to fill out the grid as they read additional myths.
8. As a unit review, use the *word grid* to help students see patterns of defining characteristics by asking questions such as: “What are two (or more) common characteristics of Myth A and Myth C?” or “Give me two ways the Norse myth(s) and the Roman myth(s) are different.”

After creating the grid and analyzing the myths they are studying as they go, students will more easily see and understand the similarities and differences between myths.

**Example of Word Grid [Semantic Feature Analysis] for Myths**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myth A</th>
<th>Myth B</th>
<th>Myth C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contains fantastic elements:</td>
<td>man versus self Conflict</td>
<td>god versus god conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 8: Defining a Hero: Prometheus (GLEs: CCSS RL.6.1, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: poster paper; markers; various magazine and newspaper articles depicting
people in acts of heroism; Character Traits BLM; Action, Motivation, and Consequences BLM; paper and pen/pencil

Heroes and heroines can be found in every strata of society. Students will think about a person from the present or past that they would call a hero and share why. They will discuss whether the terms *celebrity* and *hero* mean the same thing and will *brainstorm* (view literacy strategy descriptions) their definition of a contemporary hero or heroine, including the character traits that are present in people who act in a truly heroic manner. Students may use their Character Traits BLM to help with this activity. Each student group will be given an analogy about heroes to brainstorm (e.g., “A hero is like a champion, a supporter, Superman, an ally, a partner.”) Working in their groups, students will *brainstorm* some characteristics of the analogy being used. Students will say how each characteristic is similar to that of a hero. Students will share and discuss these ideas and opinions, supporting each with relevant factual details. Students will cite specific examples of events or people they have read about or seen that exhibited these traits and will describe the events and how the individuals responded.

Students will collect a variety of magazine and newspaper articles depicting real people in acts of heroism, including several examples from the events of September 11, 2001, from first responders during Hurricane Katrina, or from any more recent natural disaster. Student groups will read the articles and discuss how the people behaved and what their motives were. Groups will suggest ideas for a composite picture of a hero or heroine. They may want to appoint an artist who will interpret the group ideas, or they may work collectively. They will add text with arrows pointing to specific parts of their composite hero, e.g., a large heart. Each group will share its hero poster with the class. Groups will then write a definition of a contemporary hero or heroine, referring to their poster and any notes they have made. They will then share their definitions with the class, looking for similarities and differences as groups report; students will take notes in their journals. Definitions should all be posted; the class will come to a consensus on a joint definition of a contemporary hero or heroine. Students will refer to this definition and refine it throughout the unit.

Students will discuss whether they remember any stories of gods and goddesses of ancient Greece. Students will read a myth about Prometheus (See titles and resources from Activity 5 or use Internet and/or library resources.) depicting the creation of humans, the acquisition of fire, and the suffering of Prometheus. Before reading the myth, have students respond to an *anticipation guide* (view literacy strategy descriptions) about the themes of the myth. An *anticipation guide*, while suited to information that is verifiable, can also be used with literature to activate prior knowledge of topics and to help students set purposes for reading and learning. For this reason, *anticipation guides* are especially helpful to struggling and reluctant readers and learners.

Sample *anticipation guide* statements for the Prometheus myth might include, but are not limited to these:

1. People should be rewarded for obedience.  true ___ false: _____
2. People should be punished for industry and innovation.  true ___ false: _____
3. It is important to obey authority at all times.  true ___ false: _____
4. Knowledge is power. true _____ false: _____
5. A person can have too much power. true _____ false: _____

Anticipation guide statements can be written or projected on the board or distributed in handout form. After students respond to the statements, have them meet in pairs to compare and discuss their responses. Open the discussion to the entire class and then transition by telling students they will read a story tied in theme to these statements. Once the class has finished the story of Prometheus, revisit their responses in the context of the story and make any revisions. Invite students to share their post-reading responses to ensure logic and to clarify any misconceptions.

As students read, they will find at least three things that Prometheus did for humans, using sticky notes to mark what he did and jotting down both the action and a reason why Prometheus did what he did. These should be recorded on the Action, Motivation, and Consequences BLM. After discussing these in their groups, students will use the charts and their Character Traits BLM to create a list of traits for Prometheus, e.g., selfless, risked life for others, persevered, suffered for humankind, etc. Students will share their lists and then do a quick write about whether Prometheus was a hero or not, defending their reasoning.

Students will read additional myths, and they will look for other heroes. A class list will be kept of heroes throughout the unit, as students will need to reflect upon their heroic traits and behaviors in subsequent activities.

2013-2014
Activity 9: Perspectives of Prometheus (CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.9, RL.6.10)

Materials List: Prometheus Myth, copies of a companion poem about Prometheus

This activity is a supplement to Activity 8 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS RL.6.9 requires students to compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes or topics. Once students have read the myth of Prometheus, finished their character traits list, and have done their quick-write, introduce a poem version of the story. Consider “Prometheus Unbound” by Shelley or “Prometheus” by Goethe. Texts of both poems are widely available on the Internet, but because of the sophisticated language, students may need some assistance with comprehension. Consider assigning stanzas of the poem to small groups.

Using a 2-column chart, have students examine the myths and poems, looking for how the authors approached the same theme using different genres. Students should focus on use of language, character descriptions, and changes in the narrative. If students expand the organizer into a brief composition, have them cite textual evidence from both works to support their analysis.

Activity 10: Greek and Latin Root Words in Myths from Different Cultures (GLEs:
Materials List: various myths; index cards; pen/pencil, paper; Student Notetaking Form for Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA) BLM; print, electronic, and online dictionaries; Flash Card/Word Frames Strategy BLM, Flash Card/Word Frames Strategy sample.

Students will explore myths from around the world. The teacher will compile contributions from many cultures as a resource for learning about and writing in this genre (See Grade 6 Recommendations at beginning of Unit following GLEs). The teacher will first have the class read a myth together, using the DL-TA (Directed Learning-Thinking Activity) strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to help students make, check, and refine or refute predictions during and after the reading. This activity helps students to clarify their purpose for reading and gives them a framework for self-monitoring in this form of shared reading. It literally tracks their thinking processes throughout the reading. Steps are as follows:

1. Introduce background knowledge by eliciting from students what they already know about the topic. Discuss the title, cover or illustrations, and any other important information, recording students’ ideas.

2. Following a class discussion, have students write their predictions and explain the evidence they used to answer such questions as:
   - What do you expect this myth to be about?
   - What do you think the title will have to do with the story?
   - Do you think this myth will have a happy or tragic ending?

3. Determine where the natural stopping points in the text are. Read the first section of the text, stopping at the end of the first chunk to ask students to reread and revise their predictions, if necessary, and to cite the new evidence that makes a change necessary.

4. Ask:
   1. What do you know so far from this reading?
   2. How do you know it?

5. Repeat steps three and four for the next chunks until the story is complete.

6. Use students’ predictions as the basis of a discussion by asking, “What did you expect to happen before you began the reading?” A discussion of a myth might include the following:

Teacher: Class, look at the picture of [main character]. What does the illustration tell you?

Student A: I think it shows ____________________.

Teacher: What does it show you about the setting? About [main character]?

Student B: I think it shows ____________________.

Teacher: What do you think the author will write about? What might you learn from it?

Student C: I think he will write about ____________________.

Teacher: What makes you think that?

Student D: I think we will learn about ____________________.

Teacher: What makes you think that?
Students will then use the Student Notetaking Form for Directed Learning-Thinking Activity (DL-TA) BLM to make and revise predictions as they read a series of myths from a variety of cultures: Greek, Roman, Norse, Native American, etc. Each student should read several myths from a variety of cultures. A variety of myths from different cultures can be found at this link: http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/myths.htm.

Students will divide into small groups and use print, electronic, and online dictionaries to determine the etymologies of Greek and Latin root words found in the selected myths for this unit. Students will use structural analysis to generate a list of root words and show other words that are derived from them. Students will compare their lists and add to their own lists from the lists of others; students will then use the Flash Card, Word Frames Strategy and BLM for learning these.

Sample Flash card/Word Frames Strategy for the word monologue:
- Top Right Corner: Write the word’s definition. 
  Definition: a literary device in which a character reveals his or her innermost thoughts and feelings through a poem or a speech.
- Top Left Corner: Write the word’s opposite and cross it out.
  Opposite: dialogue
- Lower Left Corner: Write a silly sentence that uses the definition of the word.
  Silly Sentence: I had a monologue with myself, but I didn’t like the audience.
- Lower Right Corner: Draw a graphic to help visualize the concept.

  ![Graphic]

- In the Center: Write the word by isolating any prefixes; isolating the root, noting the meaning of the root, isolating any suffixes, and labeling the part of speech in parentheses.
  monono=one, single, alone + logologue=speech (noun)

The list of root words and words derived from root words and their meanings will be assessed.

Activity 11: Reading and Comparing Myths According to Themes and Characters (GLEs: 04a, 09, 11c, 11d, 24c, 41c, 41d, 42b)

Materials List: Linear Venn BLM, Internet access; bookmarked Web sites; electronic texts; Character Traits BLM (See Activity 8)

Teachers will act as facilitators for students to compare and contrast the themes in myths from different cultures and generate a list of similarities among them using a Linear Venn graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) to represent the information (See Linear Venn BLM). As they read, students will also look for details that support the heroic behavior of characters in the myths. The teacher will distribute copies of the Character Traits BLM as a resource for this part of the activity. Students will then divide into their small groups and individually choose a particular mythological theme (creation
stories, war, gods of the sea, or others) to explore in greater depth. Students will use their research skills to find myths in the library and on the Internet, using bookmarked Web sites and electronic texts that relate to their themes. A discussion and examples of four trends found in myths across cultures are at this link: http://www.pbs.org/mythsandheroes/myths_archetypes.html. Students will outline and draft a paragraph that lists the similarities of theme and gives at least one example from each myth and will share their information with the others in the group.

Activity 12: Comparing Texts—Reading v. Viewing (CCSS: RL.6.7)

Materials List: myth, video version of the myth, Reading v. Viewing BLM

Select a myth with an accompanying video version. To aid students in focusing and sustaining attention, develop an SQPL (student questions for purposeful learning) lesson. SQPL (view literacy strategy descriptions) promotes purposeful reading and learning by prompting students to ask and answer their own questions about content. Before reading the text with students, generate a statement related to the material that would cause students to wonder, challenge, and question. The statement does not have to be factually true as long as it provokes interest and curiosity. Present the statement to students via projection or duplication on a handout. Students should pair up and generate 2-3 questions they would like to have answered based on the statement. When all pairs have composed their questions, have each team share their questions with the class. As students ask their questions aloud, record these on the board. As duplicate questions arise, star or highlight these. Once all questions have been shared, look over the student-generated list and add any questions if necessary. At this point, have students read and view the two texts so they can seek answers to their questions. Tell them as they view and/or listen to pay attention to information that helps answer questions from the board. Stop periodically and have partners discuss which questions could be answered and ask for volunteers to share.

Video versions of myths, including “Romulus and Remus,” “Psyche and Cupid,” “Perseus and Medusa,” “Daedalus and Icarus,” and others, are available for streaming at http://my.discoveryeducation.com/. SQPL statements could be specific to content or themes in these myths, or they could be generic and related to reading vs. viewing media. For instance, the statement could read, “Myths, because of their fantastical elements and dependence upon imagination, are difficult to depict in film.” Student questions might read like these: “If the characters aren’t depicted as imagined, how will my viewing experience be affected?” or “If the director changes the setting, will the meaning of the narrative change?”

Using the Reading v. Viewing graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions), students will first read the myth, taking notes on significant words or phrases from the story on each of the story elements identified—character, point of view, setting, plot, and theme. Special emphasis should be paid to visualizing elements, especially character and setting. After students read the myth, have them stop and discuss answers to their SQPL questions.
Play the video version for students, having them watch and take notes in the same manner. Instruct students to underline trends that are common in both “readings” of the text, but encourage them to make note of significant differences. Again, allow discussion time for students to resolve their questions.

Lead students in a discussion of the choices made by the producers of the audio version that colored their interpretation of the story in some way.

Students can use the graphic organizer and discussion ideas as pre-writing for a written comparison of the two. Encourage students to compare and contrast differences in what they “saw” and “heard” as they experienced the text in a different way.

Activity 13: Favorite Heroic Mythological Characters (GLEs: 04b, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 21, 23, 24c)

Materials List: any hero myth, pen/pencil, paper; Internet access, Character Traits BLM (See Activity 8).

Students will read a myth about a hero and discuss the language—the word choice that captured their attention and imagination—that helped them visualize the character. The teacher will facilitate a review of the structures and elements of narrative and lyric poems and how they are alike and different. Students individually will make a list of three heroic mythological characters they liked. Using their Character Traits BLM as a reference, students will prewrite by brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) a list of why each character was heroic, either individually or with another student in the same group.

The teacher will then read several poems about heroes, such as “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant, “On the Death of Mr. Franklin” by Philip Freneau, “The Dying Words of Stonewall Jackson” by Sidney Lanier, “Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight” by Vachel Lindsay, “Paul Revere's Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, or other hero poems of the teacher’s choosing. Additional poems about heroes as a topic may be found at http://www.theotherpages.org/poems/SubjIdx/heroes.html and http://www.9-11heroes.us/911-memorial-poem.php.

Students will further explore characters and their heroic traits by writing a poem (e.g., lyric, narrative, biopoem) about a character from the list. The class will first create a character map for Prometheus, and the teacher will model the steps in creating a poem about Prometheus. Students will suggest character attributes and qualities displayed by Prometheus as the teacher completes the model poem. The teacher will do a “Think Aloud” as a way to review methods used by authors to reveal character other than direct narration. For example, if students believe the subject of the teacher’s model poem has courage, the teacher can ask, “What can we show this character doing in the poem that will let the reader know he is courageous without actually saying he is? What can we show him thinking that will help to reveal his courage?” etc.
Each student will then choose one character from their “Heroes” list (See Activity 2.) as the topic of an individual poem and, using the reasons from the brainstormed list with examples from the myths, brainstorm appropriate descriptive and character attributes, and compose a draft of a poem about that character. After the rough drafts are completed, students will use conferencing, revising, and proofreading strategies in pairs or small groups. The author will then use the feedback to produce a final, illustrated draft of the poem. (Poems may be illustrated with clip art, if the Internet is available. Students can go to [http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx?lc=en-us](http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx?lc=en-us) to download free clip art.) These should be shared and posted. The final poem can be shared with the author group or the whole class, through a class poetry anthology, or through Internet publication. Students will discuss successes and difficulties they had in completing the assignment.

**Activity 14: Mythology Today (GLEs: 09, 20a, 20d; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.10; W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.9)**

Materials List: word grid from Activity 7, list of three heroic mythological characters from Activity 12, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

This lesson uses myth as a vehicle for analysis and discussion. Students work together in small groups to discuss how mythology is alive and well today. Students may talk about characters from cartoons, movies, television, song lyrics, and even brand names of products as proof that mythology continues to affect our modern lives. Students will, using the completed word grid from Activity 7, refer to the list of elements of a myth and then pick a character from modern culture to show how that character is similar to one in a myth they have read.

This activity could be extended into SPAWN writing ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). SPAWN is an acronym, standing for five categories of writing prompts: Special Powers, Problem Solving, Alternative Viewpoints, What If?, and Next. While SPAWN writing was developed for content-area writing, prompts can be crafted to stimulate students’ predictive, reflective, and critical thinking about literature. SPAWN Writing is generally informal writing, and it should be scored as such. Generally, an adequate response can be developed within 10 minutes.

In this context, the Special Powers category should help students think critically about the similarities and differences between the two characters—one from myth, one modern. The prompt might read something like this: “You have the power to bring about a meeting between these two characters. Would they get along? What might stand in the way of friendship? Why? What personality traits would show up?” To incorporate CCSS RL.6.1, encourage students to support their claims with textual evidence. For instance, if a student claims that Hera’s jealousy surfaces, they should refer to a myth in which they’ve seen this occur.
Students can share their SPAWN writing responses with a small group or with the class to stimulate discussion, heighten anticipation, and check for understanding.

Activity 15: Creating a Narrative Myth (Identifying the Character) (GLEs: 04b, 17c, 19c, 20a; CCSS: RL.6.10)

Materials List: Molly Bang’s *Picture This: How Pictures Work*, (New York: Sea Star, 2000), Mythological Character Planner BLM, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

Students will review and reflect on the reading and writing they have completed in comparing myths of yesterday and today, especially considering the characters that they selected from the past and the present in their paragraphs.

The teacher will read aloud Molly Bang’s *Picture This: How Pictures Work*, (New York: Sea Star, 2000) to facilitate a discussion on the importance of the role of illustrators. (Alternative titles would be: Patricia Aldana’s *Under the Spell of the Moon: Art for Children from the World's Great Illustrators*, Uri Shulevitz’s *Writing with Pictures: How to Write and Illustrate Children's Books*, or Bertne Amoss’s *Writing and Illustrating Children's Books For Publication: Two Perspectives; 10th Anniversary.*) By helping readers to visualize what the author is writing about, by helping to create the mood of a story or give concrete attributes to a character, the role of illustrator is invaluable. Students will have the opportunity to act as illustrators for their own stories, which will be created in the following activities.

To prepare students for writing original myths, review conventions of the genre by implementing professor know-it-all (view literacy strategy descriptions). Professor know-it-all is a review strategy that enables students to be experts on a particular topic—in this instance, mythological characters and themes. To begin, assign small groups (4-5 students) to one of the myths read or to an element of myths—characters, conflicts, purpose, or theme. In their small group, students should review material from their readings and class discussions. Once small groups have reviewed the content, randomly call on students to come to the front of the room to provide “expert” answers to their peers’ questions about the content. Before calling upon experts, ask groups to generate 3-5 questions about their assigned material in order to anticipate content that might be asked of them and to prepare for their turn as experts.

Remind students who are asking the questions to listen carefully to the answers given by the “professors” and to challenge or correct these experts if their answers were incorrect or incomplete. When using professor know-it-all, it might be helpful to model the various types of questions expected from students about the content. Rotate the expert groups after five minutes or so. Continue the process of students questioning students until all groups have had an opportunity to be experts.

Once all expert groups have been questioned, students will reconvene in their cooperative groups for prewriting. In their small groups, students will begin to generate a
mythological character they think might be interesting as a central character for their own original myth. Students will work on one another’s characters, discussing options of how the character might appear, while one student selected by the group records notes of the discussion. After brainstorming (view literacy strategy descriptions) what the character might be like, the students will summarize their characters by listing their characters’ physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, relevant personal background, and personality quirks on the Mythological Character Planner BLM. These details will become part of the elaboration of the narrative myth they will write and should be chosen to engage their readers.

Activity 16: Creating a Narrative Myth (Identifying the Conflict) (GLEs: 04d, 17e, 20b, 23)

Materials List: Conflict BLM, Myth Planner BLM, Literary Devices BLM, pen/pencil, paper or computers with word processing software and printers.

Students will continue their prewriting and elaboration activities by reviewing with the teacher the many different conflicts found in the myths that were read and by making a class list of these conflicts. Students will use this list and the Conflict BLM to identify a central conflict for their own myths, as well as complete the Myth Planner BLM, which will include their decisions about the related plot sequence, setbacks, and complications (e.g., time pressures, such as forces of nature or deadline dates, injuries, losses, weather, mistakes, misunderstandings, mishaps) their character will encounter before resolving his or her central conflict. They will work within their groups to describe how their character might react to the conflict and its setbacks/complications and what the outcome might be. After receiving suggestions from the group, students will generate a list of events that will happen to their character and record these events on the Myth Planner BLM. Students should also review the variety of literary devices with which they might describe their main character within the draft of their myths, such as imagery through simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, etc., by using the Literary Devices BLM.
Activity 17: Writing a Narrative Myth (GLEs: 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19e, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21)

Materials List: Narrative Beginnings BLM, Dialogue that Reveals Character and Advances Plot BLM, Time and Place Transitions Handout BLM, Peer Feedback Form for Myths BLM.

As a precursor to the drafting stage of the writing process, the teacher will facilitate a review of the structure and defining elements of myths and of good narrative stories. Most myths begin with exposition, follow with rising action and a conflict, continue with the climax, conclude with falling action and resolution, and have an underlying theme or make a comment about human nature. Students will use a Narrative Beginnings BLM to review good narrative beginnings, use a Time and Place Transitions BLM to review the use of time and place transitions for narratives, and use a Dialogue that Reveals Character and Advances Plot BLM to review dialogue that both advances a plot and reveals specific character traits. Students will use the feedback from the earlier peer review (Activity 12) and the BLMs from Activities 14 and 15 when identifying the conflict and plot complications to begin drafting their myths, being sure to double-space for future revisions. At this point, it would be advisable for the teacher to provide feedback to students regarding the structure of their myths. Students will self- and peer-evaluate and revise their myths for their use of mythical elements, appropriate use of transitional words and word choices, for appropriate tone, and for variety in sentence structure. (See Peer Feedback Form for Myths BLM.) Students will share their revised drafts with their editing group from which they will receive additional feedback. They will then take the feedback and revise and proofread their drafts again to produce the final copy, using available technology to publish their work. This is particularly powerful if students can post their myths on the school or other website for others to read, thus giving them a real audience.

Activity 18: Sharing the Myth with the Class: Reader’s Theater (GLEs: 24c, 31, 35, 39b, 39f)

Materials List: pen/pencil, paper; copies of chosen myth; stools or chairs; class-created rubric.

Students will discuss how a Reader’s Theater performance is similar to and different from other types of drama and dramatic performances. Following the teacher’s instructions, each group will then choose one myth from those authored by their cooperative group to prepare in Reader’s Theater style, including preparing a script for the group. Students will use simple notations to indicate speakers for each part. Tips for student scripting, staging, and reading of a text for a Reader’s Theater performance can be found online at [http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips.html](http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips.html).

As part of the Reader’s Theater format, students will use their voices, facial expressions and hand gestures to interpret the characters in their myths. While there are many styles of Reader’s Theater, nearly all share these features:
Narration serves as the framework of dramatic presentation.

There should be no full stage sets. If used at all, sets are simple and suggestive.

There should be no full costumes. If used at all, costumes are partial and suggestive.

There should be no full memorization.

Scripts are used openly in performance. Their scripts are visible to the audience, whether the performers actually read from them or not. Decorations are either nonexistent or minimal. Readers usually sit on stools or chairs; costumes are not used, either. Each reader portrays one or more characters, using his or her voice, oral expression through practice, and reading fluency to convey meaning to the audience. The key to this is practice. Performers in Reader’s Theater try to develop a connection with the audience in order to assist the audience to concentrate its attention on the literary text. Audience members will practice active listening. Students will prepare their scripts and practice their parts, working on the oral emphasis, including volume, diction, enunciation, and inflection, that will add meaning to their readings; these will be presented to the rest of the class (and additional classes, if desired).

The class will create a rubric under the teacher’s leadership so the group can assess each presentation. The rubric will include evaluating the performance for sensory details, scripting, voice expression and fluency, and effectiveness of facial expression and physical gestures used.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- The teacher will provide students with a checklist of mythology-related journal topics (e.g., nature, creation, special creatures, supernatural powers, human nature). Students will collect all journal entries from this unit in a portfolio and turn them in to be assessed for completion and response to the topic.
- Students will research a mythological character and use the information to produce a text that summarizes the character’s appearance, background and origins, heritage, special powers, and central problem. Assessment of the final product may include:
• Students will give oral presentations in small groups or whole class, summarizing the details learned about the character.
• Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about myths at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, PowerPoint®, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about myths.
• For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, mythological elements and genre characteristics, story elements, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related research components.

Activity-Specific Assessments

• **Activity 11**: Students will compose a paragraph that lists the similarities of theme from at least three myths with at least one text example as support. The process should include:
  ➢ a clear statement of similar themes.
  ➢ examples that support the stated similarity.

• **Activity 13**: Students will choose a heroic character from the myths they have read to describe in a poem. The process should include:
  ➢ a pre-write that includes a character map of descriptive and sensory attributes, relationships with other characters, and behaviors that display important character traits.
  ➢ a rough draft of at least ten or more well-developed lines that show the character’s most important heroic traits and at least two examples of poetic sound devices appropriate to the form.
  ➢ revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, and fluency of language, as well as usage and mechanics that may include peer editing or conferencing with the teacher.
  ➢ a final draft that displays correct use of the conventions of usage and mechanics for poetry (e.g., use of line breaks and stanzas, capitalizing first word of each line, etc.).

• **Activity 14**: Students will complete a SPAWN writing assignment. The finished product should:
  ➢ state the elements of the modern hero’s life that are similar.
  ➢ provide support for the similarity through examples of similar behaviors, motivations, and consequences for the characters from both periods.
  ➢ contain revised and edited ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency voice, and conventions of language that may include peer
• Activities 15 through 17: Students will write an original myth. The process should include:
  ➢ a pre-write that includes a character summary of physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, relevant personal background, and personality quirks, including:
    o a rough draft that has a clear beginning, middle, and end, quickly reveals the setting, conflict, and character traits through dialogue and narration, resolves the central conflict in a satisfying way and explains some aspect of the physical/natural world, or makes a comment on human nature.
    o revision and editing for ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions that include peer editing or conferencing with the teacher.
  ➢ a final draft and publication.

• Activity 18: Groups of students will rewrite an original myth as a Reader’s Theater script, make staging decisions, conduct practice reading/performing sessions, and present the Reader’s Theater production to others. The process should include:
  ➢ choosing one group member’s myth for the Reader’s Theater performance
    o rewriting the script so as to tell the myth entirely through the reading of the narrated parts and through the dialogue
    o having repeated practice sessions so each group member achieves fluency and expression in regard to voice, emphasis, facial expression, and gestures appropriate to the myth
  ➢ giving a final performance before an audience
Myths: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Abrahams, Roger. *African Folktales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)*
3. Altman, Linda Jacobs. *African Mythology*
4. Amery, Heather. *Greek Myths for Young Children*
5. Asbjornsen, Christen. *Norwegian Folktales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)*
6. Bellingham, David. *Kingfisher Book of Mythology*
8. Bruchac, Joseph. *Native American Animal Stories (Myths and Legends)*
   *Children’s Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and The Tale of Troy*
   *Golden Fleece and The Heroes Who Lived Before Achilles*
   *Legends and Myths from the West Coast*
   *Nordic Gods and Heroes*
    *D’Aulaires Book of Norse Myths*
    *D’Aulaires Book of Trolls*
11. Ghose, Sudhin N. *Folk Tales and Fairy Stories from India*
13. Helbig, Althea K., and Agnes Regan Perkins. *Myths and Hero Tales: A Cross-Cultural Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults*
15. Horowitz, Anthony. *Myths and Legends*
    *Myths and Mythology [Children’s Library]*
17. Kingsley, Charles. *Heroes of Greek Mythology [Dover Storybooks for Children]*
19. Leeming, David Adams. *Children’s Dictionary of Mythology*
20. Lynch, Patricia Ann. *African Mythology A to Z*
21. Masters, Andrew. *Roman Myths and Legends*
22. Milbourne, Anna, Heather Amery, and Gillian Doherty. *Usborne Book of Myths and Legends [Stories for Young Children]*
23. Nexttext. *Classical and World Mythology*
24. Osborne, Mary Pope. *Favorite Greek Myths*
25. Price, Margaret Evans. *A Children’s Treasury of Mythology*
26. Ramanujan, A. K. *Folktales from India (Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore)*
27. Reid, Martine. *Children of the Raven*
    *Myths and Legends of the Haida Indians*
28. Roberts, Moss *Chinese Fairy Tales and Fantasies (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore Library)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Russell, William F.</td>
<td>Classic Myths to Read Aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Shepherd, Sandy.</td>
<td>Myths and Legends from around the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Sutcliff, Rosemary.</td>
<td>Black Ships before Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eagle of the Ninth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lantern Bearers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outcasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Tyler, Royal.</td>
<td>Japanese Tales (Pantheon Fairy Tales and Folklore)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Verniero, Joan, and</td>
<td>An Illustrated Treasury of Read-Aloud Myths and Legends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Fitzsimmons.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>White, Anne Terry.</td>
<td>Golden Treasury of Myths and Legends adapted from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World’s Great Classics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 5: Poetry

Time Frame: Approximately three weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, responding to, and writing poetry and on applying a variety of strategies to demonstrate comprehension. The defining characteristics, literary elements, and figurative language of poetry will be analyzed, including simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, alliteration, and idioms. Writing and group processes provide opportunities for collaboration, proofreading, revision, publication, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occurs within the context of the literature and student writing. Oral interpretations of poems provide an opportunity for building fluency, while publication of illustrated poems provides an opportunity for students to hone technology and desktop publishing skills. Strategies such as vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, word grids, anticipation guides, process guide, split-page notetaking, reading response learning logs, brainstorming, RAFT writing, lesson impression, and professor know-it-all will be introduced and applied to the poetry content.

Student Understandings

Poetry is a way of expressing one’s innermost feelings. Poets create images that stir imaginations, making people see the world in new and unexpected ways; it is characterized by rhythmical patterns of language, such as syllabication, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and onomatopoeia. As a result, poetry should be read, heard, and enjoyed. Students will recognize and understand the effects of figurative language, literary elements, and sound devices in poetry, noting that poetry is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature, saying the most in the fewest number of words.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the forms and elements of poetry?
2. Can students identify a speaker and explain how point of view affects a poem?
3. Can students identify and explain the use of figurative language in poetry?
4. Can students relate poetry to personal experiences?
5. Can students write original poems in a variety of forms and include a variety of sound and literary devices?
6. Can students increase their personal writing vocabularies through the use of a word bank?
7. Can students prepare, practice, and perform an oral interpretation of a poem?
## Unit 5 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade-Level Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLE #</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01e.</td>
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<td>02.</td>
</tr>
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<td>04c.</td>
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<td>05c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11g.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14. | Analyze an author’s stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade-Level Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLE #</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs</strong> (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19a.</td>
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<td>19b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19c.</td>
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<td>19d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
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<td>20e.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 21. | Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition,
### Grade-Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE #</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22a.</td>
<td>Use the various modes to write compositions, including comparison/contrast (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24c.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of novels, stories, poems, and plays (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25a.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English punctuation, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27c.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including homophones (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking (ELA-4-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39b.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including images/sensory details (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39d.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including background information (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40a.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including explaining the effectiveness and dynamics of group process (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40b.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed-upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSS#</td>
<td>CCSS Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.5</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Informational Text</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| W.6.1a, b, c | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence  
a. Introduce claims and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.  
b. Support claims 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 claims and reasons. |
| W.6.10 | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. |
| **Language Standards**                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| L.6.4c, d | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading an content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.  
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). |
L.6.5b, c  Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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).

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

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 11g, 14; CCSS: RI.6.1, RL.6.1)

Materials List: poetry, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained, silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence to work through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should continue to keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they keep copies of favorite poems, frequently respond to the poems they have read through the use of brief reflective prompts, and analyze the elements and forms of poems studied. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that students see this as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. An example is shown below.
### Reading Response Learning Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Text: <em>Shakespeare Bats Cleanup</em></th>
<th>Genre: Poetry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Poems Read:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Introductory (untitled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>“Pressure”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>“In That Book of Dad’s I Borrowed”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpts from *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup*; © Ron Koertge

### Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 01a, 01d, 01e, 02, 03)

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, Frayer Model Vocabulary Card BLM, dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, colored paper (for word banks/walls), index cards

Students will continue to use the vocabulary self-awareness strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to determine their familiarity with new words, phrases, or idioms. *Example:* Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>+ ? –</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quatrain</td>
<td>+</td>
<td><img src="quatrain.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>a stanza or poem of four lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stanza</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>The words &quot;nothing more&quot; and “nevermore” which are repeated in “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe.</td>
<td>a phrase, line, or group of lines that is repeated throughout a poem, usually after each stanza</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will use two different forms of vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions) in this unit. They will use the standard vocabulary card to define words specific to the poetic content and key to its comprehension. This is especially important
for new content words that will be seen in poetry. Students will continue to use standard *vocabulary cards* to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the poetry unit and for common idioms as detailed below.

Example: *Standard Vocabulary Card*

**Front of Card**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary word</th>
<th><strong>lyric</strong></th>
<th>a poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence from text that illustrates the word</td>
<td>Lyric poetry expresses personal thoughts and feelings, often in a songlike style or form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Back of Card**

- **Definition**
  1) a short poem with one speaker (not necessarily the poet) who expresses thought and feeling.
  2) Adjective
  3) Example of a lyric poem

**Winter Poem**

By Nikki Giovanni

once a snowflake fell
on my brow and i loved
it so much and i kissed
it and it was happy and called its cousins
and brothers and a web
of snow engulfed me then
i reached to love them all
and i squeezed them and they became
a spring rain and i stood perfectly
still and was a flower

4) Janette wrote a **lyric** poem to express her feelings about being in love.

Students will continue to use the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, and contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; they will apply this comprehension strategy throughout the unit, as appropriate. Students will continue to create word webs and riddles that illustrate multiple-meaning words, including illustrations or examples for each meaning. Students will use the second type of *vocabulary card*, which is a modified *vocabulary card* sometimes referred to as a Frayer Model *vocabulary card* to help acquire this vocabulary knowledge. Frayer model *vocabulary card* samples and additional best practices strategies for teaching vocabulary can be found at [http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm).

Students will also create word banks (or word walls) for vivid adjectives, nouns, and verbs, each on a different color of paper. Students will store these in different colored
jars or cans that match the colors of the different types of words. Students will revise their practice poems for more vivid word choices throughout the unit by using these word banks.

**2013-2014**  
**Activity 3: Words in Context**  
(CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

Teach students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but they should be words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student pieces.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. Encourage students to use the dictionary for verification after trying to determine word meaning from context. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word crowns in the following example, a discussion might reveal that crowns in this context differs from the most common understanding of the term, a headpiece worn by royalty.
Example: Words in Context
Text: “My Father’s Hats”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page if available</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>crowns</td>
<td>“Sunday mornings I would reach/into his dark closet while standing/on a chair and tiptoeing reach/higher, touching, sometimes fumbling/the soft crowns…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>the top of (a head, a hat, a mountain)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from “My Father’s Hats” © Mark Irwin

Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 23)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.); pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Continue to point out examples of good writing in texts followed by questioning. (Examples: Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? What words do you especially like? Can you imitate this?) With students, the teacher will continue to model the skill orally, then have students try it out in practice pieces, and finally apply the skill in independent writing. Important to focus on in this unit will be word choice, figurative language, literary devices, rhyme, rhythm, sound devices, chunking text for emphasis, voice, and creating imagery.

In planning whole-process pieces, continue to use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM. Choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for each whole process poem. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft several whole process poems, double-spacing in order to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, reordering). It is important to do this visually, as well as orally, since most students are visual learners.
2013-2014
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, Blank BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Students should record on this page each writing assignment in the unit (Activities 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25a, 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 27c, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist (Sample) BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist for Poetry BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist for Poetry (Sample) BLM, sentences for proofreading, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, this could be a grammar, usage, or conventions focus. Sentence formation should be addressed through the telescope of poetry, in which dependent or subordinate phrases and clauses may take the place of complete sentences. Mini-lessons should be adjusted accordingly for this unit.

Illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies, using the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM. Students should also continue daily proofreading practice of several sentences or lines of poetry in context (related), writing sentences or lines as correctly as they can with teacher monitoring and support. When a student has not caught an error, encourage him/her to search further and then return to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols to record the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM; keep a record of which
errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990.) In addition, students should be taught how to edit and proofread using the BLM entitled Proofreading/Editing Strategies for Students.

Mini-lessons on the use of hyphens, commas and coordinating conjunctions, capitalization, possessives, verb tenses, revisions to add prepositional phrases, transitions, interjections for emphasis, and conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas should also be part of this unit whenever student errors indicate such a need.

Hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly, and daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings. Students will continue to use the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM as a guide when proofreading their papers.

**Activity 7: Poetic Language and Poetic Devices (GLEs: 01e, 04c, 05c, 11d, 11g, 22a, 39b; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.5, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: Poetic Terms BLM, word grid; pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

To begin the unit of study, activate students’ prior knowledge and set their purposes for learning with an anticipation guide (view literacy strategy descriptions) on the subject of poetry. The anticipation guide involves giving students a list of statements about the topic to be studied and asking them to respond to them before reading and learning, and then again after reading and learning. In this case, the anticipation guide should be a list of statements about the genre of poetry. Some statements that might work are as follows:

- Poetry is centered on feelings.
- Poems are always shorter than works of prose.
- Poems are easy to identify because of patterns of rhyme and rhythm.
- Poetry isn’t as serious as other forms of literature.

Post the statements on the board or project onto the board. Ask students to respond individually with “true” or “false.” In pairs, have students discuss their answers. Emphasize that at this state of the discussion, there is no “correct” answer. Open the discussion to the entire class in order to hear multiple understandings about poetry. Because this anticipation guide is about the entire unit and not just one reading or lesson, keep them in a visible place for periodic discussion. In addition to setting the purpose, these statements should be revisited over the course of the unit as students gain new understandings or are exposed to new works. In preparation for a unit assessment, engage students in a discussion about the statements. Use this opportunity to clear up any lingering misconceptions about poetry and to reinforce lesson content.
Provide students with the Poetic Terms BLM with the definitions provided for students to reference. Students will read and listen to teacher-selected poems. Model and discuss oral reading techniques, such as pausing for a few seconds between the title and the poem's first line; reading at a conversational pace, pausing only where there is punctuation just as when one reads prose; using a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words so as to be able to read with understanding; and writing out a word phonetically in order to pronounce it correctly. Discuss theme and poetic voice in the poetry, as well as the use of similes and metaphors in expanding visual imagery. Students will discuss how a writer needs to help a reader create visual images, not from telling a thing directly but by providing clues so a reader can create the images and figure out the meaning of a poem from those clues.

With students, complete a sample word grid (view literacy strategy descriptions) designed to enable them to identify the words and lines from the poems that support identification of voice, mood, and theme. They will also identify similes and metaphors in the poems, noting how these analogies and comparisons help readers to “see” the images of the poem, and they will also see how specific word choice sets the mood of a poem. Students will then read examples of various poems that have good sensory detail, creation of images, figurative language, and sound devices and will complete their own word grids, adding to these over the course of the unit. Good websites for such poems include the following:

- http://www.poets.org/
- http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/

**Example of Word Grid for Poetry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shows Voice:</th>
<th>Shows Mood:</th>
<th>Reveals Theme:</th>
<th>imagery</th>
<th>metaphor</th>
<th>simile</th>
<th>sound devices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quote from Poem A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quote from Poem B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quote from Poem C</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 8: Descriptive Attributes (GLEs: 01e, 04c, 05c, 11d, 22a)

Materials List: Descriptive Attributes BLM, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

Students will then begin a poetry booklet of original poems; they will add to it throughout the unit. These will later be word-processed and illustrated using original illustrations or clip art that is appropriate to each poem. Students will start by writing a comparison poem that compares a feeling or emotion to a concrete object. By using the strategy of comparison to collect details for their poems and by linking an abstract feeling to a concrete object (e.g., comparison of anger to a black hole or happiness to a contented cat), they can begin to learn comparison and analogy as a basic strategy that good writers use. Developing writers may need to be prompted with a sensory attributes list such as:

- colored like . . .?
- temperature like . . .?
- sounds like . . .?
- tastes like . . .?
- smells like . . .?
- looks like . . .?
- has a texture like . . .?
- moves like . . .?
Students will use the Descriptive Attributes BLM, which reminds students to use less obvious senses and attributes, such as symmetry, number, weight, habitat, location, direction, orientation, composition, or special features in creating analogies for items being compared. Students will brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) other analogies and comparisons they can use to describe parts of their own bodies or physical characteristics by focusing on color, shape and texture, or other descriptive attributes. (e.g., My hair feels like porcupine quills. Her hair is streaked with sunlight.) Using their brainstorming as prewriting, students will then write an original Self-Portrait Poem.

**Activity 9: Onomatopoeia and Alliteration (GLEs: 01e, 04c, 05d, 09, 11d, 11g, 22a, 39b; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.5, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: split-page notetaking example, reading response learning logs, Descriptive Attributes BLM, TPCASTT BLM, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

Students will read aloud teacher-selected poems that use alliteration, onomatopoeia, and repetition/refrain. To encourage oral reading fluency, which is directly related to text comprehension, these should be done through choral reading, echo reading, or partner reading.

Students will use split-page notetaking (view literacy strategy descriptions) to define the terms in their notes with one or two examples. These can be added to their reading response learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions).

Example of split-page notetaking for sound devices in poetry:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alliteration – What is it?</th>
<th>the repetition of the same sound, usually of a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words not far apart EXAMPLE(S): The blazing hot sun hovers high in the sky. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onomatopoeia– How is it different from alliteration?</td>
<td>words whose pronunciations suggest their meaning EXAMPLE(S): meow, buzz, gong, crackle, twitter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Refrain – What is it? Why do authors use it? | A phrase, line, or group of lines that is repeated throughout a poem, usually after every stanza EXAMPLE(S): nothing more and nevermore are repeated throughout Edgar Allan Poe's The Raven. Or Poem by Langston Hughes

I loved my friend.
He went away from me.
There’s nothing more to say.
The poem ends,
Demonstrate for students how they can study and review information from their split-page notes by covering information in the right column and use the prompts in the left column to recall the covered information. Students can also quiz each other over the information in their notes in preparation for other tests and other class activities. Do not underline the whole paragraph.

Students will read a variety of such poems independently and will search for and identify examples of onomatopoeia, alliteration, and deliberate repetition/refrain. When examples are found, students will explain in their reading response learning logs how these literary sound devices enhance the meaning of the poems, including creating images/sensory details. Students will generate phrases that illustrate onomatopoeia and alliteration and include them also in their reading response learning logs.

Students will then add to their booklets of original poems. Students will write a “Repetition/Refrain Poem” that uses repetition/refrain about a conversation based on “Well, you shouldn't have” or “Well, don’t do it again.” as the repeated line or any other refrain they are likely to have heard repeatedly from parents or teachers. Students will also write an “Onomatopoeia Poem” with onomatopoeia being about the noises on a street, at the mall, in school, in the cafeteria, or in any other noisy location. They will select appropriate verbs to personify the noises made by various machines. Students will then write several additional short original poems that contain examples of each of these sound devices, as well as the use of comparisons and sensory detail, as in Activity 1. Students should refer to their Descriptive Attributes BLM as needed. Students should be discouraged from using forced rhyme because it often detracts from the meaning or sense of a poem with developing writers. Good topics for the “Sound Device Poems” include weather, hobbies/activities, and sports, but students should be allowed to choose their own topics for some poems.

Introduce the TPCASTT process guide (view literacy strategy descriptions). While generally developed for content area reading, process guides can work for literary analysis as well. Process guides scaffold students’ comprehension within a predetermined format. In addition to stimulating student thinking, process guides help students focus on important information and ideas. The TPCASTT is a standardized process guide that works for every poem. Because poetry is a unique genre, using the TPCASTT model with multiple poems over the course of the unit is recommended.

TPCASTT is an acronym representing these key concepts:

- T—title: Before reading the poem, what do you think the title means?
- P—paraphrase: Go line by line, putting the poem’s lines in your own words.
- C—connotation: Examine the author’s use of language, especially imagery and figurative language. (Note: To start, have students focus on the basics and topics already taught--onomatopoeia, alliteration, refrain, metaphor, and simile)
• A—attitude: How does the author or speaker feel about the subject? What is his/her attitude?
• S—shifts: What shifts in subject, tone, or format are made?
• T—title: How has the title’s meaning for you changed over the multiple readings?
• T—theme: What is the theme of the poem? How does the author address the theme in the poem?

A sample TPCASSTT for “Twelve Couplets = One Poem” by Ron Koertge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T—title</th>
<th>I expect that this will be a poem written in couplets, pairs of rhyming lines. The title gives no indication of the poem’s subject, only its form.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P—paraphrase</td>
<td>My Barry Bonds poster hangs on the wall. His batting ability is as good as any other player’s. Anyone who walks in my room would know I’m into sports: baseballs, bat, glove—these are the tools of my trade. An edgy pitcher works to maintain control, the strongest runner (having stolen one base already) runs like a crazed gnome, the catcher hugs home, protecting it. This was my life (before I got sick)—wander to the plate, knock one toward the shortstop who would miss the ball. Now life is sitting in a doctor’s office. I see his diplomas. He greets me cheerfully. Dad eases forward nervously as I freeze in fear. The doctor looks over my test results, assuring me that I’m okay but a little thin, encouraging me to dine out. He tells me to celebrate, taking it easy but playing a bit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C—connotation

- Allusion: “It doesn’t take Sherlock/to figure out that this is a
tock’s room.”
- Metaphor: his baseball equipment is “paraphernalia of combat”
- Simile: “faster runner…dances down the line like a mad
gnome,”
- Metaphor: line drive is “a frozen rope”

I notice that the speaker reserves the colorful language for descriptions
of baseball, the equipment and the game itself.

A—attitude

The speaker longs for his life on the diamond. Despite good news
about his recovery, he is certainly wistful.

S—shift

The greatest shift is at line 15. The word “Now” signals a jump to the
present and all that entails—bedrest and doctors’ visits.

T—title

The title doesn’t really connect to the poem’s meaning for me. I think
he just wanted to experiment with rhyming in couplets.

T—theme

The theme is certainly tied to desperation, pining for what was, but
also looking toward the future.

Use this same template for any in-depth poem study of the unit. As new terms are
introduced, including personification, hyperbole, and idiom, add those to the study of
connotation.

Templates for and information about TPCASTT can be found at this link:
- [http://skyview.vansd.org/bquestad/cw/poetry/TPCASTT%20Template.htm](http://skyview.vansd.org/bquestad/cw/poetry/TPCASTT%20Template.htm)
- [http://hs.houstonisd.org/reaganhs/academies/resources/tpcastt.htm](http://hs.houstonisd.org/reaganhs/academies/resources/tpcastt.htm)

Activity 10: Personification, Hyperbole, and Idioms (GLEs: 03, 04c, 09, 11g, 39b)

Materials List: reading response learning logs, Descriptive Attributes BLM, TPCASTT
BLM, pen/pencil, paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and
printer

Students should discuss the importance of common verbs like eating or walking not
communicating as effectively as stronger verbs might. A reader needs to visualize, so a
writer should help the reader picture the action through more specific word choice (e.g.,
eating doesn’t communicate as clearly as gobbling, gnawing, munching, chomping,
dribbling, inhaling, slurping; walking isn’t as clear as: stomping, limping, strolling,
bouncing). An important point for students to understand about strong verbs is that the
verbs don’t have to be used exclusively with people as doers. Grass can nibble toes,
flowers can slurp rain, etc. Using their Descriptive Attributes BLM, students will revise
their poems from Activity 8 to include strong verbs and will then write a “Strong Verb
Poem” about a self-selected object or strong emotion.
Students will read aloud teacher-selected poems that contain good examples of personification, hyperbole, and idioms. Students will brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) and write in their reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) an explanation of how the poet’s use of each literary device affects the meaning of each poem. Students will then read a variety of such poems and find examples of personification, hyperbole, and idioms in the self-selected poems. When examples are found, students will explain in their reading response learning log how these literary devices enhance the meaning of the poems. Students will then complete a “Personification Poem” by choosing an object and imagining that they become the object. They will begin their poem with the lines, “If I were a(n) object,/ I’d _____ and ______./ I’d ______.” and then complete the poem as they wish, using strong verbs as a target skill. They should also complete an original poem that either uses an idiom or hyperbole. These “Idiom” or “Hyperbole Poems” should be added to student booklets.

Activity 11: Poetry Response Learning Logs & Poetry Booklet Additions (GLEs: 01d, 04c, 05c, 05d, 19b, 19e, 23, 24c, 39d)

Materials List: reading response learning logs, Descriptive Attributes BLM, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

Students should discuss poetic form and how a poet does not write in complete sentences, but uses exact word choices, leaves out any unnecessary words, and divides a poem into lines (chunks) deliberately so the first or last word of a line is emphasized by deliberately ending or beginning lines with the words the poet sees as most vivid. Students will look at models of poems that do this. They will then revise a previous practice poem or write a new one, using this technique to “chunk” and emphasize the words they see as most vivid or important in their own poems. (Students should use a slashed line to indicate where to divide a line into two or more images and use the proofreading delete symbol to condense sentences into poetic lines by deleting unnecessary words such as the, an, etc.)

Students will read teacher-selected poems that incorporate the use of foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery and will facilitate a discussion of these literary devices. In the same poems, students will identify in their reading response learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions) the speaker of each poem and will explain how point of view affects the poem. Students will identify poems and poets they like from text anthologies, electronic sources, or the Internet. They will share resources they used to locate poems with others and place copies of favorite poems or a list of the titles in their reading response learning logs. Students may practice using the process guide of TPCASTT on a second poem at this time.

Students will discuss how many poems take their inspiration from the natural world, through animals, or the landscape. Students will select a real focus for the writing of a “Nature Poem” to be placed in their booklet of original poetry, again referring to their Descriptive Attributes BLM: a place close to the school that can be visited, a natural object, a plant, or an animal. Students will experiment with techniques studied and their notes to produce additional original poems for their booklets in a variety of different
forms that apply some of the poetic elements and literary devices studied. Students will brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) a list of topics or ideas they often think about or have strong feelings about. Categories students can use for their poems include past experiences, memories, observation, relationships, nature, pets, people significant in their lives, or events important to them. Students will include in their additional original poems for the booklet chunked lines for effect, strong verbs, clues for images, sensory detail, comparisons, repetition and refrain, alliteration, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, and idioms.

2013-2014
Activity 12: Poetry Response Learning Logs & Poetry Booklet Additions (GLEs: 01d, 04c, 05c, 05d, 19b, 19e, 23, 24c, 39d; CCSS: RL.6.1, RL.6.6)

Materials List: reading response learning logs, Descriptive Attributes BLM, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

This is an extension of Activity 11 for the school year 2013-2014. CCSS RL.6.6 calls for students to explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. For the reading response log, include prompts that call for students to analyze the speaker’s development over the course of the poem.
Sample prompts for analyzing speaker’s development might include these:
• How does the speaker change from the first stanza to the last?
• How would you describe the speaker’s wants or wishes? Are these fulfilled? Explain.
• What is the turning point of the poem? What effect does this have on the speaker?

As students take response notes on the poems, encourage them to use textual evidence to support their analysis of the speaker’s development.

Activity 13: Writing Process (On-Going for Poetry Booklets) (GLEs: 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 23, 25a, 27c, 28b, 29; CCSS: W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.1c)

Materials List: reading response learning logs, Descriptive Attributes BLM, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, or computer with word processing software and printer

Before students begin drafting their poems, implement the RAFT writing (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy to review conventions of the genre. RAFT writing provides students an opportunity to rework and extend their understandings after they have acquired new content. In RAFT writing, students put themselves into unique roles and look at content from a new perspective. The letters in the acronym RAFT stands for R—role, A—audience, F—form, and T—topic. Because one of the instructional shifts in the CCSS is an increase in argumentative writing, the sample topics have been geared toward persuasion. Students may need mini-lessons on using persuasive language and supporting claims with clear evidence. This assignment will serve two purposes: a review of poetry
conventions before students start writing poetry and an exercise in argumentative writing to meet CCSS W.6.1a and W.6.1b.

Suggested topics are these:
R—poetry
A—prose
F—letter
T—why I’m more special than you

R—poetry
A—students
F—a 30-second commercial
T—why I’m not so tough to understand

Materials on persuasive writing can be found at these links:
- [http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/persuasive-writing-30142.html](http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/persuasive-writing-30142.html)
- [http://www.greatsource.com/iwrite/students/s_pers.html](http://www.greatsource.com/iwrite/students/s_pers.html)
- [http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr4.htm](http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr4.htm)

Once students have written their RAFTs, have select students share their pieces. As students read their pieces aloud, the audience should be making a list of traits of poetry. With this list in mind, students will begin planning their poems. Students will plan and develop one poem at a time. Students should include at least two poems for each of the following categories: past experiences, memories, observations, relationships, nature, pets, significant people, and important events. Students will organize their ideas and write their first drafts, focusing first on message, then on form both during and outside of class. Students will apply the writing process and do guided revision to include at least two of the following in each of their poems in their poetry booklets: contrasting images, homophones, and interjections for emphasis. Students should refer to their Descriptive Attributes BLM as needed throughout this activity.

Students will conduct several peer response sessions, allowing time for revision after each session. Students will appoint a facilitator and will read their poetry aloud while others in the group listen for content and form. All sessions will begin with positive comments from the poetry rubric. Students will ask clarifying questions and make suggestions for changes, which will be discussed by the group.

Students will consider feedback from peer response when they revise. They will ask themselves: “Did I use forms, language patterns, and techniques effectively? How does the rhythm of each poem affect its mood and meaning?” They will proofread and edit their work, using a teacher-designed rubric and a proofreading checklist as a reference, especially for the use of hyphens, interjections, homophones, and frequently misspelled words. Students will use word processing to write, spell check, and publish their final copies. Students will use spelling resources as needed.
Students will review the rule for capitalizing the first letter of every word of every line of poetry, editing their poems to apply this rule. Students will add clip art from a clip art Internet site such as Google>Images or http://office.microsoft.com/clipart/. Poetry anthologies will be assessed for completeness and for quality of work; components of the assessment rubric should be reviewed before submission. Students will make selections from their writing to present orally in the next activity.

**Activity 14: Reviewing Poetic Devices (GLEs: 01e, 04c, 05c, 11d, 22a, 39b)**

Materials List: completed Word Grid BLM (from Activity 7), reading response learning logs, props for professor-know-it-all, such as glasses, ties, briefcases, lab coats, etc.

The students will then participate in the professor know-it-all (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy to review important poetic elements and devices. To prepare for this activity, students may refer to their completed word grids (view literacy strategy descriptions) and reading response learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions) from previous activities in this unit. This strategy makes students the experts who must inform their peers and be challenged and held accountable by them for their knowledge gained during this unit of study.

Students form groups of three or four and will be called on randomly to come to the front of the room to be a team of “professor know-it-alls” who will provide expert answers about questions on rhyme, rhythm, sound and literary devices, etc. Each group of students should construct possible questions about poetry and its elements and forms that they might be asked and that they can ask of the other experts (e.g., *What is an example of an idiom in the poem “(Title)”*? or *What is being compared in the simile: “My love is like a red, red rose?”* or *What lines from the poem “(Title)” support identification of voice/mood?* etc.)

Students come to the front of the room, stand facing the class, and invite questions from the class (and from the teacher, if needed). The group of students confers as a team to talk about the answer, then returns to position, and the spokesperson then answers in complete sentences; students take turns being the spokesperson. After five minutes or so, a new group of professor know-it-alls take their place in front of the class, don their props, and continue the process of student questioning. All groups should have a chance to serve as professor know-it-alls.

**Activity 15: Comparing Texts: Reading v. Listening (CCSS: RL.6.5, RL.6.7, RL.6.10)**

Materials List: poetry selection, audio version of the same poem, Reading v. Listening BLM
Select a poem with an accompanying audio version. Before sharing the poem with students, develop a lesson using the lesson impression (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. Lesson impressions create interest in the content or, in this instance, the text, to be covered by capitalizing on students’ curiosity. Because students form a written impression of the text to be read, they are eager to discover how closely their impression text matches the actual content. They should begin by reviewing the selected poem, selecting several key words they will encounter as they read it. Narrow the initial list of terms to a smaller number that will leave students with a good, but incomplete picture of the poem’s content. Present the list to the students. Encourage students to write a short descriptive passage using these words to predict the poem’s subject in the space provided on the Reading v. Listening BLM. Once students are done, encourage volunteers to read their impression texts aloud.

Example of lesson impression for the poem “Break” by Dorianne Laux:

Impression words: break, piece, broom, patch, pair, circles, shuffle, satisfied tap

Impression text: This poem seems to be about a separation and then coming together, pieces break apart, are swept with a broom. The speaker patches things up, pairs at a time. Working in circles, she shuffles the pieces of puzzle around the table. Each piece falls into place with a satisfied tap.


After volunteers share their impression texts, share the original text with students. Because this lesson emphasizes reading as compared to listening. Students should read the poem silently and use the Reading v. Listening graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) to take notes on the speaker, the subject, emphasized ideas, and theme(s).

Play the audio version for students, having them listen and take notes in the same manner. Instruct students to underline trends that are common in both “readings” of the text, and encourage them to listen for notable differences.

Lead students in a discussion of the choices made by the producers of the audio version that colored their interpretation of the story in some way.

Have students select the most important line or most important stanza of the poem. To meet CCSS RL.6.5, students write an essay explaining that line or stanza’s importance, how it fits into the overall structure of the poem and how it contributes to the development of the theme.

Links to poets reading their own works can be accessed at the American Academy of Poets website at this link: http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/361. Links of persons reading their favorite poems can be accessed at The Favorite Poem Project at this link: http://www.favoritepoem.org/videos.html.
Activity 16: Interpreting Favorite Poems (GLEs: 31, 32, 35, 39b, 40a, 40b)

Materials List: Text Marking for Emphasis BLM, books of poetry, reading response learning logs, booklets of original poetry

Students will select favorite poems they would like to interpret orally, using components of good public speaking, including good diction, enunciation, syntax, pronunciation, and standard English grammar when speaking. Audience members will practice active listening. The teacher will demonstrate how poems can be read in different ways to evoke different meanings by reading examples to the class. The teacher will distribute copies of Text Marking for Emphasis BLM and will facilitate a discussion of how to mark text (in this case, poems) to create emphasis on key words or phrases. The teacher will model, using a poem previously studied in class. Students will then practice marking for emphasis and reading different selections of poetry aloud in groups of two or three with a focus on adjusting their diction and enunciation to suit different interpretations of the poem. They will adjust their volume and inflections with feedback from the other students.

To prepare their poems for performance, students will mark an accent above words in the poem that need emphasis, by underlining words that will need to be acted out, and by marking a couple of slashes, //, above any places where they will need to pause. Students will also consider how characters or speakers should sound or how they can show particular feelings or emotions with their voices. Should it be a funny voice? etc. Students will practice their interpretation and timing, including standing or moving as appropriate to the meaning and actions of the poem, in front of a mirror. A rubric with these components should be reviewed. Students can audiotape or videotape presentations and place in the library for all classes to enjoy. They may memorize and recite a short poem for the class. Students will be provided feedback via the oral presentation rubric.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of poetry/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products.
Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format. BLM

- Students will give oral presentations in small groups or whole class, summarizing details learned about poetry forms and elements.
- At the end of the unit, students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about poetry. This may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, word processing, *PowerPoint*, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about poetry.
- Students will use a proofreading checklist that addresses the most common errors in punctuation, capitalization, usage, and sentence formation to proofread their final drafts of individual poems, their reading response journals, and their original poetry anthologies.
- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, poetic elements and figurative language characteristics, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related performance components.

**Activity-Specific Assessments**

- **Activities 8 through 12:** Students will compose individual poems as described to illustrate specific writing craft or figurative language skills (Comparison Poem; Self-Portrait Poem; Repetition/Refrain Poem, Onomatopoeia Poem; several Sound Device Poems; Strong Verb Poem; Personification Poem; Idiom or Hyperbole Poem; Nature Poem); poem(s) with contrast, with homophones, with interjections used for emphasis, as well as additional self-selected forms and topics. Each poem should adhere to all the rules for the particular form and should:
  - express ideas, organization, thoughts, feelings, and experiences that create one overall mood and appropriate content
  - use details that appeal to the reader’s emotions and/or the senses
  - use one or more figurative language device(s)
  - use one or more sound device(s) or deliberate repetition of sounds to create rhythm
  - use carefully chosen precise, exact, and vivid word choice
  - use parallel structure in creating phrasing
  - use line breaks in which each image stands on its own
  - have the first letter of the first word of each line capitalized

Students will create a poetry reflection booklet that gives their interpretations of selected poems. Each entry in the reflection booklet should:

- identify the poem being studied by title and author
- state an overall response to the work
- make clear the student’s overall response by citing clear reasons and supporting evidence backed up with examples (paraphrases or quotations) from the work
clinch the position taken so the reader is left with a final question, a quotation, a fresh insight, or another memorable impression

use word choice that is clear, precise, and expressive

show attention to sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling

**Activities 8 through 13:** Students will create an anthology of their original poems after each has been assessed with a teacher-designed rubric for form and content. Students must include at least two original poems for each category of past experiences, memories, observations, relationships, nature, pets, significant people, and important events. Poems should then be word processed and illustrated with the addition of clip art appropriate to the form or content of each entry. Poems should be sorted and arranged according to content or form or skill(s) addressed and should be bound in some fashion in order to create a booklet. The final product should:

- contain front and back covers, title and dedication pages, and a table of contents
- contain the appropriate number and types of poems assigned
- reflect additional revisions made after original assessment
- show care was taken in the formatting, layout, and design, including font, size, color, etc.
- use appropriate clip art for the form and content of each poem
- be pleasing to the eye and ear
- appear to have been spell-checked

**Activity 16:** Students will perform a favorite poem. The performance should:

- begin with the name of the poem and its author, as well as a statement of why that particular poem was chosen
- employ confident body language and eye contact with the audience
- be appropriately animated with appropriate facial expressions and gestures
- be clearly enunciated
- use varied pitch, rate, volume, stress, and tone as appropriate
- appear to be well rehearsed; if a script is used, it should be used only for occasional reference
- have a strong, memorable ending
Poetry Anthologies: Grade 6 Recommendations

For Teachers:
1. Elizabeth, Mary. Painless Poetry
2. Holbrook, Sara. Outspoken!: How to Improve Writing and Speaking Skills Through Poetry Performance
3. Janeczko, Paul. How to Write Poetry (Scholastic Guides)
   A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms
   Poetry from A to Z: A Guide for Young Writers
4. Johnson, K. Writing With Authors Kids Love: Writing Exercises by Authors of Children’s Literature
5. Koch, Kenneth and Ron Padgett. Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry
6. Lies, Betty Bonham. The Poet's Pen: Writing Poetry with Middle and High School Students
7. Moore, Jo Ellen. Writing Poetry with Children
8. Ruurs, Margriet. The Power of Poems: Teaching the Joy of Writing Poetry

For Students:
1. Berry, James. Around the World in Eighty Poems
2. Clinto, Catherine. I, Too, Sing America: Three Centuries of African American Poetry
3. Driscoll, Michael. A Child's Introduction to Poetry: Listen While You Learn About the Magic Words That Have Moved Mountains, Won Battles, and Made Us Laugh and Cry
5. Fleischman, Paul. Big Talk: Poems for Four Voices
   I Am Phoenix: Poems for Two Voices
   Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices
6. Fletcher, Ralph. Seeing the Blue Between: Advice and Inspiration for Young Poets
   A Writing Kind of Day: Poems for Young Poets
8. Guthrie, Donna W. How to Read, Recite, and Delight in All Kinds of Poetry
9. Holbrook, Sara. The Dog Ate My Homework: Poems
   I Never Said I Wasn’t Difficult: Poems
   Walking on the Boundaries of Change: Poems of Transition
10. Hughes, Langston. The Dream Keeper and Other Poems
   Seeing the Blue Between: Advice and Inspiration for Young Poets
12. Kennedy, X. J. Knock at a Star: A Child’s Introduction to Poetry
   Talking Like the Rain: A Read-to-Me Book of Poems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Koch, Kenneth.</td>
<td><em>Talking to the Sun: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems for Young People</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Lansky, Bruce.</td>
<td><em>Kids Pick the Funniest Poems</em></td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Mendelson, Edward.</td>
<td><em>Poetry for Young People: Lewis Carroll</em></td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Pappas, Theoni.</td>
<td><em>Math Talk: Mathematical Ideas in Poems for Two Voices</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>The 20th Century Children's Poetry Treasury</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Wilson, Edwin Graves.</td>
<td><em>Poetry for Young People: Maya Angelou</em></td>
</tr>
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Time Frame: Approximately four weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, responding to, and writing drama, as well as applying a variety of strategies to demonstrate comprehension. Narrative and dramatic techniques and conventions will be analyzed, including the use of dialogue, stage directions, sound effects, and sets. Dramatic scenes and short plays will be performed, as well as creative interpretation of a dramatic speech to enhance its meaning. Writing and group processes provide opportunity for proofreading, revision, publication, and evaluation. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occur within the context of the literature and student writing. Strategies such as vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, reading response learning logs, questioning the content, brainstorming, GISTing, word grids, and SQPL will be applied to the drama content.

Student Understandings

Plays are stories told in verse or prose in which conflict and emotion are expressed entirely through the dialogue and actions of the characters on stage, with little or no narration. Students examine conflicts and impact of major characters and minor characters, who are driven by conflicts, which, in turn, drive the story. Students will recognize the importance of audience to a dramatic performance and will understand the structure of acts, scenes, stage directions, descriptions of setting, cast of characters, and revelation of character through dialogue and actions, without the aid of narration.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the elements of drama?
2. Can students analyze techniques authors use to describe characters, including the narrator or other characters’ points of view and the characters’ thoughts, words, or actions?
3. Can students summarize a presentation?
4. Can students relate a drama to personal feelings and experiences?
5. Can students create a flow chart to show the events of a dramatic scene?
6. Can students write an original script of a dramatic scene/skit that uses a variety of narrative and drama?
### Unit 6 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE #</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01a.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01c.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology) (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01d.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using knowledge of idioms (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Identify common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple meaning words (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including theme development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04b.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including character development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04c.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including relationship of word choice and mood (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04d.</td>
<td>Identify and explain story elements, including plot sequence (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05a.</td>
<td>Identify and explain literary and sound devices, including foreshadowing (ELA-1-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11f.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1)</td>
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</table>
## Grade 6 ELA
### Unit 6: Drama

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11g.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze an author's stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17a.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an established central idea (ELA-2-M1)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17b.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17c.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17d.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19a.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19b.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19c.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19d.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (individual personality)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19e.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20a.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20b.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20c.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20d.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer, teacher) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20e.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20f.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20g.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
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<tr>
<td>39a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>39b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40a.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum**

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**Grade 6 ELA ◇ Unit 6 ◇ Drama**

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6-4
### ELA CCSS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS#</th>
<th>CCSS Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Literature</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.5</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.6.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Standards for Informational Text</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.1</td>
<td>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.6.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking and Listening Standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL.6.1a,b,c,d</td>
<td>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.4c, d</td>
<td>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
flexibly from a range of strategies.
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).

L.6.5b, c Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
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).

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

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 09, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 11g, 14; CCSS: RL.6.1, RI.6.1)

Materials List: dramas, plays, and scenes, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained, silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is the key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence in working through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should continue to keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they keep copies of favorite dramas, frequently respond to the dramas they have read through the use of brief reflective prompts, and analyze the elements and forms of dramas studied. Students should also record the author’s purpose and viewpoint (perspective) for each piece read.

Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that students see this as a personal response to their reading, not as a test.
Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. To meet CCSS involving citing textual support, the fourth column provides an opportunity for students to support their responses with passages from the original text. An example follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Pages Read:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
<th>Passage from text to support:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Feb 20  | the set description | I’d much rather visit Dictionopolis than the Land of Ignorance, but I imagine for conflict development, we’ll spend some time in the L of I. | “Dictionopolis—A marketplace full of open air stalls as well as little shops. Letters and signs should abound.”
     |             |                                                                            | “The Land of Ignorance—A gray, gloomy place full of cliffs and caves, with frightening faces.” |
| Feb 21  | Pages 615-616 | This play has elements of comedy. Here, the clock speaks first, and he questions our use of time. | “Clock. Too often, we do something simply because time tells us to...Time is important, but it’s what you do with it that makes it so.” |
| Feb 22  | Page 617     | I don’t normally like plays, but I like reading the stage directions. It helps me to “see” what’s going on. | “[The ALARM goes off very loudly as the stage darkens. The sound of the alarm is transformed into the honking of a car horn, and is then joined by the blasts, bleeps, roars and growls of heavy highway traffic.]” |


**Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 01a, 01c, 01d, 02, 03)**

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, Frayer Model Vocabulary Card BLM, Word Map BLM, Vocabulary Self-Awareness BLM, Drama Vocabulary BLM, etc., plus dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, index cards

Students will continue to use the *vocabulary self-awareness* strategy ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to determine their familiarity with new words, phrases, or idioms. A Vocabulary Self-Awareness BLM has been provided for this purpose.
Students will continue to use the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; they will apply this comprehension strategy throughout the unit, as appropriate.

Students will continue to create word webs and riddles that illustrate multiple-meaning words, including illustrations or examples for each meaning. Students will use the Frayer Model Vocabulary Card BLM or the Word Map BLM to help acquire this vocabulary knowledge. Frayer model and additional best practices strategies for teaching vocabulary can be found at [http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm).

Students will use vocabulary cards (view literacy strategy descriptions) to define words specific to the dramatic content and key to its comprehension. This is especially important for new content words that will be seen in drama. Students will continue to use vocabulary cards to define vocabulary specific to selections read as part of the drama unit and for common idioms as detailed below. (See Drama Vocabulary BLM.)

**Example: Vocabulary Card**

**front of card**

- Vocabulary word: monologue
- Sentence from text that illustrates the word: A monologue is a long speech spoken by one person, either to others or as if alone.

**back of card**

- Definition: 1) an extended speech by one person only who exposes inner thoughts and provides insights into his or her character.
- Example or drawing: 2) noun
- 3) example of a monologue
- 4) Brandon wrote a monologue to express his feelings about being dumped by his girlfriend.

Students will review their vocabulary cards and quiz each other with them in preparation for tests and other class activities as needed.

Students will continue to apply the use of context clues, idioms, multiple meaning words, etymologies, and structural analysis throughout the unit as appropriate. Students will use vocabulary graphic organizers to define words specific to selections read as part of the

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**Drama**

A monologue is a long speech spoken by one person, either to others or as if alone.

- **Superordinate idea**: an extended speech by one person only who exposes inner thoughts and provides insights into his or her character.
- **Characteristics or features**: noun
- **Example or drawing**: example of a monologue
- **Student-composed sentence**: Brandon wrote a monologue to express his feelings about being dumped by his girlfriend.
2012-13 and 2013-14 Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum

drama unit. These words should be added to each student’s personal vocabulary list in his/her notebook.

Students will create word walls for the vocabulary of drama, adding words as they learn them within the context of reading and writing about drama and dramatic performance. (See Drama Vocabulary BLM).

2013-2014
Activity 3: Words in Context
(CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

The teacher will remind students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but they should be words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student writing.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, the teacher will encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. The teacher will further encourage students to use the dictionary for verification after trying to determine word meaning from context. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word bound in the following example, a discussion might reveal that bound in this context differs from bound, as in a book, but that surely the words must be related in some way as they both have a connotation of “stuck to something.”
Example: Words in Context
Text: *The Phantom Tollbooth: A Children’s Play in Two Acts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page if available</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>bound</td>
<td>“Whether or not you find your own way, you’re bound to find some way.”</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>certain to, destined to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 04a, 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 23)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM, Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Through the course of the unit, continue to point out examples of good writing in mentor texts followed by questioning. (Examples: Does it make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? What words do you especially like? Can you imitate this?) With students, the teacher will model the skill orally, and then students will try it out in practice pieces, and finally apply the skill in independent writing. Important to focus on in this unit will be plot and theme (who wants what?), character and character motivation, mood, diction and dialogue (especially first person dialogue to advance plot and to reveal character), word choices made by the playwright, enunciation of actors delivering the lines, stagecraft and staging techniques, dramatic space, focus, tension, scenery, costumes, special effects, dramatic convention, and distinguishing subgenres of drama such as comedy, tragedy, farce.

In planning whole-process pieces, the teacher will continue to use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM and will choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as target skills for each whole process piece. Students should pay special attention to imagery, voice, and variety in sentence structure, as well as engaging the interest of the reader/audience. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft several whole process skits or scenes, double-spacing in order
to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, and reordering). The teacher will illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies by using the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM. It is important to do this visually as well as orally as most students are visual learners.

2013-2014
Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so, whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece, written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a journal, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Students should record on this page each writing assignment in the unit (Activities 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25a, 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 27c, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist with Examples BLM, Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM sentences for proofreading, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

The teacher will continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts and daily editing practice. Thus, this could be a grammar, usage, or conventions focus. Sentence formation should be addressed through the telescope of poetry, in which phrases and subordinate clauses may take the place of complete sentences. Mini-lessons should be adjusted accordingly for this unit.

Students should also continue daily proofreading practice of several sentences or lines of poetry in context (related), writing sentences or lines as correctly as they can while the teacher gives positive feedback, walking around the room and giving a brief comment to each student. When a student has not caught an error, the teacher will encourage him/her to search further and then return to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the
class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students will continue to correct their papers by using proofreading symbols as they record the types of errors they make on the Secondary/Editing Proofreading Chart BLM. The teacher will keep a record of which errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990.) NOTE: Use the Secondary/Editing Proofreading Chart with Examples BLM to show students how to use this chart.

Mini-lessons on the use of hyphens and commas correctly, capitalization of proper names, especially historical names, homophones, revisions to add prepositional phrases, transitions, and interjections for emphasis, and conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas should also be part of this unit whenever student errors indicate such a need. The teacher will hold regular peer editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and to daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings. Students will continue to use the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM as a guide when proofreading their papers.

Activity 7: Reader’s Theater for the Whole Class (GLEs: 04b, 04c, 04d, 09, 11c, 11d, 21, 24c, 35, 39a, 39b, 39d, 39f; CCSS: RL.6.5, RL.6.10)

Materials List: GIST Worksheet BLM, Linear Venn BLM, Written Summary Rubric BLM, Scene/Skit Performance Rubric BLM

To begin their unit study of drama, students will review the format and text structure of a play or teleplay (including use of a script, stage directions and/or camera directions). Scripts for dramas will typically:

- name characters
- give exposition
- include a central conflict (Who wants what?)
- reveal character through action and dialogue only (or with occasional narration from a narrator)
- build suspense through complications leading to a climax
- feature a resolution which resolves all questions

Students will spend several weeks reading and discussing a variety of plays from different cultures and time periods, noting similarities and differences of customs, traditions, viewpoints, literary elements, and ideas in each.

To help students develop an understanding of the genre of drama, the teacher will utilize the questioning the content (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy as students read the first plays. *Questioning the content*, or *QtC*, can help students cope with challenging text materials, in this instance, a new genre. The activity conditions students to think about what the text is saying rather than search for literal answers. The questioning the content strategy makes the previously overlooked actions of the author more visible to
students as they attempt to learn from literary works. In addition, students are less likely to be personally frustrated by difficult text as they realize that the responsibility for a passage making sense is shared between author and reader. Students become deeply engaged with reading, as issues and problems are addressed while they learn, rather than afterward.

Because students utilized QtC in unit 1, they will likely need a refresher. The teacher will provide practice by reading segments of the text aloud to students and stopping at pre-determined segments to have the class discuss the ideas and events encountered. Then the teacher will pose questions, such as What is the author trying to say? and What do you think the author means by that? and How does this connect with other text ideas? The teacher will pre-segment the text where the pupils may be expected to have difficulties. Based on the teacher’s modeling of question asking, students will then collaboratively construct meaning by questioning the author and the author’s purpose. This gives pupils the opportunity to learn from one another, to question, and to consider alternative possibilities, and to test their own ideas in a safe environment.

In this use of questioning the content in determining where to break the reading segments, the teacher must consider the following focuses: identifying major differences and similarities between drama and other genres, understanding the structure of genre, analyzing decisions made by the author v. decisions left up to the reader, and preventing problems with understanding. To meet CCSS RL.6.5, the teacher will have students question how the author introduces an event and track its development over the course of the play. The goal here is for students to begin questioning the content independently and naturally.

After students have read a couple of plays, the teacher will distribute the GIST Worksheet BLM and use the GIST strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to summarize and paraphrase essential information from the plays they read in order to write a character sketch. In this strategy, students must limit the “gist” of a paragraph to a set number of words. Limiting the total number of words forces students to think about only the most important information in order to summarize a text; this is the essence of comprehension. The teacher must first model this strategy with a short (5 to 10 lines) dialogue that reveals character.
1) Students read a short dialogue of no more than 15 lines that reveals at least one character trait.
2) Students try to remember important ideas from the passage as the teacher lists them on the board.
3) The teacher assists the class to condense those ideas into 20 words.
4) Students read a second dialogue and, again, create a 20-word summary that incorporates information from both the first and second sections.
5) Students repeat the strategy with a third section if necessary.

NOTE: Students must be shown how to delete trivial and repetitious information and to collapse lists into broader categories. If a passage lists the achievements of Robert Fulton, Alexander Graham Bell, and Thomas Edison, collapse the names into the category of
“inventors”; or if a passage lists the various schools a person attended, then it could be summarized by stating that the person was well-educated.

Example of GIST:

SAMPLE of Dialogue that Reveals Character

"I told you I didn't want to go to this," Linda said as she stood beside John on their neighbor’s steps. "It's just going to be as lame as every other party we've been to since we got here."

"You used to love parties," John said, avoiding eye contact.

"Yeah, well, that was back in Brooklyn. But Montana isn't Brooklyn."

"No." He looked at the mountains, colored flame by the setting sun, the sky he had come to love. Then he looked at Linda, glowering even before they went inside. In five years of marriage, she had changed so much. They both had.

Based upon the dialogue above, a student might complete the following GIST:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIST Worksheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unhappy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The class will choose a favorite character for a sample character sketch and will analyze the character as a class by completing a GIST, with the teacher facilitating this activity. Students will then choose a character from another play they have read to complete their own character analysis by completing a GIST with the GIST Worksheet BLM.

The class will then choose one play to read together, Reader’s Theater style (See Unit 4). While reading the play, students will discuss the narrative elements of the play’s structure: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Students should discuss the important distinction of telling a story only through the dialogue and action shown on stage without the help of narration, other than stage directions. Students will complete the Linear Venn BLM, which is a graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions), to discuss the similarities and differences between a play and the poetry read in the previous unit. Through the use of a graphic organizer, students will compare and contrast literary elements, devices, and ideas. Students will evaluate the play for how it conveys images and sensory details through the script, and they will figure out how to translate those images and details on stage, especially the relationship
of word choice and mood. They will analyze the techniques authors use to describe characters, including the differences in telling a story without narrated prose, the difficulties of revealing character only through dialogue and action, and the implications of changes of scenery/sets, etc. In small groups, students will write summaries of how they would translate one scene to the stage. These performances will be assessed using the Written Summary Rubric BLM. Groups will then perform the scene or a part of the scene for the class. These performances will be assessed using the Scene Performance Rubric BLM. Groups will discuss afterwards how they thought about translating the script into the performed scene.

Activity 8: Reading a Play and Performing a Scene (GLEs: 04b, 04d, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 31, 35, 40a; CCSS: RL.6.5, RL.6.10)

Materials List: Text Marking for Emphasis Handout BLM, Scene Performance Rubric BLM (See Activity 7), Sample Cue Card BLM, learning log, Character Journal BLM

To illustrate the need for creating meaning as a performer, each student will learn a simple, easily memorized phrase (e.g.,”Anthony, come here.” or ”Open the door.”). Each student will say his or her line in three or four different tones of voice to convey different meanings. Students will practice improvisation by pretending to take imaginary shoes out and make a big deal about putting them on (e.g., a ballerina will lace up to her knees, a fireman will pull on high boots). Then, silently, students will act out the character (dance, put out fires climbing ladders, etc.) and have the other students guess the character.

The students will be put into groups to develop their own short scene to perform for the class. The teacher will brainstorm with the class some common fairy tales, like ”The Three Billy Goats Gruff,” ”The Three Little Pigs,” or ”Goldilocks.” The teacher will give each group five minutes to come up with a short scene that has a beginning, middle, and end based on one of the fairy tales. They will be expected to use the techniques they developed in the previous exercises. The teacher will remind students to incorporate various movement, voice, staging and character interaction techniques in their scene. These performances will again be assessed using the Scene Performance Rubric BLM.

Following teacher instructions, in their cooperative groups, students will find and list plays in which they are interested, using the print and electronic sources from library, the Internet, and the classroom as resources. Each group will choose one play from the list. Students will skim and scan the play to identify a scene that reflects the main idea of the play, making inferences as needed. To meet CCSS RL.6.5, the teacher will inform students that they will be asked to explain why they chose this scene, with an emphasis on how this scene fits into the greater work.

Using the Text Marking for Emphasis Handout BLM, students will decide how to translate the script of the scene into a performance of the scene, practicing the script with others in the group. One student will be appointed the director and will help the group decide how to play, or block, the scene. Students will discuss various strategies for
delivering their lines and propose various alternatives so the group can discover the variety of ways the voice and body might be used to convey meaning.

This process of using the voice and physical movement to convey meaning involves students making inferences about the characters, plot, and setting. Students will practice linking their inferences to specific passages in the text of their plays. The teacher will distribute copies of the Sample Cue Card BLM and then lead a discussion of the elements of a cue card. An additional cue card example can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson289/cuecard.pdf. This example is part of a full-blown lesson on writing monologues, which can also be done as preparation for students performing their own roles in their group’s chosen plays. The complete lesson is found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=289. However, there is merit in doing just a sample cue card, followed by students writing cue cards for their individual roles in their group’s chosen plays.

Students will create a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) that records the observations and reactions of a character in the play they are reading. They will write their reading response learning log entries from the character's point of view, using language the character might have used. The teacher will remind students that the actor's interpretation and the director's staging of the scenes informs what the audience knows about a character. The text alone leaves many questions unanswered. Students' character learning log entries will help fill in the gaps by developing a more complete picture of the persona. Students will use the Character Journal BLM to use the persona of a central character to analyze key issues and events in the play, and to explore how their own personal values and beliefs shape their understanding of the play’s events.

The group will then practice their chosen scene from the play, using their voices and body movements to convey meaning, and present it to the class. After the presentation, the group will discuss the steps involved in working as a group to put the scene together, with the director reporting on his/her role in the production. They will also explain their chosen scene and how it relates to the larger work. Additional drama lesson plans, assessments, and student resources are available at http://www.ket.org/artstoolkit/drama/lessonplan/#middle and http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=1005.

**Activity 9: Developing Story Structure for a Skit (GLEs: 04b, 04d, 05a, 09, 11a, 11d, 19a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 23, 31, 35)**

**Materials List:** Group Process Rubric BLM, “Plot Bags,” Story Elements Planner BLM, Character Map BLM, Scene/Skit Performance Rubric BLM, Audience Checklist BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

The teacher will facilitate a discussion of the importance of character, setting, and plot as elements of a story. Students will be divided into groups of four and will be assigned the following roles, which can be rotated as needed: 1) Facilitator—coordinates the group
The teacher will display the sample skit plot bag and remove each item from the bag. The teacher will ask students to think of a story plot that would involve these items and give them a minute or two to think quietly. Then the teacher will tell students to turn to a neighbor and share their ideas for story plots. The teacher will ask a volunteer to share his/her partner’s idea with the class and then ask several more volunteers to share ideas. The teacher will write these ideas on an overhead transparency or chart paper for later reference. Next, the teacher will display and discuss the story ideas shared, reminding students how each connects to the props that are contained in the sample skit bag. The group process will be evaluated using the Group Process Rubric.

Using an LCD projector or large monitor, the teacher will display a blank Story Elements Planner BLM. Then, using the chosen story idea, the teacher will complete all three sections of the Planner, having students suggest entries for each item. The teacher will begin with Setting, followed by Character(s), and then Conflict/Resolution. The teacher will remind students that the props must be used in the skit, so planning should include ways to incorporate them. The teacher will then model the use of a separate Character Map BLM for each character in the story.

The teacher will facilitate a discussion of the guidelines for creating and performing skits, using the Scene/Skit Performance Rubric BLM. Skits will not be plays with elaborate scripts, assigned parts, and multiple rehearsals. Instead, students will create a rough outline of the skit and perform it in a spontaneous manner while trying to use a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery. Students will again use their cooperative group roles as described in the beginning of this activity to repeat the directions for the activity orally, to use the items in their prop bags, to brainstorm possible story lines, to determine the story elements—character, setting, and conflict/resolution for their skits, and determine the sequence of events for their skits, using the same BLMs as the teacher did in modeling this process. Once groups have written their skits, they should briefly rehearse them. The teacher will remind students that scripts are to be loosely created, resulting in impromptu interpretation for most of the skit. Students performances will take more than one or two class periods.

To promote active listening, the teacher will distribute copies of the Audience Checklist BLM to each student. Students will be required to pay close attention to each skit to try to determine the conflict and resolution of each. After each performance, students will fill in their Audience Checklist BLM. Following class discussion of the conflict and resolution
of the skit, students may then change their answers on the handout. If time permits, the
teacher will discuss the setting (and its effect on the plot) and character development.

2013-2014
Activity 10: Developing a Story Structure for a Skit—the Actor’s Studio
(CCSS: SL.6.1b, c, d)

Materials List: Group Process Rubric BLM, “Plot Bags,” Story Elements Planner BLM,
Character Map BLM, Scene/Skit Performance Rubric BLM, Audience Checklist BLM,
projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board
and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Group Discussion Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 9. Because the Common Core Standards call for
greater student accountability in group discussions, an extension of this activity in 2013-
2014 provides a BLM for students to record their group roles and tasks, deadlines, and to
prepare discussion points in advance. The Group Discussion Record BLM should be seen
as a companion document to Activity 9. The primary difference in this second year
involves coaching students in techniques for collegial discussions and work groups and
having them set and monitor their own deadlines. Another key difference is that instead
of assigning students to these roles—Facilitator, Director, Casting Director, and
Screenwriter—students will determine their individual strengths and determine their
roles, evaluating their performance along the way. Students will make changes as needed.

Activity 11: Writing and Performing a Play for TV (GLEs: 11d, 11g, 14, 19a, 20b,
20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 23, 31)

Materials List: Story Elements Planner BLM, Dialogue that Reveals Character
Worksheet BLM, Secondary Proofreading/Editing Checklist, Teleplay Script Rubric
BLM, paper or notebooks

Writing plays involves the process of planning, improvising, adapting, recording through
writing, taping, or other means, and refining scripts. The scripts for student-generated
plays are based on personal and shared experiences, heritage, and imagination, as well as
literature and history. As a class, students will discuss some of their favorite television
shows as examples of plays, including the author’s purpose for each. Students will use
inductive and deductive reasoning to identify cause-effect relationships in each, raising
questions and comparing and contrasting the literary elements of the plays they have read
and performed with the TV shows. Students will describe in writing the genre
characteristics of a short story compared to the characteristics of a dramatic script, noting
the textual and visual aids used to convey meaning in the dramatized version.

With students, the teacher will complete a sample word grid (view literacy strategy
descriptions) designed to differentiate between the different forms drama may take. The
word grid should focus on various aspects of the genre, emphasizing that not all aspects
surface in all the genre’s forms. Discussion of the word grid should be geared toward information students will need to write a teleplay script.

**Example of Word Grid for Drama**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>comprised of dialogue and stage directions</th>
<th>allows for use of props</th>
<th>meant to be performed live</th>
<th>meant to be recorded, edited</th>
<th>allows for improvisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reader’s theatre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teleplay script</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>film script</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small groups of students will write a teleplay script for a television show. Groups will use the Story Elements Planner BLM to brainstorm and discuss major characters (their appearances, and actions, and how other characters react to them); determine the setting (including where and when it takes place and a brief description of it); choose a basic plot with complications; and determine the central conflict on which their dramatic tension will depend (including why it occurs, how it could be resolved, and how it will affect the central character) for their teleplays. This conflict is the core of a play’s dramatic tension and suspense; it can take the form of a challenge, a surprise, a time restraint or the suspense of the reader/audience being in on a secret a character doesn’t know. Tension is what works in a play to ensure the audience's desire to know what will happen. Plays also make great use of contrast, the dynamic use of movement/stillness, sound/silence, light/darkness, etc. Students will create a flowchart to show the events of their story.

Students will discuss the staging of the complications and resolution of their story, thinking about favorite TV shows as models. Once these ideas have been discussed, students will record them on a plot organizer. Students will review the need for realistic dialogue, which is often full of fragments or other incomplete thoughts, and the use of the ellipsis in writing such dialogue (e.g., “Oh, no; well . . .; uh . . .”; etc.). Using the Dialogue that Reveals Character Worksheet BLM, students will individually practice writing realistic, short dialogues that reveal specific emotions for each character, such as affection, anger, disappointment, depression, irritation, fright, cowardice, etc. Students will review punctuation rules for writing dialogue as needed.

The class will develop rubrics for evaluating the student-written dramas and for their actual performance, and should include use of word choice, dialogue, stage directions, dramatic literary devices, meeting the needs of the audience, and use of foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery. Students will then begin a draft, using stage directions and dialogue that advances the story. This professional-looking, properly formatted script should be double-spaced in order to make revision easier.
Students will revise to add simple sound effects as needed, which can be used to indicate location, weather, time of day, or to indicate actions occurring offstage such as cars arriving, phone ringing, clock striking, etc. If time allows, artistic students can be engaged in creating simple sets and/or props for certain scenes. Students should then use the rubric to evaluate their drafts. They will share the script with another group, who will ask questions and make suggestions for improvements or needed clarity. The author group will make needed revisions, edit their scripts carefully, again using the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM. Students will decide what final revisions to make to their papers. A final copy should be word processed, if possible. The scripts will be assessed with the Teleplay Script Rubric BLM.

Students will practice performing the script and record their performance, using the elements of effective speaking used in drama to influence an audience. Students will watch and evaluate the television shows with a performance rubric. Points for following good group process behaviors, for meeting deadlines, and for completing each part of the process should be awarded along the way. Students will reflect in their reading response logs on what they learned in the process of writing and viewing their television shows.

Activity 12: Reacting to the Recorded TV Show Performance (GLEs: 17c, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 24b, 27a, 27b, 28a, 39f; CCSS: RL.6.7)

Materials List: Presentation Invitation Rubric BLM, Video Critique Rubric BLM, Reading v. Viewing BLM

Students will select one or more of the dramas they recorded in Activity 11 and write invitations to other classes to attend a private showing. These invitations will be assessed using the Presentation Invitation Rubric BLM.

Before students read the student-developed scripts and view the performance videos, employ the SQPL strategy to aid students in focusing and sustaining attention. The Student Questions for Purposeful Learning, or SQPL, (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy promotes purposeful and critical reading and learning, and in this case, viewing, by prompting students to ask and answer their own questions about content. Generate a statement related to the material that would cause students to wonder, challenge, and question. The statement does not have to be factually true as long as it provokes interest and curiosity. Present the statement to students via projection or duplication on a handout. Students will pair up and generate 2-3 questions they would like to have answered based on the statement. When all pairs have composed their questions, have each team share their questions with the class. As students ask their questions aloud, record these on the board. As duplicate questions arise, star or highlight these. Once all questions have been shared, review the student-generated list and add any questions if necessary. At this point, have students read and view the two texts, the written script and the recorded performance, so they can seek answers to their questions. Remind students to pay attention to information that helps answer questions from the board as they view...
and/or listen to the presentations. Stop periodically and have partners discuss which questions could be answered and ask for volunteers to share.

For the purposes of this activity, the statement should be geared toward the experience of reading a script vs. viewing the script performed. The statement could read, “A production should not deviate from the scripted text,” or “Changes from the scripted text should be deliberate but not obvious to the viewer.” Students’ questions might read like these: “If a production differs, how will it affect the viewer’s response?” or “What are the benefits and drawbacks to an audience member reading a script in advance?”

Students will work in groups to generate reflective questions to involve and connect the audience to the dramatic production and relate it to personal experiences. Encourage students to evaluate some of the following issues: what moment in the play they liked best; how a particular character made them feel; personal associations with characters or situations; what the funniest (saddest) moment in the play was; which costumes they liked; any symbolism they found interesting; anything that they didn't understand.

Have students view the recordings in small groups, and then conduct the discussion using the group-generated questions, and to take notes on the answers elicited, using the Reading v. Listening BLM. Unlike previous versions of this BLM in units 2 and 5, the column for points of comparison has been left blank. These should be determined by student discussion not by the teacher.

**Example of Reading v. Viewing BLM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>reading</th>
<th>viewing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best moment in the play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How [a particular character, a particular moment] made me feel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal associations or connections made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funniest (saddest) moment in the play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best costume(s)/set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing parts/ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group members will then each write a critique of the videos, identifying what could be done differently the next time around, citing evidence brought up during the discussion. When writing the critique of a play, students should also consider the sequencing and the
contribution of technology in the staging of the play. Students will demonstrate in their critiques the correct use of possessive pronouns, regular and irregular verb tenses, and prepositional phrases. Students will be assessed using the Video Critique Rubric BLM.

Revisit student questions and responses from the SQPL exercise, noting differences between the two versions.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will be provided with a checklist of drama/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students will be assessed on the completion of vocabulary lists/products. Students will also be assessed on vocabulary acquisition via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will give oral presentations in small groups or whole class, summarizing the details learned about reading, writing, or performing Reader’s Theater, plays, and dramatic scenes.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about drama at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, PowerPoint, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about drama.
- Students will use a proofreading checklist that addresses the most common errors in punctuation, capitalization, usage, and sentence formation to proofread their final drafts of scripts.
- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading comprehension strategies, elements and forms of drama, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related performance components.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 2**: Students will create a word wall of dramatic terms and vocabulary; words will be added to the wall throughout the unit, including words that refer to:
  - narrative elements of drama
  - various written forms of drama
  - elements of dramatic performance
• **Activity 7**: The graphic organizer should:
  - list attributes unique to the poems
  - list attributes unique to the play
  - list attributes common to both genres

Students will write a summary of how they would translate one scene from a play to the stage. Each summary should:
  - identify the setting (time and place) of the scene
  - identify the main characters and the central conflict of the scene
  - identify clearly the events of the scene
  - make clear the importance of dialogue in conveying the scene

• **Activity 11**: Student groups will plan the storyline of their script. The script should:
  - be double-spaced and word processed
  - identify the setting (time and place) of the scene
  - identify the main characters and the central conflict of the scene
  - identify clearly the events of the scene
  - identify the turning point and resolution of the conflict
  - use the conventions of scriptwriting (indenting, speaker tags, use of colons, etc.) to mark clearly speaker, narrator (if applicable), stage directions, dialogue, character list, and character descriptions, etc.

Students will create a class rubric to evaluate their scripts. The rubric should include all of the items listed for the graphic organizer, including:
  - foreshadowing
  - flashback
  - imagery

Student groups will perform their scripts. The performance should:
  - employ confident body language and eye contact with the audience
  - be appropriately animated with appropriate movements, facial expressions, and gestures
  - be clearly enunciated
  - use varied pitch, rate, volume, stress, and tone as appropriate
  - appear to be well rehearsed; if a script is used, it should be used only for occasional reference
  - have a strong, memorable ending

• **Activity 12**: Student groups will create questions to help the audience connect the drama, both in scripted and recorded form, to their personal experiences. The questions should help the authors identify:
which were the best moments in the production
how a particular character made the audience feel
which moments were the saddest, happiest, funniest, etc.
which costumes, props, or staging were most successful
which parts were confusing, etc.

Student group members will write a critique of their own production. The critique should:

- state the writer’s overall opinion clearly
- state at least two specific reasons for the opinion
- support each reason with proof (supporting details such as an event or a quote) from personal observations made during the viewing
- offer specific suggestions for improvement

### Recommended Grade 6 Recommendations

#### Recommended Plays for Reading and/or Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brancato, Robin F.</td>
<td>War of the Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush, Max.</td>
<td>Ghost of the River House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush, Max.</td>
<td>Hansel and Gretel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush, Max.</td>
<td>Boy Who Left Home to Find Out About the Shivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush, Max.</td>
<td>Rapunzel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, Alden R.</td>
<td>Driver's Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chodorov, Jerome, and Joseph Fields.</td>
<td>Junior Miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collier, James Lincoln.</td>
<td>The Teddy Bear Habit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dahl, Roald.</td>
<td>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephron, Delia, John Forster, and Judith Kahan.</td>
<td>How to Eat Like a Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hirschhorn, Elizabeth.</td>
<td>Sonata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurence, Kristen.</td>
<td>Little Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCullers, Carson.</td>
<td>The Member of the Wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman, Marsha.</td>
<td>The Secret Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinutaro, Joe.</td>
<td>Reindeer Soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergel, Christopher.</td>
<td>Cheaper by the Dozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaight, Brad.</td>
<td>Sightings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilder, Thornton.</td>
<td>The Happy Journey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Recommended Teaching Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bany-Winters, Lisa.</td>
<td>On Stage: Theater Games and Activities for Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bany-Winters, Lisa.</td>
<td>Show Time: Music, Dance, and Drama Activities for Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belli, Mary Lou and Dinah Lenney.</td>
<td>Acting for Young Actors: The Ultimate Teen Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brosius, Peter.</td>
<td>Theatre for Children: Fifteen Classic Plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox, Mem</td>
<td>Teaching Drama to Young Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedman, Lisa, and Mary Dowdle Jennings, Coleman.</td>
<td><em>Break a Leg!: The Kid's Guide to Acting and Stagecraft</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Maureen Brady.</td>
<td><em>Plays Children Love: Volume II</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maddox, Deborah.</td>
<td><em>Middle Mania: Imaginative Theater Projects for Middle School Actors</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterson, Lenka, and Dan O’Connor.</td>
<td><em>Audition Monologues: Power Pieces for Kids and Teens</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooyackers, Paul.</td>
<td><em>Kids Take the Stage</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepard, Aaron.</td>
<td><em>101 Drama Games for Children</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepard, Aaron.</td>
<td><em>Folktales on Stage: Children's Plays for Reader's Theater</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepard, Aaron.</td>
<td><em>Readers on Stage: Resources for Reader's Theater</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spolin, Viola.</td>
<td><em>Stories on Stage: Children's Plays for Reader's Theater</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface, Mary Hall.</td>
<td><em>Theater Games for the Classroom: Teacher's Handbook</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker, Lois.</td>
<td><em>Short Scenes and Monologues for Middle School Acto</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worthy, Jo.</td>
<td><em>Readers Theatre Strategies in the Middle and Junior High Classroom</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Readers Theater for Building Fluency</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 6

English Language Arts

Unit 7: Research Reports—Writing Products

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks

Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading, comprehending, interpreting, responding, and writing content area/informational nonfiction. Researching topics and writing paraphrases, summaries, and reports/essays provide opportunities for students’ acquisition of informational, technological, and problem-solving skills. Vocabulary development and grammar instruction occur within the context of the nonfiction literature and student writing.

Student Understandings

Nonfiction is writing that deals with actual events about people, places, and things as they actually happened. The essential goal of this unit is for students to apply the reading and research processes to various types of informational texts, science and social studies articles, reference materials, and multimedia and electronic resources to find and synthesize specific information into usable formats such as paraphrases, summaries, and reports. Vocabulary and grammar instruction occurs within the context of the literature and student writing. Publication of research products provides an opportunity for students to hone technology and desktop publishing skills. Strategies such as vocabulary self-awareness and vocabulary cards, word grids, modified split-page notetaking, reading response learning logs, brainstorming, modified DL-TA, text chain, GISTing, and process guide will be introduced and applied to the research and nonfiction content.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students generate and narrow a topic of personal interest, formulate open-ended questions for research, and develop a plan for gathering information?
2. Can students identify appropriate sources and gather relevant information?
3. Can students correctly document sources in a works cited list or bibliography?
4. Can students use a variety of communication techniques to present information gathered?
5. Can students use available technology to publish research results?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLE #</th>
<th>GLE Text and Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01a.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01b.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01c.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01d.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using knowledge of idioms (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01e.</td>
<td>Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including explaining word analogies (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Identify common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple meaning words (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, content-specific, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11f.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or situation (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11g.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Analyze an author's stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Identify persuasive techniques (e.g., unsupported inferences, faulty reasoning, generalizations) that reflect an author’s viewpoint (perspective) in texts (ELA-7-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17a.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an established central idea (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17d.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17e.</td>
<td>Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an overall structure including an introduction, a body/middle, and a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas (ELA-2-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include selecting topic and form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include clear voice (individual personality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20b.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20d.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (e.g., peer, teacher) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20e.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP21 Writer’s Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20f.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20g.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24a.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including business letters that include a heading, inside address, salutation, body, and signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24c.</td>
<td>Write for various purposes, including text-supported interpretations of elements of novels, stories, poems, and plays (ELA-2-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25a.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b.</td>
<td>Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA-3-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27c.</td>
<td>Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including homophones (ELA-3-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including interjections for emphasis (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Spell high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA-3-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39a.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including text structure (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39c.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including support for main position (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39d.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including background information (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39e.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including opinions vs. facts (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39f.</td>
<td>Evaluate media for various purposes, including sequence of ideas and organization (ELA-4-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40a.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including explaining the effectiveness and dynamics of group process (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40b.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including applying agreed-upon rules for formal and informal discussions (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40c.</td>
<td>Participate in group and panel discussions, including assuming a variety of roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, leader, listener) (ELA-4-M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41a.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources (e.g., almanacs, atlases, newspapers, magazines, brochures, map legends, prefaces, appendices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41b.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including electronic storage devices (e.g., CD-ROMs, diskettes, software, drives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41c.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including frequently accessed and bookmarked Web addresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41d.</td>
<td>Locate and select information using organizational features of grade-appropriate resources, including organizational features of electronic texts (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) (ELA-5-M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42a.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42b.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42c.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, films, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including identifying sources as primary and secondary to determine credibility of information (ELA-5-M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44a.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including surveying (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44b.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including interviewing (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44c.</td>
<td>Locate, gather, and select information using data-gathering strategies, including paraphrasing (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45a.</td>
<td>Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including visual representations of data/information (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45b.</td>
<td>Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including graphic organizers (e.g., outlines, timelines, charts, webs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45c.</td>
<td>Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Use word processing and/or other technology to draft, revise, and publish a variety of works, including compositions, investigative reports, and business letters (ELA-5-M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47a.</td>
<td>Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including integrating quotations and citations (ELA-5-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47b.</td>
<td>Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including using endnotes (ELA-5-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47c.</td>
<td>Give credit for borrowed information following acceptable-use policy, including creating bibliographies and/or works cited lists (ELA-5-M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Interpret information from a variety of graphic organizers, including timelines, charts, schedules, tables, diagrams, and maps in grade-appropriate sources (ELA-5-M6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CCSS Text

#### Reading Standards for Literature

| RL.6.1 | Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. |
| RL.6.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone. |

#### Reading Standards for Informational Text

| RI.6.1 | Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. |
| RI.6.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. |
| RI.6.8 | Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. |

#### Writing Standards

<p>| W.6.1 a,b,c,d | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claims and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. b. Support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating and understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claims and |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.6.2 a,b,c,d,e</td>
<td>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aid 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 or explain about the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.6</td>
<td>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.7</td>
<td>Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.9b</td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. b. Apply grade 6 reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.6.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Speaking and Listening Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL.6.5</td>
<td>Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Language Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L.6.4c,d</td>
<td>Determine or clarify meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. 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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.5b,c</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings 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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.6.6</td>
<td>Acquire and use grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Activities

Activity 1: Independent Reading (Ongoing): (GLEs: 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 11g 14, 15; CCSS: RL.6.1, RI.6.1)

Materials List: informational nonfiction, reading response learning logs, Reading Response Prompts BLM

Students should have access to texts at their independent reading level in the current genre for 10 to 20 minutes of daily sustained, silent reading (SSR) that is not formally assessed; student choice is key in choosing these, as is teacher modeling of this skill. To reflect the emphasis on informational nonfiction and technical texts in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers should encourage students to read a balance of fiction and nonfiction, both informational and literary. Some types of literary nonfiction include biographies and autobiographies; books on content-area subjects, including social studies, science, and the humanities; and technical texts. SSR offers students an opportunity to practice word attack skills, to boost confidence to work through reading problems, and to learn the joy that reading can bring.

Students should continue to keep a reading response learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) of pages read in which they respond to the research process they are going through with the use of brief reflective prompts. Sample reflective response log prompts (starters) and a full-blown lesson plan on this strategy can be found at http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=55. It is crucial that this metacognitive process be seen by students as a personal response to their reading, not as a test. Teacher modeling of his or her own use of the active reading processes of purpose setting, predicting and refuting, visualizing, connecting, speculating and questioning, reacting, and rereading is vital. To meet CCSS involving citing textual support, the fourth column provides an opportunity for students to support their responses with passages from the original text. An example is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Response Learning Log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Text:</strong> Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Nonfiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
May 4 | pp. 5-6 | Again with the ignorance about bacteria and contamination. The patient has a huge hole in his skull, and these physicians are all wearing street clothes. | “The second thing you should notice is what the doctors are wearing—nothing special. They are in street clothes—black frockcoats, shiny satin vests, and linen shirts. No one is wearing surgical scrubs. No one is wearing surgical gloves, masks, or booties.”

Excerpts from *Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science*; © John Fleischman (2002).

**Activity 2: Vocabulary Study (Ongoing) (GLEs: 01a, 01b, 01c, 01d, 01e, 02, 03)**

Materials List: index cards and vocabulary card examples, Vocabulary Self-awareness BLM, Frayer Model Vocabulary Card BLM, Word Map BLM, plus dictionaries and thesauruses, pen/pencil; paper or notebook, index cards

Students will continue to use the Vocabulary Self-awareness BLM for the *vocabulary self-awareness* strategy ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to determine their familiarity with new words, phrases, or idioms. Students will continue to use the four most common types of clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, and contrast) for figuring out the meaning of an unknown word in context; they will apply this comprehension strategy throughout the unit, as appropriate.

Students will continue to create word webs and riddles that illustrate multiple-meaning words, including illustrations or examples for each meaning. Students will use the Frayer Model Vocabulary Card BLM to create Frayer Model *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) or the Word Map BLM to create vocabulary word maps, to help acquire this vocabulary knowledge. Frayer model and additional best practices strategies for teaching vocabulary can be found at [http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm](http://www.justreadnow.com/strategies/vocabulary.htm).

Students may create their own vocabulary tree *graphic organizers* in which an affix or root word and its meaning are displayed. This is an especially good strategy for nonfiction content study. Students then write as many words containing the root/prefix and find sentence examples as they read.
Students will also use electronic and print dictionaries, thesauruses, and glossaries to expand vocabulary during research, drafting, and editing processes.

Students will use **vocabulary cards** ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to define words specific to the research content and key to its comprehension as part of the research unit as detailed below.
Example: Vocabulary Card

front of card

Vocabulary word

obedience

a behavior

Superordinate idea

Sentence from text that illustrates the word

Many owners need to take their animals to obedience training in order to learn how best to control them.

back of card

Definition

1) The act of obeying, or complying, as required by someone in control.
2) Noun
3) Example of obedience

Characteristics or features

Example or drawing

4) The dog’s obedience improved greatly after just a few training sessions.

Student-composed sentence

Students will review their vocabulary cards and quiz each other with them in preparation for tests and other class activities as needed.

2013-2014
Activity 3: Words in Context (CCSS: RL.6.4, RI.6.4, L.6.4c, L.6.4d, L.6.5b, L.6.5c, L.6.6)

Materials List: independent reading material, Words in Context BLM, pen/pencil

Because students will encounter a number of unknown words in their independent reading, they need a process for dealing with these unknown words. This activity is in some ways an extension of Activity 2, but it incorporates the study of figurative and connotative meanings and analysis of the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone as students encounter them in independent reading.

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.
Teach students to add to this chart as they read. These should be words that are not necessarily foreign to students, but they should be words that students stumble over. The goal is that over time, these words become part of the student’s writing vocabulary. Once a student’s understanding level is marked “+,” the word should be showing up in student pieces.

Because the goal is improvement of vocabulary, encourage word talk among students. To meet CCSS language standards, discussion should be geared toward nuances in words, particularly figurative and connotative meanings. Encourage students to use the dictionary for verification after trying to determine word meaning from context. As students look up the meaning of words, encourage them also to determine the pronunciation and part of speech. Online dictionaries with pronunciation tools can be found at these links: www.m-w.com and www.dictionary.com. As students encounter words with multiple meanings, these could be added to a master class list or word wall. For instance, with the word *biotic* in the following example, a discussion might reveal that while not generally used in this form, *biotic* in this context is the root for the much used *antibiotic*, and it is also a derivative of the Greek root *bio-* meaning life. Incorporate the author’s word choice into the discussion. In this context, the author draws upon an antiquated term. This deliberate use of a word that is no longer common certainly lends to the tone of the text.

*Example: Words in Context*

*Text: Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>date</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>sentence(s) from context, page if available</th>
<th>definition</th>
<th>restatement</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>student-developed definition</th>
<th>understanding level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>biotic</td>
<td>“In 1848, science is still twenty years away from figuring out that infections are the work of living—that is, ‘biotic’—things.” (13)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>living</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from *Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science*; © John Fleischman (2002).


**Activity 4: Writing Craft Mini-Lessons (Ongoing)** (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 21, 23)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), paper or notebook
Continue to point out examples of good writing in texts followed by questioning. (Examples: Does this skill make the writing clear, interesting, or pleasant sounding? Why do you think the author uses this skill? How do you like it as a reader? What words do you especially like? Can you imitate this?) With students, continue to model the skill orally, then have students try it out in practice pieces, and finally apply the skill in independent writing. Important to focus on in this unit will be word choice, fact versus opinion, main ideas and supporting details, and logical organization of ideas.

In planning whole-process pieces, continue to use the Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner BLM; choose one (new) or two (review) genre target skills, one (new) or two (review) organization or composing target skills, and one (new) or two (review) conventions skills as Target Skills for each whole process piece. These skills become part of the scoring rubric. Students will draft several whole process pieces, double-spacing in order to have room for revisions (adding, substituting, deleting, reordering). Illustrate various proofreading/editing strategies.

2013-2014 Activity 5: Writing Record (Ongoing) (CCSS: W.6.10)

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, Blank BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills (See Activity 4.), projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Writing Record BLM

This activity is an extension of Activity 4 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS W.6.10 calls for routine writing over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Because this is not much change from current expectations, having students keep a record of their writing over the course of the year would be evidence of achievement.

On the Writing Record BLM, students track each time they write over the course of the unit. They should indicate whether the writing is over an extended time frame, and if so whether it is to research, reflect, or revise. If it is a brief piece written over a day or two, students should indicate whether it is a log entry, response to text, or other. Students should also indicate the intended audience of the piece. Students should record on this page each writing assignment in the unit (Activities 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15).

Activity 6: Sentence Formation/Grammar/Usage/Mechanics (FUMS) Mini-Lessons (Ongoing) (GLEs: 25a, 25b, 26, 27a, 27b, 27c, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29)

Materials List: projection or presentation device (e.g., overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.), Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, sentences for proofreading, student grammar text, pen/pencil; paper or notebook

Distribute copies of the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM and demonstrate the use of each strategy covered in the BLM. Continue with whole-class brief mini-lessons in usage, mechanics, and spelling, choosing only one explicit focus for the lesson, based upon student errors in drafts.
and daily editing practice. This could be a grammar, usage, or conventions focus. Mini-lessons should be adjusted accordingly for this unit.

Students should also continue daily proofreading practice of several sentences in context (related), writing sentences or lines correctly with positive teacher feedback via brief comments to students. When a student has not caught an error, encourage him/her to search further and then return to the board or overhead, correcting sentences with the class and explaining why each error is incorrect. Students continue to correct their papers, using proofreading symbols, and record the types of errors they have made on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM. Keep a record of which errors are being made by the majority of students in order to plan appropriate whole-class mini-lessons. (Adapted from Jane Bell Keister’s *Caught Ya: Grammar with a Giggle*, Maupin House, 1990.)

Mini-lessons should also be part of this unit whenever student errors indicate a need for the following:

- the use of hyphens, commas, coordinating conjunctions, capitalization, possessives, verb tenses
- revisions to add prepositional phrases, transitions, and interjections for emphasis
- conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas

Hold regular peer-editing sessions to help students form the habit of attention to spelling high-frequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly and daily reinforce the habit of using a variety of resources (e.g., glossaries, dictionaries, thesauruses, spell check) to find correct spellings.

Throughout the writing process, students should use peer editing to work with mechanics and conventions of writing. Grammar instruction should occur within the context of students’ reading and writing. Grammar instruction lessons may be found in the district-adopted textbook.

### Activity 7: Informational Nonfiction Overview (GLEs: 11a, 11b, 11c, 11e, 11f, 14, 15, 39a, 39c, 39d, 39e, 39f)

Materials List: graphic organizers, nonfiction text examples, student anthology, Nonfiction Text Structures BLM, Nonfiction Text Structures (Answer Key) BLM

Reading expository text requires students to closely examine the text’s vocabulary, features, and structures, if the material is to be comprehended and retained. Students must comprehend 75% of the ideas/concepts and 90% of the vocabulary of a content area/informational text to understand what they’re reading. Working with the science or social studies teacher will allow relevant cross-curricular materials to be selected for the class examples.

Review, show examples, and discuss the defining characteristics of informational nonfiction (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, historical/workplace documents, scientific/technical writing, encyclopedia entries, handbooks, manuals, recipes). Students will discuss how to read informational nonfiction differently from literary/personal nonfiction.
Using the Nonfiction Text Structures BLM and the Nonfiction Text Structures (Answer Key) BLM, provide examples of these various types of nonfiction so students working in groups can read and identify the type of nonfiction as well as determine the author’s purpose and viewpoint (perspective) for each example with the aid of the graphic organizer. After completing the graphic organizer, students will record notes in learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions). Allow time for students to share their responses and discuss their entries with a partner or the whole class.

Sample Nonfiction Learning Log:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NONFICTION TYPE</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>AUTHOR’S PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>news article “You Can Teach An Old Dog New Tricks -- With The Right Diet”</td>
<td>Short uses 5 w’s &amp; how approach</td>
<td>to inform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Paul Miller, professor of veterinary science</td>
<td>word for word account personal experience</td>
<td>to inform to entertain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the Nonfiction Text Structures BLM, also facilitate a review of the many types of expository text features that provide additional information to help students comprehend content such as: table of contents, glossary, index, headings and subheadings, pronunciations in parentheses, text boxes and sidebars, photographs and illustrations, captions and labels, quotes, boldfaced words, and graphics (charts, diagrams, maps, tables, etc). Examples may be found in the science, math, or social studies textbooks.

Using a modified DL-TA (view literacy strategy descriptions), acquaint students with a nonfiction library text. Using the modified DL-TA, students look at the table of contents, then think about what they already know and predict what they think will be covered in a particular chapter. Students will also determine where they might look for background information. This modified DL-TA can be done individually or in groups.

Sample Questions for modified DL-TA

1. For each chapter, read the title and write what you think will be presented.
2. Read the subheadings for each chapter. Ask yourself these questions about each subheading: (use words, phrases, or sentences to answer these questions)
   - What do I know I know about this topic?
   - What do I think I know?
   - What do I expect to find out in this chapter?
   - If I don’t know anything about the topic, where could I go to find out?

Review the parts and functions of a book (title page, copyright page, table of contents page,
chapter headings and subheadings, appendix, glossary, index) as it is a LEAP Using Information Resources Component. Students will practice by comparing two selections using the Text Features BLM.

Knowing the organizational structure of expository text will increase students’ comprehension of the relationship of ideas. Review the most common text structures that characterize nonfiction (description or listing, sequence or time order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, etc.), the most common signal words for each type, and questions students can ask themselves to aid in understanding, distributing the Nonfiction Text Structures BLM for reference. Examples may be found in the student anthology, content area textbooks, newspapers, or trade magazines (e.g., SCOPE, READ, Time for Kids, Ranger Rick, Junior Scholastic, Science World, Scholastic MATH).

As students continue to read and respond, the class will discuss and then list in notebooks/learning logs, the elements of nonfiction (e.g., main idea, cause/effect, fact/opinion, problem/solution, author’s purpose/viewpoint, chronological order, persuasive techniques). If needed, present mini-lessons and have students practice these important skills in context.

**Activity 8: Narrowing and Choosing a Research Topic (GLEs: 11d, 20a, 20b, 39a, 43; CCSS: W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.7)**

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; KWL BLM; if available, computer with Internet access; model research report

Following a teacher-facilitated discussion on focused versus broad topics, students will generate a broad list of topics of interest on either a science or social studies topic, using the KWL BLM. Students may skim content area books for items of interest. Students should check the table of contents, the introduction, picture captions, quotations, or other possible sources of quick information. Having selected a topic, students will narrow the topic and present it for approval. After teacher modeling on the use of guiding questions, students will list five to seven possible questions for their research investigation (e.g., A 5-W’s organizer is helpful.). (NOTE: If desired, limit topics to a large category, such as pets or animals, or allow students to choose any topic of interest.) Because emphasis on argumentative and persuasive writing is a major instructional shift of the CCSS, provide guidance for students on adapting their topics of interest into arguments with evidence to support their claims. For example, if a student is interested in food, and this gets narrowed to engineered, or chemically altered and processed foods, a resulting thesis might be “It is the government’s responsibility to protect consumers by monitoring the food industry.”

CCSS W.6.9 calls for students to conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources, and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. To meet this standard, develop a mini-lesson for students about the nature of inquiry with emphasis on hitting roadblocks in research. Using a sample topic and questions, work through the questioning process with students emphasizing how research may begin down one path but eventually travel another.

Students will review the differences between primary and secondary sources. Students will generate a list of topics in which they are interested by looking for ideas in their logs, conversations with friends, reading, watching television, and daydreaming (what if). Alternatively, confer with content-area teachers to seek cross-curricular categories for students to
research, but all individual topics must include some personal choice in order to be relevant to students.

Review with students the guidelines for the final research report:

- presents factual information about an interesting topic
- states and develops a main idea
- brings together information from a variety of sources
- has a beginning, a middle, and an end
- credits sources for ideas, quotations, and information presented.

NOTE: Additional help with the research process may be accessed at http://thinktank.4teachers.org/, which has an interactive Research Organizer to help students generate a list of topics and subtopics for reports and projects. Students can refine a topic by choosing from a variety of suggestions and by using a random subtopic generator. In addition, student models of research reports for grades 1-12 can be found at http://thewritesource.com/models.htm.

Review the research process using the text chain (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. Previously used in unit 3, the text chain strategy gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of newly learned material, in this case, the research process. The process involves a small group of students writing a short composition using the information and concepts being learned. The text chain strategy works for narratives, steps in a process, or solution to a problem. In a small group, students write a short composition using the information and concepts being learned—in this case, how to take a topic from inception through the research process to a well-developed argument. It might be helpful to provide students with the first line of the text chain, for example, “I started by thinking about topics I’m most interested in.” Students would then each add one line, further explaining the steps in the research process. The last student should bring the steps to a logical conclusion.

The full text chain for how to conduct research might read something like this:

- I started by thinking about topics I’m most interested in.
- From this list of topics, I considered availability of information and chose just one topic for my focus.
- I developed a list of questions to further explore my topic.
- Skimming the available sources, I chose those that best answered my questions.
- Over the course of reading, I developed an argument.
- I kept track of these resources by writing down all copyright information.
- To avoid plagiarizing, I paraphrased or summarized my answers and labeled with source information.
- When necessary, I redirected my research with new questions.
- At times, I used the author’s exact words, but I kept track of necessary information for fair use.
- I organized my information and developed my argument with a clear beginning, a middle, and end.
- Using the model MLA format page, I made a Works Cited page.

The group should then check their text chain for accuracy.
Students will then submit a final, focused topic, title, and questions for teacher approval.

**Activity 9: Locating Information and Summarizing and Paraphrasing Informational Nonfiction (GLEs: 41a, 41b, 41c, 41d, 42a, 42b, 42c, 44c)**

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook, Paraphrasing Versus Summarizing BLM, GIST Worksheet BLM, access to library/media center, computer(s) with Internet access

Students will visit the library/media center and begin a search for possible resources on their focused topics from Activity 8. With the librarian’s assistance, review as needed the use of all organizational features of multiple print and non-print, electronic, or Internet resources as students begin their information searches on their focused, narrowed topics.

Facilitate a discussion with students of the differences between summarizing and paraphrasing information found in doing research, distributing the Paraphrasing versus Summarizing BLM for student reference. Once students understand the difference, they are ready to do a GIST.

Students will use the GIST strategy (view literacy strategy descriptions) to summarize and paraphrase essential information from the resources they are reading. These GISTS can then be recorded in their learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions) or they can be transferred to notecards.

In this strategy, students must limit the “gist” of a paragraph to a set number of words. Limiting the total number of words forces students to think about only the most important information in order to summarize a text; this is the essence of comprehension. First, model this strategy with a short (one to two paragraphs) information nonfiction text.

1) Students read a short section of no more than three paragraphs.
2) Students try to remember important ideas from the passage, and the teacher lists them on the board.
3) The teacher assists the class to condense those ideas into 20 words.
4) Students read a second short section and, again, create a 20-word summary that incorporates information from both the first and second sections.
5) Students repeat the strategy with a third section.

NOTE: Students must be shown how to delete trivial and repetitious information and to collapse lists into broader categories. If a passage lists the achievements of Robert Fulton, Alexander Graham Bell, and Thomas Edison, collapse the names into the category of “inventors;” or if a passage lists the various schools a person attended, then it could be summarized by stating that the person was well-educated.

Example of GIST:
SAMPLE of Informational Nonfiction Text

A dog's temperament is first inherited, then modified by events in his life and proper training. Some breeds and certain bloodlines within breeds are friendlier, more tolerant, and more adaptable to training because they were bred to be that way. A responsible breeder wisely puts emphasis on good temperament when selecting breeding stock. Breeders without adequate knowledge of dog behavior may not understand what a correct temperament is and use unsuitable dogs for breeding. There are some dogs, just like there are some humans, that are mentally disturbed or have an illness or physical defect that affects their behavior. A dog's basic temperament, instincts, and training have the biggest effects on how that dog reacts to the world around him and his levels of tolerance.

Very few bites happen without provocation -- but the provocation may exist only in the dog's mind! We need to realize that dogs are not little people in furry costumes. They don't think in the same way that we do. They look at the world around them with a different perspective. Most of their actions are instinctive. A dog will react to situations according to what his instincts tell him unless these instincts are overridden by the consistent training and socialization he needs to receive from his owner throughout his life.

Based upon the excerpt from above, a student might complete the following GIST:

**GIST Worksheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A dog’s temperament is influenced by heredity, life experiences, and training; so reliable breeders consider this and breed for tolerance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A dog’s basic instinct may need to be replaced with consistent training and socialization from his owner throughout his life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will then choose a text from their own resources for which to complete one or more GISTS, using the GIST Worksheet BLM.

Also, model the use of note cards for selecting essential information from these resources, using the GIST strategy for creating the notes themselves. An excellent lesson on GIST (GIST: A Summarizing Strategy for Use in Any Content Area) may be accessed at [http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=290](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=290)
After a teacher-modeled lesson, students will read the various informational resources they have located and may apply other note-taking strategies (e.g., SQ3R, 5 W’s organizer, web, summary notes, outlining) to identify the main idea and supportive details for each.

Activity 10: Conducting the Research and Crediting Sources (GLEs: 20a, 20c, 20e, 24a, 39c, 39d, 39e, 41a, 41b, 41c, 42a, 42b, 42c, 43, 47a, 47b, 47c; CCSS: W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.1c, W.6.7, W.6.9b)

Materials List: index cards, library or Internet informational texts, KWL BLM, model source cards, model note cards, model Works Cited page

After a teacher-modeled lesson on use of source cards and note cards and how they connect to one another, students will gather information from their sources and make both source cards and note cards for each resource, listing one idea per card by paraphrasing and summarizing, both with and without questions. Model source cards can be found at http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/04_Making_Source_Cards.asp. Model note cards can be found at http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/12_Making_Note_Cards.asp.

Through a teacher mini-lesson, students will review the definition of plagiarism and the importance of giving credit to authors. Students will learn how to credit quotations, citations, and endnotes. Emphasize the need for relevant, textual evidence in argumentative writing. Explain to students that certain topics demand using the words of an expert. Through conferencing with students, monitor their balance of paraphrased and summarized support as well as directly quoted text, all properly cited according to fair use guidelines. Using MLA format, students will create a “Works Cited” page from their source cards. Keeping in mind the focus on developing an argument, students will write a thesis statement to guide their report. Students will organize note cards into headings/subheadings that will provide the basis for an outline (Inspiration software can be used.). Students will create a visual representation (e.g., charts, graphs, photos, timelines) of data/information gathered. A model “Works Cited” page may be found at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/14/.

NOTE: A model lesson on how to use information resources is available on the LDE website as part of the Teacher-to-Teacher lesson plans: http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1988.pdf. This is a good lesson for students who have not had much prior instruction in using information resources.

Students will use the Internet (e.g., www.Galenet.galegroup.com/) and library to search for further available information on their chosen topic. Students may also use alternative strategies to gather information (e.g., written sources provided by companies, government agencies, and political, cultural, and scientific organizations). Students may write business letters to the appropriate organizations, asking for materials. In the research learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions), students will record the search process (e.g., library visits, bibliographic information by bookmarking websites/web pages, skimming and scanning books or articles, and taking brief notes on search information). Students will write about problems encountered in locating or using information. Students will continue to jot down interesting information and observations as the search progresses, as explained in Activity 9. Students will record whether resources were helpful (by recording a + or – sign next to each entry). Students will update their...
KWL BLM and record notes and search progress in their writer’s notebook/learning log.

**2013-14**

**Activity 11: Conducting the Research and Crediting Sources** (GLEs: 20a, 20c, 20e, 24a, 39c, 39d, 39e, 41a, 41b, 41c, 42a, 42b, 42c, 43, 47a, 47b, 47c; CCSS: RI.6.8, W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.1d, W.6.7, W.6.9b)

Materials List: index cards, library or Internet informational texts, KWL BLM, model source cards, model note cards, model Works Cited page

This activity is an extension of Activity 10 for the 2013-2014 school year. CCSS RI.6.8 calls for students to 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. Because students are writing a research paper with a defendable thesis, make available a piece of writing with a definitive argument, and have students evaluate the argument, annotating claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. As students conduct their research, this mini-lesson should be a touchstone, guiding their selection of evidence and/or support.

After a teacher-modeled lesson on use of source cards and note cards and how they connect to one another, students will gather information from their sources and make both source cards and note cards for each resource, listing one idea per card by paraphrasing and summarizing, both with and without questions. Model source cards can be found at [http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/04_Making_Source_Cards.asp](http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/04_Making_Source_Cards.asp). Model note cards can be found at [http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/12_Making_Note_Cards.asp](http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/12_Making_Note_Cards.asp).

Through a teacher mini-lesson, students will review the definition of plagiarism and the importance of giving credit to authors. Students will learn how to credit quotations, citations, and endnotes. Students may use the website [http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/reference.html](http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/reference.html) as a reference. Emphasize the need for relevant, textual evidence in argumentative writing. Explain to students that certain topics demand using the words of an expert. Through conferencing with students, monitor their balance of paraphrased and summarized support as well as directly quoted text, all properly cited according to fair use guidelines. Using MLA format, students will create a “Works Cited” page from their source cards. Keeping in mind the focus on developing an argument, students will write a thesis statement to guide their report. Students will organize note cards into headings/subheadings that will provide the basis for an outline (Inspiration software can be used.). Students will create a visual representation (e.g., charts, graphs, photos, timelines, etc.) of data/information gathered. A model “Works Cited” page may be found at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/14/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/14/).

NOTE: A model lesson on how to use information resources is available on the LDE website as part of the Teacher-to-Teacher lesson plans: [http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1988.pdf](http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/1988.pdf). This is a good lesson for students who have not had much prior instruction in using information resources.

Students will use the Internet (e.g., [www.Galenet.galegroup.com/](http://www.Galenet.galegroup.com/)) and library to search for further available information on their chosen topic. Students may also use alternative strategies to gather information (e.g., written sources provided by companies, government agencies, and libraries).
political, cultural, and scientific organizations). Students may write business letters to the appropriate organizations, asking for materials. In the research learning log (view literacy strategy descriptions), students will record the search process (e.g., library visits, bibliographic information by bookmarking websites/web pages, skimming and scanning books or articles, and taking brief notes on search information). Students will write about problems encountered in locating or using information. Students will continue to jot down interesting information and observations as the search progresses, as explained in Activity 9. Students will record whether resources were helpful (by recording a + or – sign next to each entry). Students will update their KWL BLM and record notes and search progress in their writer’s journal/notebook/learning log.

Activity 12: Planning and Conducting a Personal Interview (GLEs: 11b, 11c, 24a, 44b)

Materials List: index cards, model Interview script, learning logs

Students will review the components of good interviewing. Students will brainstorm (view literacy strategy descriptions) the names of at least three individuals (e.g., either in person, via phone, or email) whom they could contact about their chosen topic; they may use print or electronic versions of the yellow pages to help them with this. In peer groups, students will relate to one another how they became interested in the topic and will seek help with tips, names, addresses, and telephone numbers of experts. Students will then fill out an interview graphic organizer (i.e., chart of questions to be asked) in their writer’s notebook for planning and conducting their interviews. Students will create a list of interview questions appropriate for the topic and submit to the teacher for approval. A sample interview script is available at http://www.u.arizona.edu/~kimmehea/purdue/421/exampleinterview.htm.

Teacher Note: Interviewees may be experts, friends, family, or anyone who knows much about the topic. The experts can also refer students to books, magazines, journals, documents, etc., which might be useful as research tools. Also, some experts can now be reached via email as well as through postal mail, so allow time for discussing and planning all interviews and reviewing the elements of good communication for a letter of request.

Students will review and practice appropriate manners for interviewing people. Then, students will conduct the actual interviews and record responses in a writer’s notebook/learning logs (view literacy strategy descriptions) and create a source card and note cards from the interview.

Activity 13: Creating a Draft of a Research Report (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 17e, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 21; CCSS: W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.1c, W.6.1d, W.6.7, W.6.9b)

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access, model research report, Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Research Group Checklist BLM

Teacher Note: For easier revision, the draft should be double-spaced, front side of the paper only.

Students will use all the notes they have taken during the unit to begin to draft the research report, Grade 6 ELA◊Unit 7◊ Research Reports—Writing Products
first by physically sorting the notes into groups of related ideas and then by using the sorted clumps of note cards to create the body paragraphs of their reports. Students will refer to the thesis sentence written in Activity 10 to help them create their introduction and will circle back to that idea in writing their conclusion.

Students will create a rough draft that includes the following:

- a well-developed beginning, middle, and end
- a focused central idea
- transitions and phrases that unify ideas and clarify the relationship among claims and reasons
- points developed from the outline and note cards, with parenthetical citations inserted as needed
- a graphic organizer, where appropriate, that presents research information

Before students begin drafting, discuss formal style, emphasizing that reporters of research findings need to utilize a certain level of formality to sound credible. Students may need to read sample research reports to develop an understanding of formal style.

To meet CCSS W.6.1 and W.6.9, design a mini-lesson on incorporating textual evidence. Using MLA guidelines, students should use in-text citations to support their argument. Within the draft, students will use interjections for emphasis and variety in sentence structure in writing their drafts, double-spacing in order to have room for revision and editing. Students will use proofreading strategies from the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM and will record their errors on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM. After authors have completed their drafts, they will return to their groups and share them. Using the Research Group Checklist BLM, student groups should review one another’s documents for development of a clear argument, relevant evidence, use of credible sources, and formal style.

2013-2014
Activity 14: Creating a Draft of a Research Report (GLEs: 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, 17e, 19a, 19b, 19c, 19d, 19e, 20a, 20b, 20c, 21; CCSS: W.6.1a, W.6.1b, W.6.1c, W.6.1d, W.6.2, W.6.6, W.6.7, W.6.9b)

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access, model research report, Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Research Group Checklist BLM

Teacher Note: For easier revision, the draft should be double-spaced, front side of the paper only.

This activity is an extension of Activity 13 for 2013-2014. In this year, newly introduced standards call for formatting of informative texts to include charts, tables (W.6.2) and for student collaboration via technology (W.6.6).

Students will use all the notes they have taken during the unit to begin to draft the research report, first, by physically sorting the notes into groups of related ideas and then by using the sorted clumps of note cards to create the body paragraphs of their reports. Students will refer to the
thesis sentence written in Activity 10 to help them create their introduction and will circle back to that idea in writing their conclusion. Students will then create a rough draft that includes the following:

- a well-developed beginning, middle, and end
- a focused central idea
- headings that define each topic and subtopic
- charts, tables, and graphics when appropriate for aiding comprehension
- transitions and phrases that unify ideas and clarify the relationships among claims and reasons
- points developed from the outline and note cards, with parenthetical citations inserted as needed
- a graphic organizer, where appropriate, that presents research information

Before students begin drafting, discuss formal style, emphasizing that reporters of research findings need to utilize a certain level of formality to sound credible. Students may need to read sample research reports to develop an understanding of formal style.

To meet CCSS W.6.1 and W.6.9, design a mini-lesson on incorporating textual evidence. Using MLA guidelines, students should use in-text citations to support their argument. Within the draft, students will use interjections for emphasis and variety in sentence structure in writing their drafts, double-spacing in order to have room for revision and editing. Students will use proofreading strategies from the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM and will record their errors on the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM.

CCSS W.6.6 calls for students to use technology, including the Internet, to collaborate and interact with others. Instead of having author groups meet during class time, set up a wiki or a Google© group for student writers to collaborate using the Internet. Wikis can be set up for no expense using this link: [http://www.wikispaces.com/](http://www.wikispaces.com/). For students to collaborate via Google© groups, students will need a free Google© account. Google© groups can be set up at this address: [http://groups.google.com](http://groups.google.com).

Using the Research Group Checklist BLM, student groups should review one another’s documents for development of a clear argument, relevant evidence, use of credible sources, and formal style.

**Activity 15: Evaluating, Revising, and Publishing Research (GLEs: 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 24c, 39a, 39e, 39d, 39e, 39f, 40a, 40b, 40c, 44a, 44b, 44c, 45a, 45b, 45c, 46, 47a, 47b, 47c, 48)**

Materials List: pen/pencil; paper or notebook; if available, computer with Internet access, Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, Research Report Rubric BLM

Using the assessment rubric as a source for comments, members of the author group will point out what they like in the reports, and authors will take notes for things they would like to mimic in their own reports. Again using the Research Report Rubric, students will self-evaluate and revise their drafts for ideas, organization, word choice, style, and audience awareness,
incorporating valid feedback by the author group. Using the LEAP ELA Writer’s Checklist (available at http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/1684.pdf), the Proofreading/Editing Strategies BLM, and the Secondary Editing/Proofreading Checklist BLM, students will self- and peer-edit drafts for sentence formation, usage, and errors in mechanics, including hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives and spelling errors including commonly confused homophones, frequently misspelled words, and derivatives. Students will use spelling resources as needed. Students will read the reports of all others in their group and give one another feedback.

Students will revise their reports, making sure the introduction is interesting, the report develops one unified idea, the facts are accurate, credit is given for borrowed information (e.g., integrating quotations and citations, using endnotes), and the conclusion is satisfying.

Students will then complete an editing session for grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling, using a variety of print or electronic resources. Students will revise the “Works Cited” page as needed. Students will publish a polished final draft, using available technology. Students’ work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php.

Students’ written work will be placed in a personal writing portfolio. Students will orally present a brief synopsis of their reports to the class. The class will decide how to publish and share the reports for others outside their classmates, including a written invitation to the chosen audience. An oral presentation rubric is available at http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/profdev/rubrics.cfm.

2013-2014

Materials List: recording and editing software and hardware; computer with Internet access

In the 2013-2014 school year, podcasting could serve as an alternative to orally presenting research findings for the 2013-2014 school year. With a podcast, students distill their findings into a brief presentation, record the presentation, and publish it on the Internet. Before beginning the podcast development process, have students listen to podcasts on various topics. There are links to NPR’s podcasts available at this link: http://www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php?type=topic&id=-1. One other source for brief podcasts could also aid the editing, revising process. Grammar Girl is a regularly updated podcast on all things grammar. It can be accessed at this link: http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/.

To standardize student podcasts, use the process guide (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy for students to apply their new knowledge. Process guides scaffold students’ comprehension within a unique format and stimulate students thinking after their involvement during, or in this case, after any content area instruction. Generally, process guides focus students on a common text, such as a chapter in a textbook or a news article. In this context, process guides will help students focus their research findings in a standard format. The “texts” students use are their notes, interview transcripts, and reports.
Sample process guide for a research podcast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>What did you set out to learn more about?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How did you get interested in the subject?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Process</td>
<td>How did your research process unfold?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How did your questions evolve over the unit’s course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>What did you learn through this process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the most interesting piece of information? (directly quoted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>What were your most reliable sources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Questions</td>
<td>What questions remain?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What would you still like to know?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information on hosting and developing podcasts can be found at these links: [http://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/specs.html](http://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/specs.html) and [http://www.voices.com/podcasting/plan-your-podcast.html](http://www.voices.com/podcasting/plan-your-podcast.html). Information on using podcasts in the classroom can be found at this link: [http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~nshelley/](http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~nshelley/). Student podcasts should be polished, not freestyle. The process guide should serve as a plan for developing the script.

Once students have written and revised their scripts, they can use Audacity, a free software download, available at [http://audacity.sourceforge.net/](http://audacity.sourceforge.net/) to record them. Publish student podcasts on the school website or your own teacher website. Kathy Schrock has several podcast rubrics available at this link: [http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/assess.html](http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/assess.html).

Sample Assessment

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that can be used for this unit:
General Assessments

- The teacher will provide students with a checklist of research-related writing target skills to practice in their journals (e.g., paraphrasing, summarizing, writing a thesis). Students will collect all log entries from this unit in a portfolio and turn them in to be assessed for completion and response to the topic.
- Students will complete a visual representation of the knowledge they have gained about research at the end of the unit. These may include outlines, posters, graphic organizers, PowerPoint®, and other technologies to demonstrate mastery of knowledge about conducting research and using information resources.
- For specific skills within the unit, the teacher will use observations, checklists, and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, elements, and genre characteristics of informational nonfiction, research process, writing process, vocabulary acquisition, and related research components.
- Students may be provided with a checklist of nonfiction elements/vocabulary terms for the unit. Students’ completion of vocabulary lists/products and vocabulary acquisition may be assessed via a teacher-created selected/constructed response format.
- Students will use information learned from research to complete log entries and graphic organizers as assigned. Students will collect all log entries/graphic organizers created or completed and turn them in for assessment via teacher-created checklist for completion and/or response to the topic.
- Students’ progress in the research process (e.g., source cards/note cards/outlines) will be assessed via teacher-created timeline checklist, skills checklist, or teacher observations.
- Students may use a trait rubric (i.e., ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions) to self-assess their written work. Six Trait Rubric is available at www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdfRubrics/6plus1traits.pdf
- Students’ writing products will be assessed using the LEAP 21 Writing Rubric for final drafts. http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/9842.pdf

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 7: Student groups will create and complete a graphic organizer (view literacy strategy descriptions) that identifies the most common text structures that characterize nonfiction, their accompanying signal words, and questions students can ask themselves to aid in identifying and comprehending each structure. These should include the following structures and their information:
  - description or list
  - sequence or time order
  - compare and contrast
Activity 10: Students will create note cards and source cards for each information resource consulted.
Source cards should include the following:
- Author
- Title of resource
- Date of publication (copyright date)
- Page number(s)
- Call numbers, if applicable/location/URL
- Place of publication

Note cards should include the following:
- Topic
- Where the information was found (e.g., school library, Internet, public library)
- Paraphrased or summarized information on one idea only
- Page or paragraph where information is located

Students will write business letters to organizations, if applicable, for research information. Letters will follow a standard business format.

Activities 13 and 14:

Research Reports: Students will write an informational report that will incorporate accurate and researched details presented in a variety of forms. Students will apply a writing process to produce a final draft to be evaluated with the following criteria:
- The report is both accurate and clear.
- The writing begins with an interesting or provocative introduction that contains a clear and concise thesis statement.
- The body fully explores the topic and presents information in a sensible order.
- The report contains facts and quotations, expressed in the writer’s words with complete and correct documentation from a variety of sources.
- The body supports and develops the writer’s thesis and exhibits unity and coherence.
- The report includes a complete and correct bibliography or source list.
- The report contains at least one visual representation of data/information.
- The report uses precise word choice appropriate to the audience.
- The report contains few or no errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, or spelling.

Students’ work may be assessed using a teacher-created rubric available at [http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php](http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php).
Additional Teacher Resources

READING

WRITING

RESEARCH
Zorfass, Judith M.  *Teaching Middle School Students to Be Active Researchers.* ASCD, 1998.